

THE FUNCTION OF ACCOUNTING IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
TURKEY AS A CASE STUDY

By LEE J. SEIDLER

Frederick A. Praeger. New York, IV. Y., 1967, xx + 366 pp.

This book is based on the author's Ph. D. dissertation which he submitted to Columbia University in 1967. As indicated in the preface, Dr. Seidler has spent a year at Robert College in Istanbul as a visiting lecturer, and it is apparently during this period that he undertook the basic research on the topic.

The title of the book is promising but somewhat misleading. Promising, because the literature available in the area of so-called development accounting is negligible. Even though both the local people in the underdeveloped countries and the international economic assistance agencies have recognized the importance of the procurement of capital and its efficient utilization for rapid industrialization, little attention has hitherto been given to the potential contributions of accounting to the achievement of these objectives. Misleading, because, instead of providing a thorough analysis and evaluation of the hypothesized roles of accounting in the development process, the author has produced a book which may more appropriately be labeled as "A Treatise on Financial Accounting in Turkey." True, there are occasional references to some of the contributions of accounting to economic development, but the approach used is purely descriptive rather than being analytic and thought-provoking.

Although never clearly spelled out in the book, accounting is generally hypothesized to have three basic roles in a country's economy - whether developed or developing. They are : (1) Social Role of Accounting for the Entity; (2) Internal Role of Accounting for the Entity, and (3) Social Role of Accounting for Macro Purposes. Using the jargon more familiar to development economists, these roles may be restated as (1) Contribution of accounting to the process of capital accumulation; (2) Contribution of accounting to the efficient utiliza-

impact of the arrival of the elite group may be given as examples (pp. 197 - 201).

Some minor criticisms at knit - picking level may also be made : that Turkey might not be a secular state today if the Sultan had endorsed the National Pact seems to be unrealistic on the face of a secular trend of more than two centuries toward secularization; contention that Atatürk was concerned with the villagers as well as with the formation of intelligentsia from the very beginning misses the relative emphasis and priority on this matter; that there was little difference between the Republican People's Party and Democrat Party, and that "the only apparent distinction lay in the image that the DP had succeeded in presenting to the Turkish voter an image of a dynamic, progressive party, eager, willing and able to make Turkey a modern Western nation ..." sounds a little confusing when in fact Szyliowich himself told us that the image of modern was alien to large numbers in Erdemli.

Despite such shortcomings, we are furnished with first hand knowledge on political change in a small community-a real contribution to the Turkish political science literature which has so far been mostly "theoretical".

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