

This book is the best synopsis available today of liberation theology in Latin America. It is a carefully documented development of the theology of liberation in all of Latin America (among Protestants and Roman Catholics), as well as in Europe and North America. It is well written, with frequent chapter summations, and the terms of liberation theology are fully explained. This book is invaluable for those interested in theology and religion, Marxism, the history of ideas, and Latin America. One can only hope that it will soon be issued in English translation.

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Development Strategies and Basic Needs in Latin America: Challenges for the 1980s. Edited by CLAES BRUNDENIUS and MATS LUNDAHL. Foreword by JON SIGURDSON. Boulder: Westview Press, 1982. Tables. Figures. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xii, 180. Cloth. \$17.50.

Through economic growth every Latin American nation but Haiti has attained the status of "middle income country" in the classification of the United Nations. As the editors of this volume point out in their introduction, however, the World Bank estimates that more than 100 million people in this area are living in absolute poverty. The realization that growth does not inevitably eliminate poverty has been associated with the emergence of the basic-needs approach to development.

In his chapter of this book, Paul Streeten places this emergence in its context within the history of development thought, where the focus was first on growth, next on employment, and then on income distribution. In an essay suitable for reading lists for graduate courses, Streeten explains why he considers the basic-needs idea superior to these earlier perspectives. It stresses the objective of development rather than means to this objective, and it is a more positive concept than reducing poverty or unemployment. Moreover, it moves from abstractions, such as money and income distribution, to specifics, such as water supply, increasing its appeal to potential donors.

Frances Stewart, relating the basic-needs concept to the new international order, is more pessimistic than Streeten about the practical consequences of this new emphasis. Stewart thinks it is being used as an excuse for reducing the quantity of aid, with donors claiming they can find few satisfactory basic-needs projects. Javier Iguíñiz, in an essay on Peru, is also critical. He urges avoidance of a "common tendency" within the basic-needs strategy to divide society into the poor and the nonpoor.

This, he writes, sunders the ties between two groups of workers, the organized and the unorganized, who must unite to confront large-scale capitalism if any meaningful redistribution is to be achieved. Not sharing Streeten's optimism about the appeal of the basic-needs approach to the charitable impulses of the well-to-do, Iguíñiz argues that the poor of Peru will secure a decent standard of living only if they obtain the power to force the state to take over large enterprises and apply their profits toward social goals.

One of the editors, Claes Brundenius, furnishes an insightful sketch of the progress of the Castro government in meeting basic needs. He states that "Cuba has done fairly well with respect to food and beverages, very well in health, and extremely well in education . . . but has a rather poor record in regard to clothing and housing" (p. 149). He interprets the experience of Cuba as showing that economic growth and meeting basic needs are compatible.

Brundenius, especially impressed by the success of the Castro government in redistributing income, presents tables according to which the real income of the bottom quintile rose 715 percent between 1953 and 1973, while the Gini coefficient plunged from 0.56 to 0.28. Readers familiar with the scarcity of income data from Cuba may be puzzled by his ability to calculate such measures, and rightly so. These tables are from a 1979 paper of his in *Cuban Studies* (vol. 9, no. 2) in which he constructs deciles for 1973 by assuming that workers in each sector are equally divided among four groups: those receiving 40 percent, 80 percent, 120 percent, and 160 percent, respectively, of the average sectorial wage. For all countries, efforts to find out the distribution of income are plagued by difficulties. Even so, Brundenius's figures do not warrant the display he gives them in parallel tables with well-known census- and survey-based data for Brazil and Peru. I hope the cachet given these numbers by their publication in *World Development* (where this essay also appears, 1981, pp. 1083–1096) will not mislead researchers without easy access to *Cuban Studies* into using them inappropriately.

Despite the weakness of his data, Brundenius is very likely correct that the distribution of income has improved in Cuba. Furthermore, output grew in the early 1970s at rates comparable to the pace of the Brazilian "economic miracle" of 1968–73. Pedro Malan, in his contribution to this collection, attributes this spurt in Brazil to cyclical recovery of capacity utilization coupled with unusually favorable export opportunities. A similar explanation is plausible for Cuba.

Mats Lundahl, the other editor of this volume, portrays the impact of population pressure on rural living standards in Haiti. Summarizing one strand of his book *Peasants and Poverty: A Study of Haiti* (New York,

1979), he shows how population growth causes desperate farmers to intensify their use of the soil in ways that cause erosion and hence lower future yields. Going beyond *Peasants and Poverty*, he gives thoughtful consideration to a small area that has escaped this vicious circle, a zone along the Dominican border where terracing, a soil-conserving method of intensive cultivation, has been adopted.

Haiti's troubles spill over into the eastern side of Hispaniola where, as noted by Rosemary Vargas, 90 percent of the labor force in the sugar industry is from Haiti, despite unemployment rates of 20 percent and more in the Dominican Republic. Both the downward pressure on rural wages by Haitian workers and a highly skewed pattern of landownership push rural Dominican youths into the cities, where many join the ranks of the unemployed.

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Latin America in its Architecture. Edited by ROBERTO SEGRE and FERNANDO KUSNETZOFF. New York: Holmes and Meier, 1981. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 216. Cloth. \$34.50.

This is not a book for those who expect pretty pictures of buildings; it is, however, a book for those interested in architecture and planning as factors in the political, socioeconomic, and cultural environment of Latin America. Eight essays, accompanied by extensive notes and references, are written by six architects, an industrial designer, and an anthropologist; all are Latin Americans, a good number born and educated in Europe, and all are members of academic establishments. Common threads link most of these essays: historical analyses and criticisms of the status quo in Latin American countries, which, as we are constantly reminded, were and are subject to colonialism, capitalism, and elitism. The book, originally published in Spanish by UNESCO, is edited by Roberto Segre, professor of history in the School of Architecture of the University of Havana. Thus, it bears a didactic imprint the reader will easily identify. Ideological issues permeate the essays; architectural style and symbolism as servants of class, colonialism, and capitalism; the conflict between imported architectural traditions and indigenous culture; participatory design versus imposed elitism; technology, social need, and the consumer society; the urban-rural conflict in development; land planning and housing as they affect the larger masses; all controversial and heady subject matter for architects as professionals and citizens. Behind some of the rhetoric one can discern cries of frustration and alienation.