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***La Relación o Naufragios de Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca* edited
by Martin A. Favata and José B. Fernández**

Paul E. Hoffmann
Louisiana State University

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BOOK REVIEWS

La Relación o Naufragios de Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, Eds. Martin A. Favata and José B. Fernández. Potomac, Maryland. Scripta Humanistica, vol. 21. 1986. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xix, 172. Cloth. \$27.50.

Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca was one of the premier story tellers of the mid-sixteenth century. His first “best seller” was the tale of his wanderings in Texas and Northern Mexico from 1529 to 1536. This “romance,” as some recent critics have called it, saw print in 1542. It was followed by a second account, this time of his adventures in the Rio de la Plata, to which he went as governor from 1540 to 1545. This second story was printed along with the first, somewhat corrected, in 1555.

This edition of the Spanish text of Cabeza de Vaca’s “Florida” story is based on the 1555 edition, with passages that vary from that text in the 1542 edition printed in italics. An appendix lists the readings of the two texts in parallel columns for readers curious to see how Cabeza, or his printer, changed the text. In the majority of cases, the changes are unimportant, serving more to clarify than to change meaning.

Besides indicating the differences between the texts, the editors (in their introduction) provide a handy summary of the various editions of Cabeza de Vaca’s tale, and they interject occasional notes to explain what they take to be obscure points in the text. In addition, they have modernized the spelling, a liberty that some purists will find objectionable but that the average reader of modern Spanish will welcome.

The lack of any additional critical apparatus in the form of a more extended commentary on the text, or even a bibliography of selected works about Cabeza de Vaca and his wanderings, makes this work less useful than it might have been for both specialist and novice. For example, readers of this journal will no doubt want to know the state of scholarly opinion on where Cabeza and his fellow conquistadores landed on the west coast of Florida. However, that form of presentation apparently is not what the series seeks to achieve, and so this text omits all but the most necessary of scholarly apparatus.

In sum, this is a fine reproduction of the texts of both editions of Cabeza’s tale, with minimal scholarly apparatus. Persons reading Spanish will want to add this volume to their Floridiana libraries.

Paul E. Hoffman

Afro-Cubans in Ybor City: A Centennial History. By Susan D. Greenbaum. Tampa. 1986. Tampa Printing. Photographs. Notes. Pp. 37. Paper. \$4.00