

Those on the coasts are happy, amusing, and back-biting. Finally, southerners are thought to be hospitable, happy, and clean.

The main audience envisioned for this little volume is quite obviously students. More sophisticated readers will be less satisfied with Miss Rodríguez' orientation and interpretation than they are with her data, although she writes interestingly and well. We are provided with a short and rather seriously dated sketch of the social psychology of stereotypes, followed a lengthy discussion of elementary statistical method. The data themselves are interpreted within the context of a fairly extensive review of the existing literature by Mexican writers on the national character; most often cited are Gómez Robleda (the author's favorite), Ramos, Paz, and Iturriaga. In the end the paradoxes and complexities of the problem remain—illuminated, shall we say, but perhaps not fundamentally elucidated. With this conclusion Miss Rodríguez would doubtlessly be the first to agree.

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*Aspectos económicos del Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social.* By LUCILA LEAL DE ARAUJO. México, 1966. Cuadernos Americanos. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Pp. 221. Paper.

This study of the Mexican Institute of Social Insurance (I.M.S.S.) analyzes the first twenty years (1944-1963) of operation of the organization. Its chief contribution rests in the large body of data and descriptive material on the operations of the I.M.S.S. that have been drawn together. Mrs. Araujo is more to be commended for amassing these statistics than criticized for not analyzing them to a greater extent. Occasionally she has glossed over apparent evidence of policy inconsistent with the stated objectives of I.M.S.S.—for instance, the extremely low relative investment in fixed assets per insured worker in the state of Nuevo León, where Mexico's third most populous city, Monterrey, is located. Also she has failed to recognize the limitations of certain data. An example of the latter is the reliance on revenue actually received for the calculation of the rate of return on the investments of the I.M.S.S. (pp. 165, 170, 171). The investments of the I.M.S.S. would not appear so unprofitable if one were to compute the rate of return on the hospitals and administrative buildings owned by the I.M.S.S.

The author argues that institutional rigidities have weakened the I.M.S.S. and suggests that new dynamism can be implanted in the organization through a greater amount of decentralization of control

and through modification of both its organic law and statutes. Simultaneously she urges reduction of the autonomy of the I.M.S.S. in determining its own investment policy, which she feels should be more closely aligned with the objectives of national economic planning. The conclusions and recommendations are frequently not linked analytically with the descriptive material presented, but seem rather to be based on Mrs. Araujo's twelve-year experience as a technical advisor to the I.M.S.S.

An interesting observation of the study, which warrants further detailed analysis, is that there is an inequitable redistribution of income from the tax paying, poor majority to the urban, insured minority. This occurs as a consequence of the contribution of the Mexican government to the support of the programs of the I.M.S.S (p. 111). (In 1963 less than one-sixth of the Mexican population was covered by the programs of the I.M.S.S.)

This book is most likely to be of value to those interested in the organization of social welfare programs in Latin America. Certainly for anyone desiring to study the Mexican programs this book is an indispensable starting point. Mrs. Araujo has not only painstakingly assembled key statistics on the I.M.S.S. for the use of future researchers, but she has also outlined a number of issues on which additional research is desirable.

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*The Financial Sector and Economic Development. The Mexican Case.*

By ROBERT L. BENNETT. Baltimore, 1965. Johns Hopkins Press. Tables. Appendix. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xiii, 210. \$6.95.

Students of recent Latin American history may find Bennett's study useful in understanding certain aspects of Mexico's impressive economic growth since World War II. In essence he applies the Gurley-Shaw theory of finance to an imposing array of statistical evidence (seventeen tables in the text and thirty-three more in the appendix) for the years, 1945-1959. The author believes that Mexico's bold and imaginative use of the financial sector has helped to bring about the far-reaching structural changes which have transformed "a relatively stagnant agricultural economy to one of rapid and self-sustaining economic development" (p. 5).

Bennett's initial chapter ("Financial Intermediary Activities and Economic Development") can best be appreciated by readers familiar with economic theory and econometrics. No mention is made of Mexico until the closing paragraphs. The preceding thirty-two pages discuss