and defense of republicanism. The title itself is illustrative of an indigenismo emerging simultaneously with the development of early Mexican nationalism. Almost every page contains memorable quotes that can be used as pedagogical tools to illuminate the political tenor of the times. Was it acute perception or naïveté that occasioned: “Paísansos mios el fanal de los Estados Unidos está delante de nosotros para conducirnos al puerto de la felicidad?” Few would dispute the nicely turned phrase: “Año de 1820, último del despotismo y primero de los mismo.” The Ayuntamiento de Monterrey is to be congratulated for selecting this interesting work for a new edition.

M.C.M.


Author Fernández proposes to secure for Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca his rightful place in Spanish colonial letters. Even if one concludes that Cabeza de Vaca is a forgotten chronicler, this book adds little to the existing critical literature on La Relación or to biographical sketches of the wandering conquistador. Relying upon a 1906 edition of La Relación and almost entirely on secondary sources, Fernández has compiled a sketchy commentary on selective passages from La Relación interspersed with anecdotal data on Cabeza de Vaca and other Spanish conquerors. One wonders why he did not include a good map of the famous odyssey. The uncritical characterization of Cabeza de Vaca as “the soul of generosity and kindness” or “temporary savior to the oppressed” is unconvincing. More conclusive evidence than Fernández provides would be required to prove that Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca was above all motivated by a desire to render love and justice to the Indians. Finally, the brief discussion of the literary merits of La Relación falls considerably short of fulfilling the author’s purpose.

S.M.D.


This is the fourth volume in the Encuesta Política: Mexico Series resulting from conferences held in 1970–71 at the University of Texas, Austin, to study the Mexican political system. Lic. Miguel Alemán, the controversial president of Mexico from 1946–1952, chose the question-and-answer form for his presentation. This book presents the questions by the participants, basically University of Texas professors and a few outsiders including Daniel Cosio Villegas, and the answers by Alemán. It is divided into four parts: the history of the Mexican political system, the structure and functioning of the system, current problems and future perspectives.

This is not a book about Alemán, nor his period as president, rather it is about his views of the Mexican political system. It does provide, however, some glimpses