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FRAY MARCOS DE NIZA AND HIS DISCOVERY
OF THE SEVEN CITIES OF CIBOLA

PERCY M. BALDWIN, PH. D.

Although Fray Marcos de Niza (Friar Mark of Nice) was the first white man who *indisputably* set foot on the soil of New Mexico,¹ there has hitherto been published no good translation into English of his *Relación*, or the report which he made to his official superiors upon his return. Indeed, the only previous translation that I have been able to discover is one given in Haluyt's *Voyages*² and this was not made from the original Spanish, but from a very imperfect Italian rendering by Ramusio.³ A French version may be found in Ternaux-Compans' *Voyages*⁴ and this was made from the Spanish manuscript copy at Simancas, but unfortunately it is a careless and unreliable piece of work.⁵ The present translation has been prepared from the printed copy contained in the *Documentos Inéditos del Archivo de Indias* (Vol. III, pp. 325 *et seq.*).

The report of Fray Marcos raised to fever heat the

1. Mr. Twitchell and others have accorded this honor to Cabeza de Vaca, but the claim is rejected by most historians.

2. Hakluyt, Richard: *Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques & Discoveries*. The "Relation" of Fray Marcos is in Vol. IX of the Glasgow edition of 1904 and in Vol. III of the London edition of 1810. It is also given as an appendix to Mrs. Bandelier's translation of *The Journey of Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca from Florida to the Pacific*, 1528-1536; New York, 1905.

3. Ramusio, Giovanni Battista: *Navigazioni et Viaggi*. 3 Vols., Venice, 1554-1583. The translation of Fray Marcos's report is in Vol. III, pp. 356 A-359 D.

4. Ternaux-Compans, Henri: *Voyages, Relations, et Mémoires Originiaux pour servir a l'histoire de la découverte de l'Amérique*. Paris, 1837-1841. The translation of the "Relation" is in tome IX, pp. 236-234. At the end of it appears the following note: "J'ai collationné cette copie avec l'original, qui est à Simancas, le 3 septembre, 1781.--Juan Bautista Muñoz."

5. Several examples of this are quoted in footnotes to the translation given herewith and more are mentioned by Bandelier (article cited below), who, however, was in error in thinking that Ternaux-Compans translated from Ramusio.

interest of the Spanish adventurers in "the seven cities of Cibola" and Coronado's army set out with high hopes of duplicating or surpassing the exploits of Cortés in Mexico. When these hopes were grievously disappointed and, instead of marvellous cities exceeding in wealth and grandeur anything yet discovered in the New World, were found only the Indian pueblo villages of Zuñi and its neighborhood, the father was roundly traduced as a liar. Cortés, at the court of Madrid in 1540, declared that the report was simply an elaboration of some information which he (Cortés) had received from Indians and which he had communicated to the Friar and he alleged that the Friar, in thus relating what he had neither seen nor heard, was merely following a practice for which he had become notorious in Peru and Guatemala.⁶ This charge is grotesque, because Fray Marcos accompanied Coronado to Cibola and, had he not been over the ground previously, the fact would have become painfully evident as the expedition proceeded.

However, this does not clear the Friar of the charges of exaggeration preferred against him by Coronado himself.⁷ Castañeda de Nagera, the principal chronicler of the Coronado expedition, gives a story of Stephen Dorantes' death and subsequent events which differs in several particulars from the "Relation." He says the Indians killed only Stephen and let his companions go and that when these met the "friars" (plural), they incontinently fled, so that they never came within sight of Cibola.⁸ This is tantamount to a charge that the Friar's report, presented immediately after his return and solemnly sworn to, was deliberately falsified to cover an act of cowardice. But Castañeda is evidently wrong when he speaks of there being three friars,

6. Smithsonian Institution: *Fourteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, in article by Winship on "The Coronado Expedition," p. 367.

7. Letter of Coronado to the Emperor, October 20, 1541. Given by Ternaux-Compans, IX, 362, and by Winship, *op. cit. supra*, p. 583.

8. Winship's translation of Castañeda, *op. cit. supra*, p. 475. Or, Hodge's translation in *Spanish Explorers in the Southern United States, 1523-1542*, p. 290; New York, 1907.

whom he mentions by name as Marcos, Daniel, and Antonio de Santa Maria. Fray Marcos expressly speaks of his being alone and having no one with whom he could take counsel, having left his companion Onorato (not Daniel nor Antonio) behind at Vacapa. His official superiors must have known how many companions he had and an error on this point would have been obvious. Castañeda's account was written more than twenty years after the events he describes and, when it comes to a question of his word against the Friar's, there is certainly no reason to accept his.

Some historians have been almost as unkind to Fray Marcos as were his contemporaries. Ternaux-Compans speaks disparagingly of him⁹ and Haynes, in Winsor's *Narrative and Critical History*, says: "We think that he fairly deserves the epithet of the 'lying monk,' which has been bestowed upon him, in spite of the air of probability which pervades the greater part of his narrative."¹⁰ On the other hand, as John G. Shea remarks: "Haynes follows his real narrative and does not note a single statement as false or bring any evidence to show any assertion untrue."¹¹ F. H. Cushing has brought to light Indian traditions which corroborate a part of the Friar's story.¹² A. F. Bandelier has stoutly defended him and has given plausible explanations of all his statements, as well as traced his probable route, in his *Contributions to the History of the Southwestern Portion of the United States*.¹³ J. P. Winship, in discussing his credibility writes: "Friar Marcos undoubtedly never wilfully told an untruth about the country of Cíbola, even in a barber's chair."¹⁴ C. F. Lummis goes so

9. Ternaux-Compans, *op. cit. supra*, tome IX, "Preface de l'éditeur français," pp. v-vi.

10. *Op. cit.*, II, 499.

11. Shea, John Gilmary: *The Catholic Church in Colonial Days*, p. 117, footnote.

12. In *The Magazine of Western History*, cited by Bandelier in *Southwestern Historical Contributions*, p. 106.

13. Bandelier, *op. cit.*, in *Papers of the Archaeological Institute of America*, Amer. series, Vol. V, pp. 106-178.

14. Winship, *op. cit. supra*, p. 366.

far as to say warmly: "He has been accused of misrepresentation and exaggeration in his reports; but if his critics had not been so ignorant of the locality, of the Indians and of their traditions, they never would have spoken. Fray Marcos's statements were absolutely truthful."¹⁵

The Friar himself, in concluding his report, says: "I simply tell what I saw and what was told me concerning the countries where I went and those of which I had information." All through his narrative he is careful to distinguish between observation and hearsay and certainly nothing that he states from observation can be set down as deliberately false. On the contrary, as Bandelier has shown, it conforms pretty accurately with what we know of the ethnology and topography of the region over which he travelled.

There are, however, two statements for which he vouches that are open to question. One is his observation have made an error here of about $3^{\circ} 30'$ in his latitude that in 35° the coast suddenly turns to the west. He must which does not say much for the knowledge of cosmography that Fra. Antonio ascribes to him and which is given as one of the reasons why he was chosen for the exploration. Even with the crude instruments of those days, $31\frac{1}{2}$ degrees is a large error. But the most puzzling point is that at a previous point in his journey he had found himself 40 leagues from the coast and his subsequent traveling must have led him away further still. Bandelier estimates that he must have been 200 miles away,¹⁶ and seems to think that he made a special trip to the coast to ascertain its direction. But nothing in the text would indicate that he made any such important deviation from his route. He was hurrying on after Stephen Dorantes and he was only a day's march from Cibola when he met the fugitive who gave him the first news of Stephen's disastrous end. This lone observation of our cosmographer-priest is unfortunately of no as-

15. Lummis, Charles Fletcher: *The Spanish Pioneers*, p. 80.

16. *Op. cit. supra*, p. 143.

sistance to us in determining his route. Nowhere else does he mention his latitude and he gives only vague clues as to the direction in which he is marching.

The other dubious statement is that, from a distance, Cíbola appeared to him bigger than Mexico. Castañeda later wrote: "There are mansions in New Spain which make a better appearance from a distance,"¹⁷ and he tells us that Fray Marcos found it unsafe to remain with Coronado's army when his exaggerations became apparent, and returned to New Spain. However, allowance must be made for the difference in point of view. Friar Mark had been given many glowing accounts of the greatness of Cíbola by the Indians; these accounts had checked with one another and the Indians had been truthful in all else. His mind was primed to expect a big city and no doubt distance lent enchantment to the view. After all, his was only common human failing of being prone to believe what he wanted to believe and to see what he wanted to see.

It is altogether probable that the accounts which the adventurers in Coronado's army had heard were grossly exaggerated and garbled versions of Fray Marcos's report. It is possible that some of these got into print and that one of them was used by Ramusio for his Italian version. How else can one explain the extraordinary interpolation in connection with the description of Cíbola? (See page 218) It is difficult to believe that Ramusio invented it and deliberately foisted it into the text. Certainly Fray Marcos should not be held responsible for these embellishments of his narrative.

In one respect, at any rate, the Friar deserves our admiration. He is fair to the Indians at every point. He describes their joy at being set free by Mendoza; he draws attention to their agriculture being neglected due to warlike raids upon them by the "Christians" of San Miguel; he will not break faith with the messengers he sent to the

17. Winship, *op. cit. supra*, p. 483.

sea coast from Vacapa; he declines to receive gifts from the aborigines in a country where white men have not been previously known; he gratefully acknowledges their hospitality and aid at every stage of his journey; he testifies to their great truthfulness; he does not blame them when they manifest a hostile disposition towards himself after the massacre of their companions; he evidently regards their anger as arising naturally from their grief and says that it would be against his will if Christians should come to avenge his death. He seems to be moved throughout by missionary zeal and there is no reason to suppose him insincere, even though, as Castañeda insinuates, the ambition to be elected Father Provincial of his order may not have been absent from his thoughts.

When all is said, the fairest treatment we can give him is to let him speak for himself, and therefore the subjoined translation of his "Relation" is given for the benefit of the readers of the *New Mexico Historical Review*. The report is written in a naïve style that does not lack interest and we feel sure that New Mexicans will be willing to accord the discoverer of their land an attentive hearing.

INSTRUCTION OF DON ANTONIO, VICEROY OF NEW SPAIN

[Fray Marcos de Niza, this is what you have to do in the expedition which you are undertaking for the honor and glory of the Holy Trinity, and for the propagation of our holy catholic faith].¹

First: As soon as you arrive at the province of Culiacan, you shall exhort and encourage the Spaniards, who reside in the town of San Miguel, to treat well the Indians who are at peace and not to employ them on excessive tasks, assuring them that if they do so, they shall find favor with and be rewarded by H. M. for the labors

1. This introductory paragraph is given by Ternaux-Compans. It is not in the *Documentos inéditos*.

which they have there undergone, and in me they shall have a good supporter for their claims, but if they do the contrary, they shall be punished and out of favor.

You shall give the Indians to understand that I send you, in the name of H. M., to order that they be treated well, and that they may know that he is afflicted by the affronts and injuries which they have received, and that henceforward they shall be well treated, and that those who do them harm shall be punished.

Likewise you shall assure them that they shall no longer be made slaves, nor removed from their lands, but that they shall be left free on them, without hurt or damage; that they shall lose their fear and recognize God Our Lord, who is in heaven, and the Emperor, who is placed by His hand on earth to rule and govern it.

And as Francisco Vazquez de Coronado, whom H. M. has appointed governor of that province, will go with you to the town of San Miguel of Culiacan, you must advise me how he provides for the affairs of that town, in what concerns the service of God Our Lord and the conversion and good treatment of the natives of that province.

And if by the aid of God Our Lord and the grace of the Holy Ghost, you shall find a way to go further and to enter the country beyond, you shall take with you Stephen Dorantes for a guide, whom I order that he obey you in all and by all that you command him, as he would myself, and, if he does not so, he shall be in jeopardy and shall incur the penalties which befall those who do not obey persons who hold power from H. M. to command them.

Likewise the said governor, Francisco Vazquez, has with him the Indians who came with Dorantes and some others, that it has been possible to gather from those parts, in order that, if to him and to you both it may seem advisable that you take some in your company, you may do so and may use them as you see is good for the service of Our Lord.

You shall always arrange to go in the safest manner possible, and inform yourself first if the Indians be at

peace or war with one another, that you may give them no occasion to commit any indiscretion against your person, which would be the cause of proceeding against them and chastizing them. If such were the case, instead of doing them good and bringing them light, it would be the opposite.

You shall take much care to observe the people that there are, whether they be many or few, and if they are scattered or live close together.

Note the quality and fertility of the soil, the climate of the country, the trees and plants and domestic and wild animals, which there may be, the nature of the ground, whether rugged or level, the rivers, whether great or small, and the stones and metals which there are in the country. Send or carry back samples of such things as it is possible to do so, to the end that H. M. may be advised of everything.

Always endeavor to obtain information about the sea coast, that of the North as well as that of the South, because the land may narrow and in the country beyond some arm of the sea may enter. And if you come to the coast of the South Sea, bury letters concerning whatever may appear to you noteworthy, on the prominent points, at the foot of some tree distinguished for its size, and on the tree make a cross so that it may be known. Likewise make the same sign of the cross and leave letters by the most remarkable trees near the water, at the mouths of rivers and at places suitable for anchorage. Thus, if we send ships, they will go advised to look for such signs.

Always arrange to send news by the Indians, telling how you fare and are received and particularly what you may find.

And if God Our Lord be pleased that you find some large town, where it may seem to you that there is a good situation to establish a monastery and to send religious to undertake the work of conversion, send word by Indians or return yourself to Culiacan. Send such word with all secrecy, in order that what is necessary may be provided

without commotion, because in bringing peace to the country which may be found, we look to the service of Our Lord and the good of the inhabitants.

And although all the earth belongs to the Emperor our lord, you in my name shall take possession of the country for H. M., and you shall erect the signs and perform the acts, which seem to you to be required in such case, and you shall give the natives of the country to understand that there is a God in heaven and the Emperor on the earth to command and govern it, to whom all men must be subject and whom all must serve.—*Don Antonio de Mendoza.*

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT

I, Fray Marcos de Niza, of the order of St. Francis, declare that I received a copy of these instructions signed by the most illustrious lord Don Antonio de Mendoza, viceroy and governor of New Spain, the which was delivered to me, by command of his lordship and in his name, by Francisco Vazquez de Coronado, governor of this New Galicia. The said copy is taken from these instructions *de verbo ad verbum*, corrected by them and made to agree with them. I promise faithfully to fulfill the said instructions and not to go against nor to exceed them in anything therein contained, now or at any time. And as I will thus adhere to and fulfill them, I sign hereto my name, at Tonalá, on the twentieth day of the month of November in the year one thousand five hundred and thirty-eight, where were given and delivered to me in the said name the said instructions, and which is in the province of this New Galicia.—*Fra. Márcos de Niza.*

RELACION

With the aid and favor of the most holy Virgin Mary, our Lady, and of our seraphic father St. Francis, I, Fray Marcos de Niza, a professed religious of the order of St. Francis, in fulfillment of the instructions above given of the most illustrious lord Don Antonio de Mendoza, viceroy and governor for H. M. of New Spain, left the town

of San Miguel, in the province of Culiacan, on Friday, March 7th, 1539. I took with me as companion Friar Honoratus and also Stephen of Dorantes, a negro, and certain Indians, which the said Lord Viceroy bought for the purpose and set at liberty. They were delivered to me by Francisco de Coronado, governor of New Galicia, along with many other Indians from Petatlan and from the village of Cuchillo, situated about fifty leagues from the said town. All these came to the valley of Culiacan, manifesting great joy, because it had been certified to them that the Indians were free, the said governor having sent in advance to acquaint them of their freedom and to tell them that it was the desire and command of H. M. that they should not be enslaved nor made war upon nor badly treated.

With this company as stated, I took my way towards the town of Petatlan, receiving much hospitality and presents of food, roses and other such things; besides which, at all the stopping-places where there were no people, huts were constructed for me of mats and branches. In this town of Petatlan I stayed three days, because my companion Friar Honoratus fell sick. I found it advisable to leave him there and, conformably with the instructions given to me, I followed the way in which I was guided, though unworthy, by the Holy Ghost. There went with me Stephen Dorantes, the negro, some of the freed Indians and many people of that country. I was received everywhere I went with much hospitality and rejoicing and with triumphal arches. The inhabitants also gave me what food they had, which was little, because they said it had not rained for three years, and because the Indians of that territory think more of hiding than of growing crops, for fear of the Christians of the town of San Miguel, who up to that time were accustomed to make war upon and enslave them. On all this road, which would be about 25 or 30 leagues beyond Petatlan, I did not see anything worthy of being set down here, except that there came to me some Indians from the island visited by the Marquess of Valle, and who

informed me that it was really an island and not, as some think, part of the mainland. I saw that they passed to and from the mainland on rafts and that the distance between the island and the mainland might be half a sea league, rather more or less. Likewise there came to see me Indians from another larger and more distant island, by whom I was told that there were thirty other small islands, inhabited, but with poor food excepting two, which they said had maize. These Indians wore suspended from their necks many shells of the kind which contain pearls; I showed them a pearl which I carried for sample and they told me that there were some in the islands, but I did not see any.

I took my way over a desert for four days and there went with me some Indians from the islands mentioned as well as from the villages which I left behind, and at the end of the desert I found some other Indians, who were astonished to see me, as they had no news of Christians, having no traffic with the people on the other side of the desert. These Indians made me very welcome, giving me plenty of food, and they endeavored to touch my clothes, calling me *Sayota*, which means in their language "man from heaven." I made them understand, the best I could by my interpreters, the content of my instructions, namely, the knowledge of Our Lord in heaven and of H. M. on earth. And always, by all the means that I could, I sought to learn about a country with numerous towns and a people of a higher culture than those I was encountering, but I had no news except that they told me that in the country beyond, four or five days' journey thence, where the chains of mountains ended, there was an extensive and level open tract,² in which they told me there were many and very large towns inhabited by a people clothed with cotton. When I showed them some metals which I was carrying, in order to take account of the metals of the country, they took a piece of gold and told me that there were

2. "Abra."

vessels of it among the people of the region and that they wear certain articles of that metal suspended from their noses and ears, and that they had some little blades of it, with which they scrape and relieve themselves of sweat. But as this tract lies inland and my intention was to stay near the coast, I determined to leave it till my return, because then I would be able to see it better. And so I marched three days through a country inhabited by the same people, by whom I was received in the same manner as by those I had already passed. I came to a medium-sized town named Vacapa, where they made me a great welcome and gave me much food, of which they had plenty, as the whole land is irrigated. From this town to the sea is forty leagues. As I found myself so far away from the sea, and as it was two days before Passion Sunday, I determined to stay there until Easter, to inform myself concerning the islands of which I said above that I had news. So I sent Indian messengers to the sea, by three ways, whom I charged to bring back to me people from the coast and from some of the islands, that I might inform myself concerning them. In another direction I sent Stephen Dorantes, the negro, whom I instructed to take the route towards the north for fifty or sixty leagues to see if by that way he might obtain an account of any important thing such as we were seeking. I agreed with him that if he had any news of a populous, rich and important country he should not continue further but should return in person or send me Indians with a certain signal which we arranged, namely, that if it were something of medium importance, he should send me a white cross of a hand's breadth, if it were something of great importance, he should send me one of two hands' breadth, while if it were bigger and better than New Spain, he should send me a great cross. And so the said negro Stephen departed from me on Passion Sunday after dinner, whilst I stayed in the town, which I say is called Vacapa.

In four days' time there came messengers from Stephen with a very great cross, as high as a man, and they

told me on Stephen's behalf that I should immediately come and follow him, because he had met people who gave him an account of the greatest country in the world, and that he had Indians who had been there, of whom he sent me one. This man told me so many wonderful things about the country, that I forebore to believe them until I should have seen them or should have more certitude of the matter. He told me that it was thirty days' journey from where Stephen was staying to the first city of the country, which was named Cibola. As it appears to me to be worth while to put in this paper what this Indian, whom Stephen sent me, said concerning the country, I will do so. He asserted that in the first province there were seven very great cities, all under one lord, that the houses, constructed of stone and lime, were large, that the smallest were of one storey with a terrace above, that there were others of two and three storeys, whilst that of the lord had four, and all were joined under his rule. He said that the doorways of the principal houses were much ornamented with turquoises, of which there was a great abundance, and that the people of those cities went very well clothed. He told me many other particulars, not only of the seven cities but of other provinces beyond them, each one of which he said was much bigger than that of the seven cities. That I might understand the matter as he knew it, we had many questions and answers and I found him very intelligent.

I gave thanks to Our Lord, but deferred my departure after Stephen Dorantes, thinking that he would wait for me, as I had agreed with him, and also because I had promised the messengers whom I had sent to the sea that I would wait for them, for I proposed always to treat with good faith the people with whom I came in contact. The messengers returned on Easter Sunday, and with them people from the coast and from two islands, which I knew to be the islands above mentioned and which, as I already knew, are poor of food, though populated. These people

wore shells on their foreheads and said that they contain pearls. They told me that there were thirty-four islands near to one another, whose names I am setting down in another paper, where I give the names of the islands and towns. The people of the coast say that they, as well as the people of the islands, have little food, and that they traffic with one another by means of rafts. The coast trends almost directly towards the north. These Indians of the coast brought to me shields of oxhide, very well fashioned, big enough to cover them from head to foot, with some holes above the handle so that one could see from behind them; they are so hard, that I think that a bullet would not pass through them. The same day there came to me three of those Indians known as *Pintados*, with their faces, chests and arms all decorated;³ they live over towards the east and their territory borders on those near the seven cities. They told me that, having had news of me, they had come to see me and among other things they gave me much information concerning the seven cities and provinces, that the Indian sent by Stephen had told me of, and almost in the same manner as he. I therefore sent back the coast people, but two Indians of the islands said they would like to go with me seven or eight days.

So with them and the three *Pintados* already mentioned, I left Vacapa on the second day of the Easter festival, taking the same road that Stephen had followed. I had received from him more messengers, with another big cross as big as the first which he sent, urging me to hurry and stating that the country in question was the best and greatest of which he had ever heard. These messengers gave me, individually, the same story as the first, except that they told me much more and gave me a clearer account. So for that day, the second of Easter, and for two more days I followed the same stages of the route as Stephen had; at the end of which I met the people who had

3. "Labrados"--Bandelier would translate this word by "tattooed." Ternaux-Compans says "peints." The word here used leaves it indefinite like the Spanish.

given him news of the seven cities and of the country beyond. They told me that from there it was thirty days' journey to the city of Cibola, which is the first of the seven. I had an account not from one only, but from many, and they told me in great detail the size of the houses and the manner of them, just as the first ones had. They told me that, beyond these seven cities, there were other kingdoms named Marata, Acus and Totonteac. I desired very much to know for what they went so far from their homes and they told me that they went for turquoises, cowhides and other things, that there was a quantity of these things in that town. Likewise I asked what they exchanged for such articles and they told me the sweat of their brows and the service of their persons, that they went to the first city, which is called Cibola, where they served in digging the ground and performing other work, for which work they are given oxhides, of the kind produced in that country, and turquoises. The people of this town all wear good and beautiful turquoises hanging from their ears and noses and they say that these jewels are worked into the principal doors of Cibola. They told me that the fashion of clothing worn in Cibola is a cotton shirt reaching to the instep, with a button at the throat and a long cord hanging down, the sleeves of the shirts being the same width throughout their length; it seems to me this would resemble the Bohemian style. They say that those people go girt with belts of turquoises and that over these shirts some wear excellent cloaks and others very well dressed cowhides, which are considered the best clothing, and of which they say there is a great quantity in that country. The women likewise go clothed and covered to the feet in the same manner.

These Indians received me very well and took great care to learn the day of my departure from Vacapa, so that they might furnish me on the way with victuals and lodgings. They brought me sick persons that I might cure them and they tried to touch my clothes; I recited the Gospel over them. They gave me some cowhides so well tan-

ned and dressed that they seemed to have been prepared by some highly civilized people, and they all said that they came from Cibola.

The next day I continued my journey, taking with me the *Pintados*, who wished not to leave me. I arrived at another settlement where I was very well received by its people, who also endeavored to touch my clothing. They gave me information concerning the country whither I was bound as much in detail as those I had met before, and they told me that some persons had gone from there with Stephen Dorantes, four or five days previously. Here I found a great cross which Stephen had left for me, as a sign that the news of the good country continually increased, and he had left word for me to hurry and that he would wait for me at the end of the first desert. Here I set up two crosses and took possession, according to my instructions, because that country appeared to me better than that which I had already passed and hence it was fitting to perform the acts of possession.

In this manner I travelled five days, always finding people, who gave me a very hospitable reception, many turquoises and cowhides and the same account of the country. They all spoke to me right away of Cibola and that province as people who knew that I was going in search of it. They told me how Stephen was going forward, and I received from him messengers who were inhabitants of that town and who had been some distance with him. He spoke more and more enthusiastically of the greatness of the country and he urged me to hurry. Here I learned that two days' journey thence I would encounter a desert of four days' journey, in which there was no provision except what was supplied by making shelters for me and carrying food. I hurried forward, expecting to meet Stephen at the end of it, because he had sent me word that he would await me there.

Before arriving at the desert, I came to a green, well watered settlement, where there came to meet me a crowd of people, men and women, clothed in cotton and some

covered with cowhides, which in general they consider a better dress material than cotton. All the people of this town wear turquoises hanging from their noses and ears; these ornaments are called *cacona*. Among them came the chief of the town and his two brothers, very well dressed in cotton, *encaconados*, and each with a necklace of turquoises around his neck. They brought to me a quantity of game--venison, rabbits and quail--also maize and meal, all in great abundance. They offered me many turquoises, cowhides, very pretty cups and other things, of which I accepted none, for such was my custom since entering the country where we were not known. And here I had the same account as before of the seven cities and the kingdoms and provinces as I have related above. I was wearing a garment of dark woollen cloth, of the kind called *Saragossa*, which was given to me by Francisco Vazquez de Coronado, governor of New Galicia. The chief of the village and other Indians touched it with their hands and told me that there was plenty of that fabric in Totontecac and that the natives of that place were clothed with it. At this I laughed and said it could not be so, that it must be garments of cotton which those people wore. Then they said to me: "Do you think that we do not know that what you wear and what we wear is different? Know that in Cibola the houses are full of that material which we are wearing, but in Totontecac there are some small animals from which they obtain that with which they make a fabric like yours." This astonished me, as I had not heard of any such thing previously, and I desired to inform myself more particularly about it. They told me that the animals are of the size of the Castilian greyhounds which Stephen had with him; they said there were many of them in Totontecac. I could not guess what species of animals they might be.

The next day I entered into the desert and at the place where I had to go for dinner, I found huts and food enough, by the side of a watercourse. At night I found cabins and

food again and so it was for the four days that I travelled through this desert. At the end of them, I entered a very well populated valley and at the first town many men and women came with food to meet me. They all wore many turquoises suspended from their noses and ears, and some wore necklaces of turquoises, like those which I said were worn by the chief of the town on the other side of the desert and his brothers, except that they only wore one string, while these Indians wore three or four. They were dressed in very good cloaks of ox leather. The women likewise wore turquoises in their noses and ears and very good petticoats and blouses. Here they had as much information of Cibola, as in New Spain they have of Mexico and in Peru of Cuzco. They described in detail the houses, streets and squares of the town, like people who had been there many times, and they were wearing various objects brought from there, which they had obtained by their services, like the Indians I had previously met. I said to them that it was not possible that the houses should be in the manner which they described to me, so to make me understand they took earth and ashes and mixed them with water, and showed how the stone is placed and the edifice reared, placing stone and mortar till the required height is reached. I asked them if the men of that country had wings to climb those storeys; they laughed and explained to me a ladder, as well as I could do, and they took a stick and placed it over their heads and said it was that height from storey to storey. Here I was also given an account of the woolen cloth of Totontecac, where they say the houses are like those at Cibola but better and bigger, and that it is a very great place and has no limit.

Here I learned that the coast turns to the west,⁴ almost at a right angle, because until I reached the entrance of the first desert which I passed, the coast always trended towards the north. As it was very important to know the direction of the coast, I wished to assure myself and so

4. Ternaux-Compans says, "vers le nord," but the Spanish is "al Poniente."

went to look out⁵ and I saw clearly that in latitude 35 degrees it turns to the west. I was not less pleased at this discovery than at the good news I had of the country.

So I turned to follow my route and was in that valley five days. It is so thickly populated with fine people and so provided with food that there would be enough to supply more than three hundred horse. It is all watered and is like a garden. There are villages at every half or quarter league or so. In each of them I had a very long account of Cibola and they spoke to me in detail about it, as people would who went there each year to earn their living. Here I found a man who was a native of Cibola. He told me he had fled from the governor whom the lord had placed there in Cibola—for the lord of these seven cities lives and has his residence in one of them, which is called Ahacus, and in the others he has placed persons who command for him. This citizen of Cibola is a man of good disposition, somewhat old and much more intelligent than the natives of the valley and those I had formerly met; he told me that he wished to go with me so that I might procure his pardon. I interrogated him carefully and he told me that Cibola is a big city, that it has a large population and many streets and squares, and that in some parts of the city there are very great houses, ten storeys high, in which the chiefs meet on certain days of the year. He corroborated what I had already been told, that the houses are constructed out of stone and lime, and he said that the doors and fronts of the principal houses are of turquoise; he added that the others of the seven cities are similar, though some are bigger, and that the most important is Ahacus. He told me that towards the south-east there lay

5. "Y así fui en demanda della." "Demanda" is a nautical term for "look-out" and this translation seems to be indicated, as Fray Marcos goes on to say that he saw clearly that the coast turned to the West. Being familiar with navigation (see the attestation of Fray Antonio) it would be natural for him to use a sailor's expression and the mention of the latitude points to an actual observation. Nevertheless, this remains a very puzzling statement, as Fray Marcos was evidently too far from the coast to see it. Perhaps the meaning is, "after inquiry, I perceived etc."

a kingdom called Marata, in which there used to be many very large towns, having the same kind of houses built of stone and with several storeys; that this kingdom had been and still was at war with the lord of the seven cities; that by this war Marata had been greatly reduced in power, although it was still independent and continued the war.

He likewise told me that to the south-east⁶ there is a kingdom named Totontecac, which he said was the biggest, most populous, and the richest in the world, and that there they wore clothes made of the same stuff as mine, and others of a more delicate material obtained from the animals of which I had already had a description; the people were highly cultured and different from those I had hitherto seen. He further informed me that there is another province and very great kingdom, which is called Acus—for there are Ahacus and Acus; Ahacus, with the aspiration, is one of the seven cities, the most important one, and Acus, without the aspiration, is a kingdom and province by itself.

He corroborated what I had been told concerning the clothes worn in Cibola and added that all the people of that city sleep in beds raised above the floor, with fabrics⁷ and with tilts above to cover the beds. He said that he would go with me to Cibola and beyond, if I desired to take him along. I was given the same account in this town by many other persons, though not in such great detail.

I travelled in this valley three days and the natives made for me all the feasts and rejoicings that they could. Here in this valley I saw more than two thousand oxhides, extremely well cured; I saw a very large quantity of turquoises and necklaces thereof, as in the places I had left behind, and all said that they came from the city of Cibola. They know this place as well as I would know what I hold in my hands, and they are similarly acquainted with the kingdoms of Marata, Acus and Totontecac. Here in this

6. Ternaux-Compans and Hakluyt both say to the west, which seems more reasonable, as Marata lay to the south-east.

7. "Ropas," perhaps blankets.

valley they brought to me a skin, half as big again as that of a large cow, and told me that it was from an animal which has only one horn on its forehead and that this horn is curved towards its chest and then there sticks out a straight point, in which they said there was so much strength, that no object, no matter how hard, could fail to break when struck with it. They averred that there were many of these animals in that country. The color of the skin is like that of the goat and the hair is as long as one's finger.

Here I had messengers from Stephen, who told me on his behalf that he was then entering the last desert, and the more cheerfully, as he was going more assured of the country; and he sent to me to say that, since departing from me, he had never found the Indians out in any lie, but up to that point had found everything as they had told him and so he thought to find that beyond. And so I held it for certain, because it is true that, from the first day I had news of the city of Cibola, the Indians had told me of everything that till then I had seen, telling me always what towns I would find along the road and the numbers of them and, in the parts where there was no population, showing me where I would eat and sleep, without erring in one point. I had then marched, from the first place where I had news of the country, one hundred and twelve leagues, so it appears to me not unworthy to note the great truthfulness of these people. Here in this valley, as in the other towns before, I erected crosses and performed the appropriate acts and ceremonies, according to my instructions. The natives of this town asked me to stay with them three or four days, because there was a desert four leagues thence, and from the beginning of it to the city of Cibola would be a march of fifteen days and they wished to put up food for me and to make the necessary arrangements for it. They told me that with the negro Stephen there had gone more than three hundred men to accompany him and carry food, and that many wished to go with me also, to serve me and be-

cause they expected to return rich. I acknowledged their kindness and asked that they should get ready speedily, because each day seemed to me a year, so much I desired to see Cibola. And so I remained three days without going forward, during which I continually informed myself concerning Cibola and all the other places. In doing so I took the Indians aside and questioned each one by himself, and all agreed in their account and told me the number of the people, the order of the streets, the size of the houses and the fashion of the doorways, just as I had been told by those before.

After the three days were past, many people assembled to go with me, of whom I chose thirty chiefs, who were very well supplied with necklaces of turquoises, some of them wearing as many as five or six strings. With these I took the retinue necessary to carry food for them and me and started on my way. I entered the desert on the ninth day of May. On the first day, by a very wide and well travelled road, we arrived for dinner at a place where there was water, which the Indians showed to me, and in the evening we came again to water, and there I found a shelter which the Indians had just constructed for me and another which had been made for Stephen to sleep in when he passed. There were some old huts and many signs of fire, made by people passing to Cibola over this road. In this fashion I journeyed twelve days, always very well supplied with victuals of venison, hares, and partridges of the same color and flavor as those of Spain, although rather smaller.

At this juncture I met an Indian, the son of one of the chiefs who were journeying with me, who had gone in company with the negro Stephen. This man showed fatigue in his countenance, had his body covered with sweat, and manifested the deepest sadness in his whole person. He told me that, at a day's march before coming to Cibola, Stephen according to his custom sent ahead messengers with his calabash, that they might know he was coming.

The calabash was adorned with some rows of rattles* and two feathers, one white and one red. When they arrived at Cibola, before the person of the lord's representative in that place, and gave him the calabash, as soon as he took it in his hands and saw the rattles, with great anger he flung it on the ground and told the messengers to be gone forthwith, that he knew what sort of people these were, and that the messengers should tell them not to enter the city, as if they did so he would put them to death. The messengers went back, told Stephen what had passed. He said to them that that was nothing, that those who showed themselves irritated received him the better. So he continued his journey till he arrived at the city of Cibola, where he found people who would not consent to let him enter, who put him in a big house which was outside the city, and who at once took away from him all that he carried, his articles of barter and the turquoises and other things which he had received on the road from the Indians. They left him that night without giving anything to eat or drink either to him or to those that were with him. The following morning my informant was thirsty and went out of the house to drink from a nearby stream. When he had been there a few moments he saw Stephen fleeing away pursued by the people of the city and they killed some of those who were with him. When this Indian saw this he concealed himself and made his way up the stream, then crossed over and regained the road of the desert.

At these tidings, some of the Indians who were with me commenced to weep. As for myself, the wretched news made me fear I should be lost. I feared not so much to lose my life as not to be able to return to give a report of the greatness of the country, where God Our Lord might be so well served and his holy faith exalted and the royal domains of H. M. extended. In these circumstances I consoled them as best I could and told them that one ought

7*. "Cascabeles."

not to give entire credence to that Indian, but they said to me with many tears that the Indian only related what he had seen. So I drew apart from the Indians to commend myself to Our Lord and to pray Him to guide this matter as He might best be served and to enlighten my mind. This done, I returned to the Indians and with a knife cut the sords of the packages of dry goods and articles of barter which I was carrying with me and which till then I had not touched nor given away any of the contents. I divid-ed up the goods among all those chiefs and told them not to fear and to go along with me, which they did.

Continuing our journey, at a day's march from Cibola, we met two other Indians, of those who had gone with Stephen, who appeared bloody and with many wounds. At this meeting, they and those that were with me set up such a crying, that out of pity and fear they also made me cry. So great was the noise that I could not ask about Stephen nor of what had happened to them, so I begged them to be quiet that we might learn what had passed. They said to me: "How can we be quiet, when we know that our fathers, sons and brothers who were with Stephen, to the number of more than three hundred men, are dead? And we no more dare go to Cibola, as we have been accustomed." Nevetheless, as well as I could, I endeavored to pacify them and to put off their fear, although I myself was not without need of someone to calm me. I asked the wounded Indians concerning Stephen and as to what had happened. They remained a short time without speaking a word, weeping along with those of their towns. At last they told me that when Stephen arrived at a day's journey from Cibola, he sent his messengers with his calabash to the lord of Cibola to announce his arrival and that he was coming peacefully and to cure them. When the messengers gave him the calabash and he saw the rattles, he flung it furiously on the floor and said: "I know these people; these rattles are not of our style of workmanship; tell them to go back immediately or not a man of them will re-

main alive." Thus he remained very angry. The messengers went back sad, and hardly dared to tell Stephen of the reception they had met. Nevertheless they told him and he said that they should not fear, that he desired to go on, because, although they answered him badly, they would receive him well. So he went and arrived at the city of Cibola just before sunset, with all his company, which would be more than three hundred men, besides many women. The inhabitants would not permit them to enter the city, but put them in a large and commodious house outside the city. They at once took away from Stephen all that he carried, telling him that the lord so ordered. "All that night," said the Indians, "they gave us nothing to eat nor drink. The next day, when the sun was a lance-length high, Stephen went out of the house and some of the chiefs with him. Straightway many people came out of the city and, as soon as he saw them, he began to flee and we with him. Then they gave us these arrow-strokes and cuts and we fell and some dead men fell on top of us. Thus we lay till nightfall, without daring to stir. We heard loud voices in the city and we saw many men and women watching on the terraces. We saw no more of Stephen and we concluded that they had shot him with arrows as they had the rest that were with him, of whom there escaped only us."

In view of what the Indians had related and the bad outlook for continuing my journey as I desired, I could not help but feel their loss and mine. God is witness of how much I desired to have someone of whom I could take counsel, for I confess I was at a loss what to do. I told them that Our Lord would chastize Cibola and that when the Emperor knew what had happened he would send many Christians to punish its people. They did not believe me, because they say that no one can withstand the power of Cibola. I begged them to be comforted and not to weep and consoled them with the best words I could muster, which would be too long to set down here. With this I left them and withdrew a stone's throw or two apart, to

commend myself to God, and remained thus an hour and a half. When I went back to them, I found one of my Indians, named Mark, who had come from Mexico, and he said to me: "Father, these men have plotted to kill you, because they say that on account of you and Stephen their kinsfolk have been murdered, and that there will not remain a man or woman among them all who will not be killed." I then divided among them all that remained of dry stuffs and other articles, in order to pacify them. I told them to observe that if they killed me they would do me no harm, because I would die a Christian and would go to heaven, and that those who killed me would suffer for it, because the Christians would come in search of me, and against my will would kill them all. With these and many other words I pacified them somewhat, although there was still high feeling on account of the people killed. I asked that some of them should go to Cibola, to see if any other Indian had escaped and to obtain some news of Stephen, but I could not persuade them to do so. Seeing this, I told them that, in any case, I must see the city of Cibola and they said that no one would go with me. Finally, seeing me determined, two chiefs said that they would go with me.

With these and with my own Indians and interpreters, I continued my journey till I came within sight of Cibola. It is situated on a level stretch on the brow of a roundish hill. It appears to be a very beautiful city, the best that I have seen in these parts; the houses are of the type that the Indians described to me, all of stone with their storeys and terraces, as it appeared to me from a hill whence I could see it. The town is bigger than the city of Mexico.⁸

8. Here Ramusio, III. 359B, interpolates: *La citta è maggior che la citta di Temistitan, laqual passa venti mila case, le genti sono quasi bianche, vanno vestiti, & dormono in letti, tengono archi per arme, hanno molti smeraldi, & altre gioie, anchor che non apprezzino se non turchese, con lequali adornano li pareti delli portali delle case, & le vesti, & li vasi, & si spende come moneta in tutto quel paese. Vestono di cotone, & di cuoi di vacca: & questo è il piu apprezzato, & honoreuole vestire: vsano vasi d'oro, & d'argento, perche non hanno altro metallo, delquale vi è maggior vs. & maggior abbondanza che nel Peru, & questo comprano per*

At times I was tempted to go to it, because I knew that I risked nothing but my life, which I had offered to God the day I commenced the journey; finally I feared to do so, considering my danger and that if I died, I would not be able to give an account of this country, which seems to me to be the greatest and best of the discoveries. When I said to the chiefs who were with me how beautiful Cibola appeared to me, they told me that it was the least of the seven cities, and that Totontec is much bigger and better than all the seven, and that it has so many houses and people that there is no end to it. Viewing the situation of the city, it occurred to me to call that country the new kingdom of St. Francis, and there, with the aid of the Indians, I made a big heap of stones and on top of it I placed a small, slender cross, not having the materials to construct a bigger one. I declared that I placed that cross and landmark in the name of Don Antonio de Mendoza, viceroy and governor of New Spain for the Emperor, our lord, in sign of possession, in conformity with my instructions. I declared that I took possession there of all the seven cities and of the kingdoms of Tontontec and Acus and Marata, and that I did not go to them, in order that I might return to give an account of what I had done and seen.

Then I started back, with much more fear than food, and went to meet the people whom I had left behind, with the greatest haste I could make. I overtook them after

turquese nella provincia delli Pintadi, doue si dice che vi sono le minere in grande abbondanza. D'altri regni non potetti hauere instruttione cosi particolare, alcune volte fui tentato andarmene fino li . . .

Hakluyt translates this passage as follows: The people are somewhat white, they wear apparell, and lie in beds, their weapons are bowes, they have Emeralds and other iewels, although they esteeme none so much as turqueses wherewith they adorne the walles of the porches of their houses, and their apparell and vessels, and they use them instead of money through all the Country. Their apparell is of cotton and Oxe hides, and this is their most commendable and honourable apparell. They use vessels of gold and silver, for they have no other mettall, whereof there is greater use and more abundance then in Peru, and they buy the same for turqueses in the province of the Pintados, where there are sayd to be mines of great abundance. Of other Kingdoms I could not obtain so particular instruction. Divers times I was tempted to goe thither . . .

two days' march and went with them till we had passed the desert and arrived at their home. Here I was not made welcome as previously, because the men as well as the women indulged in much weeping for the persons killed at Cibola. Without tarrying I hastened in fear from that people and that valley. The first day I went ten leagues, then I went eight and again ten leagues, without stopping till I had passed the second desert.

On my return, although I was not without fear, I determined to approach the open tract,⁹ situated at the end of the mountain ranges, of which I said above (page 5) that I had some account. As I came near, I was informed that it is peopled for many days' journey towards the east, but I dared not enter it, because it seemed to me that we must go to colonize and to rule that other country of the seven cities and the kingdoms I have spoken of, and that then one could see it better. So I forebore to risk my person and left it alone to given an account of what I had seen. However, I saw, from the mouth of the tract seven moderate-sized towns at some distance, and further a very fresh valley of very good land,¹⁰ whence rose much smoke.¹¹ I was informed that there is much gold in it and that the natives of it deal in vessels and jewels for the ears and little plates with which they scrape themselves to relieve themselves of sweat, and that these people will not consent to trade with those of the other part of the valley; but I was not able to learn the cause for this. Here I placed two crosses and took possession of all this plain and valley in the same manner as I had done with the other possessions, according to my instructions. From there I continued my return journey, with all the haste I could, till I arrived at the town of San Miguel, in the province of Culiacan, expecting to find there Francisco Vazquez de Coro-

9. "Abra."

10. Here Ternaux-Compans inserts: "et une tres jolie ville," which brings down upon him a severe criticism from Bandelier.

11. Hakluyt says: "out of which ran many rivers." This is his own mistranslation, as Ramusio writes "fumos."

nado, governor of New Galicia. As I did not find him there, I continued my journey to the city of Compostella, where I found him. From there I immediately wrote word of my coming to the most illustrious lord, the viceroy of New Spain, and to our father provincial, Friar Antonio of Ciudad-Rodrigo, asking him to send me orders what to do.

I omit here many particulars which are not pertinent; I simply tell what I saw and what was told me concerning the countries where I went and those of which I was given information, in order to make a report to our father provincial, that he may show it to the father of our order, who may advise him, or to the council of the order, at whose command I went, that they may give it to the most illustrious lord, the viceroy of New Spain, at whose request they sent me on this journey.—*Fray Marcos de Niza, vice comisarius.*

ATTESTATIONS

I, Friar Antonio of Ciudad-Rodrigo, religious of the order of the Minorites and minister provincial for the time being of the province of the Holy Evangel of this New Spain, declare that it is true that I sent Fray Marcos de Niza, priest, friar, presbyter and religious, and in all virtue and religion so esteemed that, by me and my brethren of the governing board who take counsel together in all arduous and difficult matters, he was approved and held as fit and able to make this journey and discovery, as well for the aforesaid character of his person, as for being learned, not only in theology, but also in cosmography and navigation. When it had been considered and decided that he should go, he departed with a companion, a lay-brother named Friar Honoratus, by the command of the lord Don Antonio de Mendoza, viceroy of this said New Spain. His lordship gave him all the furnishings and equipment necessary for the said journey and exploration. His instructions which are here written, which I saw and which his lordship communicated to me, asking my advice thereon,

were given, as they appeared to me good, to the said Fray Marcos, by the hand of Francisco Vazquez de Coronado. He duly received them and executed them faithfully, as in fact has appeared. And as the above is the truth and there is no mis-statement in it, I have written this faithful testimony and signed it with my name. --Executed in Mexico, on the twenty-sixth¹² day of August, in the year one thousand five hundred and thirty-nine.—*Fra. Antonio de Ciudad-Rodrigo, minister provincial.*

In the great city of Temixtitan, Mexico of New Spain, on the second day of the month of September, in the year of the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ one thousand five hundred and thirty-nine, before the very illustrious lord Don Antonio de Mendoza, viceroy and governor for H. M. in this New Spain, president of the *audiencia* and royal chancery, residing in the said city, and being present the very magnificent lords, the learned judge Francisco de Ceños, *oidor* for H. M. in the said royal *audiencia*, and Francisco Vazquez de Coronado, governor for H. M. in the province of New Galicia, and in the presence of us, Juan Baeza de Herrera, chief secretary of the said royal *audiencia* and of the government of the said New Spain, and Antonio de Turcios, secretary to Their Majesties and of the said royal *audiencia*, appeared the very reverend father Fray Marcos de Niza, vice-commissary in these parts of the Indies of the Ocean,¹³ of the order of San Francisco, and presented before their lordships and before us the said secretaries and witnesses the appended writings, these instructions and this relation signed with his name and sealed with the general seal of the Indies, the which have nine leaves, including this in which go our signatures; and he said, affirmed and certified to be true the content of the said instructions and relation and that what is contained therein occurred, in order that H. M. may be informed of

12. Ternaux-Compans gives the 27th.

13. "Las Indias del mar Océano."

the truth of that which is made mention of therein. And their lordships ordered us the said secretaries, that, as the said vice-commissary presented it and declared it to be such, we attest the same at the foot thereof and that we declare it for truth, signed with our signatures.—Witnesses present: the above-named, and Almaguer¹⁴ and Friar Martin of Ozocastro, religious of the same order.

In faith whereof, I the said Juan Baeza, the above-named secretary, affix here this my seal, thus in testimony of truth.



—*Juan Baeza de Herrera.*

And I the said Antonio de Turcios, the above-named secretary, who was present at what is here said, affix here this my seal, in testimony of truth.



—*Antonio de Turcios.*

CONTRIBUTORS

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14. Ternaux-Compans gives "Antonio of Almaguez."