

Caliban and Other Essays. By ROBERTO FERNÁNDEZ RETAMAR. Translated by EDWARD BAKER. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989. Notes. Index. xvi, 139 pp. Paper. \$14.95.

In the sixties, when the title essay of this collection appeared, it expressed the combative, self-assertive, and independent spirit spearheaded in Latin America by the Cuban Revolution. The author proposes Caliban as symbol of that spirit: a rebel whose island has been taken over by colonizers who wish to impose upon him alien ideas and practices. Having learned the usurper's language, Caliban now uses it to curse him and drive him away. Retamar's essay was not only an answer to José Enrique Rodó's *Ariel* (1900), the most influential essay ever written in Latin America, but also in a way a culmination of the Uruguayan's program to chart an original course for Latin American culture, one that would steer clear of U.S. influence. *Calibán* was written at the turning point: nationalism based on *Kulturgeschichte* was giving way to the Marxist-oriented revolutionary movements that followed in Latin America. This is evident in the contradictions that make up the essay, as well as in the various rewritings of it included in this volume. It is also dramatically obvious in the author's contorted efforts to revise his own intellectual and personal trajectory, which carried a man from an ordinary bourgeois, Catholic background into service as a mouthpiece for the increasingly Stalinized Cuban cultural establishment. The most enduring value of this essay as literature is that subtext involving an elaborate self-masking.

Fredric Jameson's introduction as well as the editorial apparatus of this book fail to give Retamar's essay a proper Latin American context. No mention is made of Rodó, no details are given about the polemical moment in which the essay appeared, and no secondary bibliography is furnished. Worse still is the suggestion that the arguments proposed by Retamar are original.

In spite of these serious editorial flaws and the numerous typographical errors, this volume will be useful in courses dealing with contemporary Latin American culture: it makes what is by now a "period piece" of some notoriety available for commentary and debate.

ROBERTO GONZÁLEZ-ECHEVARRÍA, Yale University

Pioneros de la banca dominicana: Una historia institucional del Banco Popular Dominicano y del Grupo Financiero Popular. By FRANK MOYA PONS. Santo Domingo: Grupo Financiero Popular, 1989. Photographs. Tables. Graphs. Appendixes. Index. 406 pp. Paper.

This is not the usual corporate anniversary publication in which financial institutions manage to discourage interest in their recent past. It is a set of interwoven histories, published by the Grupo Financiero Popular, on the twenty-fifth anniversary