

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 naiveté that occasioned: "Paisanos míos 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.

Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca: The Forgotten Chronicler. By JOSÉ B. FERNÁNDEZ. Miami, 1975. Ediciones Universal. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 144. Paper.

Author Fernández proposes to secure for Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca his rightful place in Spanish colonial letters. Even if one concedes 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.

Miguel Alemán contesta. By MIGUEL ALEMÁN VALDÉS. Preface by STANLEY R. ROSS. Austin, Texas, 1975. The University of Texas Press. Illustrations. Pp. ix, 54. Paper. \$2.95.

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 Cosío 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

of his administration's resolution of political and economic problems. Alemán is a strong defender of the system. The most useful chapter is that in which he interprets its functioning structure. His answers to questions on current and future problems are sometimes evasive and tend to adhere to the government's position.

This book should be read by students of the Mexican political system. Although they will find little new, it does provide insight through Alemán's interpretation. Unfortunately, the Spanish text will limit readership.

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JERRY LADMAN

Massacre in Mexico. By ELENA PONIATOWSKA. Translated by HELEN R. LANE. Introduction by OCTAVIO PAZ. New York, 1975. Viking Press. Illustrations. Pp. xvii, 333. Cloth. \$12.50.

Massacre in Mexico is a moving account of the student movement of 1968 and its tragic culmination at the Plaza of the Three Cultures of the Tlatelolco housing complex on October 2 when Army units and police killed many students and on-lookers and wounded and imprisoned several thousand persons. Poniatowska, a Mexican novelist and journalist, permits the hundreds of students and others whom she interviewed to tell the story of the student movement and its early high hopes, public reactions both adverse and favorable, the growing confrontations with public authority leading to the violation of university autonomy, arrests, and some killings, and finally the *noche triste* of Tlatelolco with a death toll estimated by sources at more than 300. Although some of the interviews are anti-student, the bulk of the material points to a pro-student bias by the author; and the reader of Part 2, "The Night of Tlatelolco," is likely to find himself in profound sympathy with the students and other victims of the massacre.

The reviewer can only guess at why the government created a situation whose outcome was tragedy. Perhaps it was fearful of revolution, angry at the insults to the President, traditionally above direct, personal criticism, and, despite student disclaimers, afraid of student interference with the Olympic games. The tragedy may have had some positive results. The reviewer hypothesizes that President Echeverría's encouragement of public discussion and dialogue—the students repeatedly called for a dialogue with President Díaz Ordaz—and his greater responsiveness to worker and campesino problems may represent an effort to purge a sense of guilt resulting from his participation in the events of 1968, at least in a formal sense, as the Secretary of Internal Affairs.

University of Arizona

PAUL KELSO

Laredo and the Rio Grande Frontier. By J. B. WILKINSON. Austin, 1975. Jenkins Publishing Co. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 456. Cloth. \$14.95.

After an illustrious career as a Houston advertising executive, J. B. Wilkinson spent the last years of his life researching and writing this narrative history of