

ples, there have also been attractions, and that many forces and influences in the modern world, partly ideological and partly technological, are moving in the direction of "the effective synthesis of various cultures."

Professor Urbanski's study, as noted, is primarily oriented toward what he calls an analysis of the civilizations of Angloamerica and Hispanoamerica. It is more extensive, detailed, and systematic than the study of Professor del Río and is more descriptive than analytical. It does not have a central theme but examines specific aspects of society in North America as compared with the same structures, ideas, and institutions of Latin America. He considers, among other topics, problems of the Negro and the aborigines of the two areas, education, and economic and religious influences. Although he has studied and traveled widely in Latin America and understands the variations among Latin American states, he treats the area as a whole. Sometimes he falls into stereotypes of analysis even though he is aware of this danger. In general the work is informative and objective and is an important addition to a growing field of knowledge.

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*The Church and the Latin American Revolution.* By FRANÇOIS HOUTART and EMILE PIN. Translated by GILBERT BARTH. New York, 1965. Sheed and Ward, Inc. Appendices. Pp. 264. \$5.95.

Change, persistent and fundamental change, forms the basis for this perceptive and informative study of the Church in contemporary Latin America. Developed from a sociological viewpoint, the authors—both priests active in the current "renewal" of the Latin American Church—trace the historical background from which has emerged the present societal formlessness of values and attitudes. In examining traditional Latin American institutions—the hacienda, those stemming from restrictive commercial and mining patterns, and those created by a centralized administrative bureaucracy—and their inability to adjust to change imposed by later nineteenth and twentieth century forces, they regard the revolutionary nature of today's Latin America as a necessary consequence. The need for the Church, then, is to accept the fact that traditional values have no relevance to the contemporary world. The Church, if it is to exert a positive influence, must become an "element of cultural and social dynamism" (p. 69).

In examining the changing political, economic, and social structural patterns the authors frame their conditions for the reintegra-

tion of the resulting marginal masses. While they attribute social change largely to exogenous pressures from more mature technical societies, they find that the impact has ended the traditional two-class system. The marginal masses, caught between differing sets of values, reflect the "cultural disequilibrium" in their rootlessness and their search for new norms. It is clear, then, that efforts to retain traditional values are doomed to failure, and that the principal task is to accept change.

The problem becomes not one of reform but of channeling what revolution has wrought into constructive areas. While the authors are not pessimists, their sober assessment of the West's present inability to distinguish between a "just evaluation of man" and the "enrichment of private interest groups" (p. 90) makes for reflective reading. It has been the failure of the West to provide a systematic and coherent definition of its way of life which has given the Marxian alternative with its clear and stated objectives strong advantages in shaping the goals of transitional societies. For the authors, Latin America must gain national control over her economy and deal realistically with the problem of agrarian reform, if only to shape constructively social attitudes.

Revolution has broken open the social order and confronted the marginal masses with the dying, traditional elite in ways not previously possible. Alerted public opinion and revolutionary ideology complementary to nationalism and tinged with universal pretensions have ended the old, privileged order with its bureaucratic, governmental apparatus. It is interesting to observe the negative image of the United States in all of this, for the American blurring of economic and political objectives limits its role in directing revolutionary forces or identifying with the ideal future in Latin America.

The disintegration of traditional society in Latin America has affected all groups and institutions. The authors note the socio-cultural changes and their impact, from the family with its patriarchal base no longer viable to the Church with the ending of its "traditional channels through which culture has been transmitted" (p. 72). Yet, it is the Church which remains the focus of this study. And herein lies the book's greatest value. Aided by statistics and thoughtful assessments of the religious nature of Latin American society, the authors make clear the general failure of the Church in the past to fulfill its mission. Their study of the contemporary Church, with its new and at times contradictory currents, seems realistic. While they suggest a messianic future for the Church, they conclude that it can

be accomplished only through a spiritual renewal of Catholicism, along lines of Chilean Christian Democracy. Necessary preconditions for the Church's renewal include increasing the number of the religious, greater participation of the laity, and developing alternatives to the existing ineffectual parish organization. Even here the Church's obligation transcends the spiritual, for the authors justify its role in Latin America only if it is predicated upon a dynamic social action. The assessment of the Church is one of cautious concern; it is of substance and value to the reader.

For the Latin Americanist, sorely besieged by "crisis" books and journalistic accounts of revolutionary Latin America, this study provides a brief respite. Clearly written and ably translated, it is a thoughtful and provocative evaluation of change in Latin America, its origins and course of development. Its stress upon the religious nature of Latin America provides an insight into a relatively limited area of contemporary Latin American writing. In the words of the authors, from pre-Columbian times "the society and culture of Latin America have been impregnated with religious values and to ignore this fact deliberately would be to throw away a most valuable key to the understanding of the continent" (p. 76).

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*The Law of the Americas. An Introduction to the Legal Systems of the American Republics.* By HENRY P. DE VRIES and JOSÉ RODRÍGUEZ-NOVÁS. Dobbs Ferry, N. Y., 1965. Oceana Publications, Inc. for the Parker School of Foreign and Comparative Law and the Inter-American Law Center, Columbia University. Tables. Appendices. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 339. \$15.00.

This is an excellent book but a surprising one in that there seems to be considerable discrepancy between title and contents. If the main title means "The Law of the American System," it is correctly descriptive, and the book is invaluable both as a historical review and as an analysis of the present network of treaties and international organizations that link the American republics with each other. But the subtitle, "An Introduction to the Legal Systems of the American Republics," led this reviewer to hope that here at last was the textbook we have all been wanting for our courses in Latin American law. It is not; the conclusion of the authors is that "The reader who plans to continue more specialized studies in Latin American law must take into account that beyond the point of generalization reached herein, the law in each country in the area must be