

of the century, victims of the process of economic change (was it development?), and no longer meaningful figures in the national social fabric. On the stage these changes were reflected in the production of such plays as *Calandria* (1896) by Martiniano Leguizamón and Martín Coronado's *La piedra de escándalo* (1902), that were more subtle portrayals of Argentine rural life.

Unfortunately, the book is dull. It is too detailed and too long, the constant plot summaries of obscure plays too repetitive and uninteresting. For the cultural and social historian the study is not very helpful. For example, there is little on that remarkable Podestá family so central to the theater of that epoch, nothing on how the theater operated, who paid the salaries, how high or low they were, or who went to the theater. One can only conjecture about the relationships between the social, political, and economic forces of turn-of-the-century Argentina and the changes in the style of drama they produced. Although it was not the purpose of Bosch to address himself to these questions, I offer this comment to the historian who might pick up this volume in hope of finding something that is not there.

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Development Problems in Latin America. An Analysis by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America. Foreword by CARLOS QUINTANA. Austin, 1970. University of Texas Press for the Institute of Latin American Studies. Notes. Appendix. Index. Pp. xlviii, 318. \$8.50.

This collection from the general analytical work published during its first 20 years (1948-67) by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), was originally issued in 1968 as an ECLA document (E/CN/112/AC.61/10); a preface by Carlos Quintana, the Commission's present head, has been added which concisely places the book in its context, i.e., that of the special problems of the less developed world's most advanced region.

Part One on external aspects of Latin America's development includes chapters on the need to overcome the traditional division of labor between manufacturing "center" (developed) and primary producing "periphery" (less developed countries—LDCs); industrial development via import substitution, and its limits; regional integration as an alternative industrialization strategy; world trade policy and trade between developed and developing countries; and foreign finance, foreign direct investment, and development.

The second part on internal problems deals with the need for

planning; the nature of inflation in Latin America (which might also have been placed in Part One) and social problems. The final section presents an over-all view of development problems. The appendix contains a listing of ECLA publications during the period covered by the book.

There are a few minor printing errors and the language at times contains hispanicisms, though it is always clear. The wide audience to which ECLA's work is addressed explains the sometimes non-technical character of the exposition.

Few would disagree with ECLA's general message: the need for Latin America, or, indeed, for LDCs in general, to pursue an active, social as well as economic development policy. Similar agreement cannot be expected for many of ECLA's particular propositions or, more exactly, emphases. Especially, but not only, in the earlier studies the undoubted difficulties posed by external and structural factors are over-rated, the effectiveness of the market mechanism under-rated, and the need for "programming" overstressed (this view may benefit from hindsight). Thus: (i) ECLA rightly emphasizes the need for import substitution policies, because of the low income elasticity deriving from demand for primary products and because of the protective policies of the industrialized countries. But ECLA under-rates the extent to which developing countries' export performance is affected by their domestic policies. The importance of this factor is demonstrated by rapid export growth in the late 1960s when numerous developing countries, in Latin America and elsewhere, simultaneously began to engage in export promotion policies. (ii) The explanation of inflation is in considerable part in terms of export instability due to structural factors and of the choice between inflation and unemployment that falling export revenues may pose. But this was not the main cause of inflation, and, in any case, greater reserves—which LDCs are now accumulating rapidly—can moderate, if not remove, the dilemma. (iii) The use of excessively capital intensive equipment in relation to developing countries' factor proportions is related to lack of an appropriate technology rather than to exchange rate overvaluation and inappropriate interest and wage policies.

The points just made must not obscure ECLA's great merits. Its influence has been multifold and its first head, Raúl Prebisch, deserves much credit for it. The stimulus it has brought to systematic economic and statistical research in Latin America has been important; at the outset of its existence, ECLA was almost alone in this field. In addition to its general analytical work and country studies, it has produced valuable industry analyses. It has, moreover, directly prevailed upon

governments to apply some of its ideas, e.g., the Central American Common Market and the Latin American Free Trade Area.

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Growth, Equality, and the Mexican Experience. By MORRIS SINGER. Austin, 1970. University of Texas Press for the Institute of Latin American Studies. Latin American Monographs, 16. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. x, 341. \$8.50.

The author, an economist, hopes to “throw . . . light on the relationships between growth and the several components of equality” in post-Revolutionary (especially 1939-1961) Mexico. He accepts the difficulties of the enterprise, and conceives of it as a tentative essay. General economic theory is applied to Mexican development experience. The bulk of the book deals with income distribution, taxation, savings, consumption, inflation, with lesser space on government expenditures on education and social welfare. Although much of the data is of interest primarily to specialists in finance, there are convenient reviews of data found in other studies that will be useful for reference purposes to economic historians generally. There is little new in these summaries. Singer’s cautions on simplistic interpretations of economic data by the untrained are useful.

In chapter 9 the author argues that although more expenditures for education and welfare would have reduced investment, there “probably” would have been a net gain to economic development, and he bases his stand in part on the history of savings propensities in Mexico. If this is not entirely convincing, at least it is founded on some sort of data rather than on hope and divination. Singer is moderately convinced in this connection—as in others—that the policies he advocates would have improved the good growth record of Mexico. He does state many caveats, understands the difficulties of being sure of such suggestions, and—no doubt unintentionally—succeeds in convincing this reviewer that Mexico’s *políticos* did about all that could have been expected of them in estimating investors’ reactions.

Chapter 10, on “Political Democracy and Economic Development,” scarcely deals with either political concepts or Mexico’s political experience. It fails to integrate politico-social matters into the economic development themes and data of the study. Singer finds the political system “highly adequate for the tasks of economic development,” and repudiates Raymond Vernon’s notion that power in Mexico is too diffused to permit effective development action by government. Chapter 11, entitled “Conclusion: Income Distribution and Demand in