

Latin American Political Thought: A Developmental Perspective. By EDWARD J. WILLIAMS. Tucson, 1974. University of Arizona Press. Comparative Government Studies, 6. Bibliography. Pp. 69. Paper. \$1.50.

This monograph surveys Latin American perceptions of their historical aspirations and problems using contemporary developmental concepts. Writing from a broad, interdisciplinary perspective, the author concludes that (a) two such concepts have dominated the past 150 years of Latin American history—cultural secularization and nation building, and (b) that *pensadores* and ideologues have contributed insightful self-analysis in enumerating constraints to development. The constraints examined include the influence of Spain and the Catholic Church, poor facilities and outdated philosophies in education, internal and foreign domination and exploitation, racism, population growth, and political alienation, as well as the military and landed aristocracy. However, the major focus is upon the existing socio-cultural value system and past failures in integrating the great mass of indigenous peoples. The author's analysis of solutions skillfully brings together discussions of general institutional responses under various monarchical governments, participatory democracies, and authoritarian regimes with treatment of such specific experiments as the collegial executive, Colombia's National Front, and corporate legislative bodies of the Christian Democrats. Most effective is his historical analysis of the move to nationalism, commencing in the re-evaluation of Spanish heritage which led to the school of *Hispanidad* and culminating in the indigenist movement.

In the interest of avoiding excessive repetition of historical facts, the author employs a problem-solution approach in contrast to the more traditional chronological methodology. Within such a framework, he discusses quite thoroughly the philosophic and ideological influences upon each problem. These influences range from early French and British thought (resulting in positivism à la Comte and Spencer and the reactionary response of idealism and anarchism) to more recent trends such as reformist Marxism, reformist Catholic thought, the modernizing military, Aprista Social Democracy, and Cepalista thought. Although the author occasionally falls into the redundancy trap he seeks to avoid, most visibly in three separate expositions of the Prebisch thesis, the approach is largely successful and the study as a whole sheds light upon the extremely complex interaction of factors in the development process.

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