

value of the book for area experts, who require fuller detail. And there is not enough depth and precision of analysis to compensate for this. The beginning student, who is not likely to have more than a few slices of information about Puerto Rico, will find it useful, though not as a reliable guide to the debatable issues of Puerto Rican nationalism. Let the reader beware; this is a highly emotional and personal analysis of a topic which has inspired much argumentation.

New York City Community College

J. ORTIZ MARÍN

Capital y desarrollo: La Venezuela agraria. Vol. I: *La etapa agraria.* By DOMINGO ALBERTO RANGEL. Caracas, 1969. Universidad Central de Venezuela. Instituto de Investigaciones Económicas y Sociales. Tables. Notes. Pp. 370. Paper.

This volume is an extremely valuable analysis of the Venezuelan economy. At the beginning a fifty-page introduction offers an excellent resume of the historical background from which that economy derived its orientation. Underdevelopment is shown to have been superimposed upon this region, a neglected segment of colonial Spain, remotely governed from Bogotá. Few people and much grassland made cattle ranching the logical development. To be sure, for centuries the Spaniards had been conditioned by the Mesta, which favored ranchers at the expense of cultivators, so that wherever they went they were sympathetic to ranching. The Conquistadores tried to find gold, but when unsuccessful they turned to farming—preferably to cattle ranching, for cattle walk to market. The early colonial towns built simple garrison towns in which soldiers lived off the products produced locally. There was not the remotest possibility of establishing an exchange economy.

The first section of the book discusses in detail the three fundamental forces operative in the economic development of the nation: the regional nuclei of development, the influence of state activity on domestic growth, and the international demand for Venezuela's products. In the body of the work, under the rubric of structure and rhythm of the economy, it is shown how the adverse factors of civil war, floods, and malaria were effective during the period from 1891 to 1920, not only in decreasing the growth rate of the population, but in pushing people out of the country into the cities. The country has paid a high price for surviving feudalism and the wars of independence—the impossibility of generating capital.

The final section of the book, dealing with capital formation in

railroads, commerce, and banking, as well as in agriculture, industry, and mining, is well documented and logically thought out. Ordinarily, when a certain stage in capitalist development has been reached, agricultural and industrial capital is applied to further production. However, in Venezuela, although agriculture acts as a kind of conveyor belt between the nation and the outside world, capital from it accumulates in the hands of urban businessmen who are more interested in distributive functions than in productive processes. (This is true also of the capital accumulated from the oil industry.) Thus in the final analysis underdevelopment is simply a subversion of the historical process.

University of Florida

RAYMOND E. CRIST

The Agricultural Development of Venezuela. By LOUIS E. HEATON. Foreword by LOWELL S. HARDIN. New York, 1969. Praeger Publishers. Praeger Special Studies in International Economics and Development. Tables. Figures. Notes. Appendices. Glossary. Pp. xxvii, 320. \$15.00.

This book is not intended for enjoyment but for use. Perhaps that is enough. Crammed with statistics, technical data, tables, and charts, it is designed as a handbook for the planner or agricultural specialist to help him develop Venezuela. The historian may find it tough going, mainly because it lacks synthesis and analytical narrative. He should not ignore it, however, particularly if he is engaged in serious research touching upon Venezuelan economic development or agrarian reform.

The strength of the book lies in the raw data compiled in over one hundred tables and figures. These give impressive evidence about the nature and complexity of the obstacles to increased agricultural production and to the improvement of rural life. The book is weak in its narrative portions, however, because Heaton is content to lead the reader from one table to the next without explaining the significance of each. The author would be more helpful if he presented his data as reference material or supporting evidence for a discussion or summary of important points. Moreover, the book lacks an index, which one might use to find answers for specific questions. For example, it is difficult to obtain a clear picture of the success or failure of agrarian reform in Venezuela. Nonetheless, while the casual or less-expert reader may have trouble, there is a great deal of profit in