

INSTITUTIONALIZING AUTHORITARIANISM: BRAZIL SINCE 1964

RHETORIC AND REALITY IN A MILITARIZED REGIME: BRAZIL SINCE 1964. By BARRY AMES. (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Professional Papers Series No. 01-042, 1973. Pp. 55. \$2.40.)

THE BRAZILIAN MODEL: POLITICAL REPRESSIONAL AND ECONOMIC EXPANSION. CODOC (Washington, D.C.: Common Catalogue No. 2, June 1974. Pp. 72. \$2.45.)

BRAZIL SINCE 1964: MODERNIZATION UNDER A MILITARY RÉGIME. By GEORGES-ANDRÉ FIECHTER. (New York: Halstead Press, 1975. Pp. 310. \$30.00.)

AUTHORITARIAN BRAZIL: ORIGINS, POLICIES, AND FUTURE. Edited by ALFRED STEPAN (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1973. Pp. 265. \$10.00. Paper \$3.95.)

In his essay in the Stepan volume, Philippe C. Schmitter points out that the observers who called the Brazilian military's seizure of power in 1964 an act of seminal importance for the "free world" were correct, but for the wrong reasons (p. 179). In spite of the early optimism of the "they had to do it to save Brazil from Communism" school, Brazil's military rulers chose not to relinquish power once order was restored; rather, they have moved toward the institutionalization of permanent authoritarian government.

Indeed, the military regime has demonstrated a flair for crisis manipulation. Its foreign policy has been managed by skillful hands: Brazil's influence in Africa in particular and among Third World nations in general—and in terms of its own subcontinental hegemony—has grown, and it escaped potentially severe damage from the OPEC petroleum offensive. Officials maintain a decentralized but effective apparatus of repression and have not only brushed off but apparently wrung political mileage out of foreign (mostly from the Carter administration) criticism of abuses in the realm of human rights. In short, the regimes from Castelo Branco to Geisel have waged an impressive campaign to gain legitimacy through the use of sophisticated public relations devices, civic education (*civismo*), and the systematic dismemberment of political opposition, real and imagined.

The year 1964 has turned out to have been as fateful a watershed as 1889, when the monarchy was ousted by a military coup, and 1930, when Vargas came to power at the head of a civilian-military alliance and ushered in an era of authoritarianism that, in retrospect, seems relatively mild in comparison with the post-1964 version. Thomas E. Skidmore, in fact, notes that Brazil's "democratic era" from 1945 to 1964 appears through hindsight to have been merely an interlude between authoritarian regimes. By 1964 the Brazilian political elite stood polarized and divided, and the seeming threat from the Left was sufficiently grave to warrant support of the authoritarian turn (in Stepan, p. 4).

Studies of post-1964 Brazil have only started to appear. Most of them have chosen to focus either on the institutions of authoritarianism (the military, the technocracy, repression) or upon continuities or discontinuities with the past. Broader surveys on the emergence of an apolitical generation, on the quality of life, of the impact of post-1964 change on social mobility and values, remain to be written. Sources of documentation already are ample. Researchers have obtained access (with interesting results) to the Lyndon B. Johnson papers at Austin's Johnson Library; the London-based weekly newsletter *Latin America Political Report* (formerly *Latin America*) offers often astonishingly detailed and useful current information; and *The Economist* has devoted special issues to Brazil.

Brazilian government agencies have published large numbers of statistical reports, and even the annually revised civismo textbooks, required study at all educational levels, illustrate the regime's policy aims and self-perceived accomplishments: texts issued in 1977 detail the nuclear energy accord with West Germany over United States opposition and discuss Brazilian policy objectives in Africa. On the critical side, there are the documentation centers run by political exiles and/or their sympathizers: New York's NACLA; Berkeley's American Friends of Brazil; Toronto's Latin America Working Group; and the Comité Solidarité avec le Peuple Brésilien.¹

In this genre, CoDoC, based in Washington, D.C., a document coordination center on problems related to the Third World, has compiled a 72-page catalog of articles, books, and public documents, divided into two main parts, "Political Repression," and "Economic Expansion." The bibliography indexes documents from the Bertrand Russell Tribunal, The Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development (Geneva), Institut Oecuménique au Service de Développement du Peuples (Paris), and other centers whose publications are not generally known to researchers. It also covers a wide spectrum of journals from virtually every country in the Western World.

As an introduction to Brazil's institutionalized "revolutionary" regime, one of the most useful is *Authoritarian Brazil*, edited by Alfred Stepan. The book is the result of a conference in 1971 of social scientists from the United States, Europe, and Brazil, all specialists on Brazil except for Juan Linz, whose work on authoritarian regimes, in any case, nicely complements the writings of the others. Stepan's volume stands out for two reasons: its chapters were carefully selected (and edited) to provide a coherent thread of analysis, and all of its papers are of uniformly high quality.

Authoritarian Brazil considers themes as important today as they were in 1971, especially in view of the continued fragility of military-congressional relations, and the renewed stirrings of unrest among university students. On the conditions for the emergence of the authoritarian government, Skidmore's treatment of the 1964 regime as essentially an extension of the Estado Novo of the 1930s is complemented by Schmitter's view of the regime as a restored and remodeled authoritarian institution, and by Stepan and Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who stress the new transnational processes that have contributed to "associated-dependent" development.

Stepan treats the progressive professionalization of the military, which has far exceeded the traditional institutional role of caudillo armies, and which has provided a rationale for the military's new role as catalyst for internally directed national development. The lack of a revolutionary myth or a consistent, elaborately designed ideology, Stepan notes (as was the case with Vargas after 1930 and in the early 1950s), distinguishes Brazil from, say, the Mexican model, and has contributed to the lack of internal military unity (p. 65). Some Brazil-watchers, as a result, stand on the lookout for shifts within the military command, poring over promotion lists for signs of changing influence, and otherwise imitating the Kremlinologists of the 1950s seeking to discern new patterns of influence among military leaders.

Barry Ames' short study of changes within the policymaking process after the 1964 coup focuses on the nature of the post-1964 elite and its role in implementing the regime's public rhetoric. Ames concentrates on three areas—the removal of urban squatter settlements (the *favelas*), national salary levels, and revenue allocation for education. Ames assigns low grades to the technocrats who were responsible for policy: they subscribed to planning policies, but failed to consider the paternalistic class values of high officials; in consequence their programs did not succeed. Military skills, he demonstrates, are not necessarily transferable to nonmilitary problems (p. 47).

The longest and most comprehensive monograph in this package of studies of Brazil since 1964 is Georges-André Fiechter's study of modernization under the military regime. Fiechter's volume, nearly one-third of which consists of detailed backnotes, tabular data, lists of government officials, and an excellent bibliography, joins Stepan's *The Military in Politics: Changing Patterns in Brazil* (1971) and Ronald M. Schneider's *The Political System of Brazil: Emergence of a Modernizing Authoritarian Regime* (1971) as one of the more useful analyses of the subject.²

Schneider, drawing on Samuel Huntington, examines modernization against the background of social mobilization, participation, and political institutionalization, stressing the ascendant role of the expanding middle class and the relationship between civilian society and the military hierarchy.³ Stepan discusses the changing role of the officer corps, not only among the senior men but professional noncommissioned officers; he relates the increasing self-isolation of the military as that role expanded, illuminating the continuing anomaly of a military regime in Brazil lacking public support from the very groups who welcomed enthusiastically the 1964 coup.⁴

Fiechter, a Swiss, did not follow the conventional route of foreign "Brazilianists" who have written about contemporary Brazil from academic vantage-points. He is director and general manager of PULSAR S.A. in Geneva; has been head of the press and information department of the International Red Cross; secretary general of a management development institute, IMEDE; and since 1961 has been an executive in the watch industry, from which, however, he took a two-year leave of absence to write the doctoral dissertation upon which his book is based. He spent eight years in Brazil, as a student and businessman. Discussing modernization, he chooses the typology of Dankwart A.

Rustow for his frame of reference, seeing it as a process of human co-operation, an "ethically neutral" concept seeking to transform both society and men's minds (p. xii).

Fiechter pursues a balanced, even-handed approach that implicitly assumes that the ideal structure of any political system is one of democracy, and at the same time recognizes the severe problems faced by the various Brazilian governments, which led many Brazilians to stress economic goals at the expense of political openness and social welfare. Some of his observations are oversimplified: the author finds Brazil to have been united over the past 150 years both in the sense of race as well as that of national interest; he also characterizes the late 1950s as a "period of anarchy" (p. 207).

In any case, he finds the principle of authority forged since 1964 to have been one generally accepted by the nation, one still lacking equality of opportunity for its citizens. Writing in 1972, he finds the first five or six years in power to have been probably the most vulnerable period—although from today's standpoint, none of the questions of military legitimacy or of the role of political opposition has yet been resolved. The regime, he concludes, as an emanation of the middle class, seems to have set its feet firmly on the road to modernization, adopting as the first step the principle, as enumerated by General Médici to the Superior War College, that the "first goal of developing Brazilian man to his full stature is to involve everyone in the national effort" (p. 211).

One of the aspects of the historiography of recent Brazil that makes some observers uncomfortable—especially some Brazilians, for whom the term "Brazilianist" has taken on a suspicious, if not pejorative, connotation—is the fact that most of the studies that have heretofore been published are by foreigners. To be sure, the atmosphere of omniscient (if occasionally intermittent) repression imposed by the military regime, and the difficulties of access to Brazilians in sensitive areas, have handicapped Brazilian citizens who might otherwise write. The result is that most of the home-bred works on the subject of the post-1964 regime have either been journalistic in scope or safely (?) theoretical.

Among the former, the most useful include Luis Vianna Filho's *O Governo Castelo Branco*; Fernando Pereira's *Brasil Política, 1964–1975*; and the late Leoncio Basbaum's polemical fourth volume of his *História Sincera da República*, treating the period from 1961 through 1967. Of the latter, there is Edmundo Campos Coelho's *Em Busca da Identidade: Exército e Política da Sociedade Brasileira*, a sociologically oriented defense of the military "salvacionista" role originating in the fall of the monarchy and the Hermes da Fonseca-Rui Barbosa campaign of 1910; Otávio Ianni's *O Colapso do Populismo no Brasil*; and Fernando Henrique Cardoso's *Autoritarismo e Democratização*, published in 1975, arguing that not only must the "bureaucratic authoritarianism" of the regime be overcome in order to achieve democratization, but demagogic populism as well.⁵ For Cardoso, as for others, the key lies not in the return to pre-1964 structures but in the search for openings into the decision-making process, especially given the expanding role of the Brazilian state in the economic and social life of the nation.

ROBERT M. LEVINE

State University of New York at Stony Brook

NOTES

1. American Friends of Brazil, P.O. Box 2279, Station A, Berkeley, CA 94702; Latin America Working Group, Box 6300, Station A, Toronto; Comité Solidarité avec le Peuple Brésilien, Case Postale 98, 1212 Grand-Lancy, Geneva; Fronte Brasiliano d'Informazione, Via Alberica, 2 bis, 54033 Carrara, Italy.
2. See also Riordan Roett, ed., *Brazil in the Sixties* (1972); H. Jon Rosenbaum and W. G. Tyler, eds., *Contemporary Brazil: Issues in Economic and Political Development* (1972); Philippe C. Schmitter, *Interest Conflict and Political Change in Brazil* (1971).
3. See Peter Flynn, "Brazil: Authoritarianism and Class Control," *J. Lat. Amer. Stud.* 6, no. 2 (Nov. 1974):329–30.
4. See Emanuel de Kadt, in *J. Lat. Amer. Studies* 4, no. 1 (May 1972):143–44.
5. For the Brazilian view, see "Os Livros de Março," *Movimento* (18 April 1977), pp. 15–16.