

story of many convents in Mexico, would be of interest largely to the inhabitants of Querétaro.

SISTER MARY CONSUELA
Immaculata College

Ki: El drama de un pueblo y de una planta. 2nd ed. By FERNANDO BENÍTEZ. México, Buenos Aires, 1962. Fondo de Cultura Económica. Vida y Pensamiento de México. Illustrations. Index. Pp. 243. Paper.

Fernando Benítez here brings up to date his vivid and perceptive account of the henequen industry of Yucatán, first published in 1956 (see *HAHR*, XXXVII, pp. 525-526). To that scholarly study of the historical development of henequen (*ki* in Mayan) in southeastern Mexico and the effects of the Mexican Revolution on the industry and its workers, Benítez now adds an enlightening interview with Lázaro Cárdenas, under whose administration the agrarian reform was seriously launched in Yucatán, and a final chapter analyzing the past six years. Essentially, he writes, the situation has not changed since 1956. Admitting that the Revolution has still failed to relieve the misery of the henequen workers, Benítez notes with cautious optimism the agrarian reform measures that López Mateos has promoted in Yucatán, the most comprehensive and far-reaching program since Cárdenas. But he also notes that the main beneficiaries of the peasants' labor continue to be corrupt politicians and the old landholders, who control the processing machinery for the fiber. Benítez concludes that agrarian reform cannot become truly efficient or beneficial to the peasants and the region in general until it is accompanied by moral reform and until the *ejidos* include all aspects of production.

This work is essential to an accurate understanding of the history and present condition of Yucatán. The addition of the new material in this second edition increases its usefulness.

RALPH L. WOODWARD, JR.
University of North Carolina

The Dance of the Conquest of Guatemala. By BARBARA BODE. New Orleans, 1961. Tulane University. Middle American Research Institute. Appendices. Maps. Illustrations. Bibliography. Pp. 95. Paper.

This welcome monograph contains the 1872 text of an anonymous 19th-century dance-drama telling how Pedro de Alvarado conquered Quetzaltenango in 1524. One of the two indigenous leaders—Tecum Umam—prefers death to defeat, but the other—the Quiché king Quecab (an anachronism, since he reigned c. 1470)—prefers to accept Christianity. The latter's instant conversion supplies the happy ending to a "folk" drama that for at least a century has made the rounds of Guatemalan church plazas on titular saints' days.

Each of the players rents his costume and mask for about \$15 from a *morería*, pays a maestro some \$2 for eight rehearsals, and spends approximately \$5 for liquor, incense, and other offerings to insure a successful performance. The music, as transcribed by Jacinto Amezcuita in March, 1957, consists of 21 *sones* in A flat major for *chirimía* (shawm) and drum. European influence betrays itself throughout in the symmetrical phrases and the implied tonic-dominant seventh harmony.

A grant from Tulane University made possible the summer's field work in Guatemala (1957) from which the present excellent study emerged. Professor John E. Englekirk served as faculty advisor. Even if priests nowadays leave this dance-drama alone, the dogma in Quecab's dream that precedes his conversion (page 262), the biblical and classical allusions (page 225), and the *palabras cultas* such as *esquivo*, *maña auxiliar*, *figas* (note 34) forbid our supposing that the *Conquista* text welled up spontaneously from the unlettered folk. Its best days are now past: "Como la gente se va civilizando, ya no creen que estos bailes sean necesarios" (page 238).

ROBERT STEVENSON
University of California,
Los Angeles