

## RECENT RESEARCH ON LATIN AMERICA IN WEST GERMANY

*LATEINAMERIKA: KONTINENT IN DER KRISE.* Edited by WOLF GRABENDORFF. (Hamburg: Hoffman und Campe Verlag, 1973. Pp. 413.)

*ENTWICKLUNGSNATIONALISMUS UND KOMPRADORENPOLITIK: DIE GRÜNDUNG DER OAS UND DIE ENTWICKLUNG DER ABHÄNGIGKEIT LATEINAMERIKAS VON DEN USA.* By LOTHAR BROCK. (Meisenheim am Glan: Verlag Anton Hain, 1975. Pp. 370.)

*WISSENSCHAFTLICH-TECHNOLOGISCHE ENTWICKLUNG UND INTERNATIONALE ZUSAMMENARBEIT MIT LATEINAMERIKA.* By GERMÁN KRATOCHWIL. (Tübingen und Basel: Horst Erdmann Verlag, 1976. Pp. 175.)

Before commenting on these books, I would like to make a few general observations about West German research on Latin America. The statements will be limited to the social sciences. It is a commonplace that scientific work, though following in principle goals and methods of its own, cannot be separated from politics. With respect to this involvement, West German research on Latin America has been of two kinds during the past ten years. One trend emerged from the leftist student movement of the late sixties. It was an attempt to apply basic concepts of historical materialism to the empirical field of Latin America and focused on the persistent situation of economic and social underdevelopment, on the presumed failure of the CEPAL *desarrollista* strategy and of its complement, the Alliance for Progress, and on the special case of the Cuban revolution that seemed to contradict once more the fundamental assumption of conceiving socialist revolutions theoretically as the overthrow of advanced capitalist societies.

Research of this kind was substantially nourished by the then beginning reappraisal of Marxism among Latin American social scientists themselves. It would not be exaggerated to say that the bulk of leftist oriented publications that appeared at that time revealed a higher degree of *dependencia* than what was said and written before in Santiago, Lima, São Paulo, and Mexico City. With regard to this type of academic internationalism, some Latin American social scientists originating from Germany or Austria played an important catalyzing role. I mention particularly André Gunder Frank, Norbert Lechner, Paul Singer, Heinz Rudolf Sonntag. No wonder that the participants in this discussion, being aware of the fruitlessness of voluntaristic and individualistic action such as that demonstrated by Camilo Torres and "Ché" Guevara, finally thought they had found an immediate political expression of their views in the Chilean Unidad Popular and its legal way to socialism.

The shock of the Chilean *golpe* in 1973 made an impact also on these scholars and students in West Germany. Consequently, many of them have since reoriented their scientific interests towards other issues that do not neces-

sarily imply an overt commitment to revolutionary aims (for example, the role of the capitalist state in Latin America or the relationship between precapitalist and capitalist modes of production in rural areas). Among students even the regional interest has changed, since Africa and her liberation movements seem to be more promising subjects of sociological analysis. As a whole, the leftist trend of research on Latin America has lost a great deal of the influence on public opinion and on political discussion that it had before. The only significant exception are the Protestant and Catholic Churches, which run several development institutes and projects with access for leftist social scientists, especially for those who would otherwise be excluded—because of the “*Berufsverbot*”<sup>1</sup>—from relevant jobs in universities, schools, and the public administration.

The second trend of research on Latin America, linked with different levels of decision-making in national development agencies, is far more important—at least in terms of recognition and influence. It clearly reflects, though often in a bluntly critical manner, the economic and political interests of West Germany in Latin America and might be defined as a special kind of direct or indirect scientific counselling, especially for the Federal Government in Bonn (*Politikberatung*). This type of research has become even more important with the increasing economic power of West Germany in the last ten or fifteen years, which allows for a more visible performance in international organizations and also for a selective competition with the United States, even in highly sensitive fields. With regard to Latin America, it may suffice to mention two cases: the transfer of sophisticated nuclear technology to Brazil (which, besides its evident economic implications, might also weaken the position of the Carter administration in the present SALT talks) and the attempt to establish zones of marked political influence, especially in Venezuela and Brazil, where West German Social Democrats—via the Socialist International presided by Willy Brandt and via *Politikberatung* headed by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in Bonn, Caracas, and Rio de Janeiro—give support to models and movements that favor democratic and reformist solutions to the crisis of capitalism in Latin America.

It would be unfair, however, to subsume any kind of nonleftist social research on Latin America to direct political commitment or intervention. First, many of the publications stemming from this corner take an intermediate position between approval and criticism of the official West German or Western policy towards Latin America; second, such a subsumption would grossly misrepresent the actual impact of social science on politics, at least as a whole. The latter issue perhaps can best be illustrated by the growing influence of the natural-science-bound Federal Ministry for Research and Technology, which channels the really important transfer of knowledge to the developing countries, in competition with the social-science-bound Ministry for Economic Cooperation and its traditional programs of development aid. Beyond these more general aspects of the relationship between social sciences and politics, it should be mentioned that research on Latin America, compared with Africa or Asia, is by far the weakest in terms of financing, infrastructure, and output.

The three books here belong more or less to the second trend of research, but should be judged within the institutional context and its limiting factors just

pointed out. Grabendorff's reader, published a few months before the end of Allende and the Unidad Popular, explicitly speaks of crisis, at least in the preface, thereby referring rather to the perception of underdevelopment by Latin Americans than to underdevelopment itself. The book includes a dozen articles on different topics ranging from ideology and politics to foreign investment and international trade. Half of them were written by Latin Americans who—perhaps except for the article by Ricardo Ffrench-Davis on foreign investment—take a *dependentista* point of view. That is especially true of Marco Aurelio Garcia's and Tomas Amadeo Vasconi's introductory essay on Latin American ideologies analyzed within a frame of reference that combines theoretical elements of Marx, Althusser, Poulantzas and—hence rediscovered—Gramsci. Perhaps the most important issue is the hypothesis that the really relevant ideological patterns are not produced consciously by the dominant classes, but develop, beneath the surface of voluntaristic action, as a reflex of economic and social structures. The destruction of these patterns is considered a precondition for the revolutionary transformation of Latin America; the authors presume that this goal cannot easily be reached, though most of the ideologies prevailing at present, after the breakdown of *populismo*, have a lower degree of legitimating strength. The other articles by Latin Americans deal with political aspects of planification (Marcos Kaplan), social impacts of industrialization (Sergio Bagú), perspectives of economic integration (Felix Peña) and a critique of the *dependencia* concept (Octavio Ianni), which the author qualifies as euphemistic for the more proper term of imperialism.

As far as Latin American authors are concerned, the book certainly gives a vivid illustration of what Grabendorff meant by crisis in his preface; besides this insight into the sociological thinking of Latin American intellectuals, the articles also give evidence of the illusory expectations of the then still existing Chilean way to socialism: expectations that have now been reduced to nostalgic reminiscences. The German authors, however, take a somewhat different point of view. In my judgment, the common denominator of their articles is the underlying criticism of schematic dependency concepts, though none of them really rejects *dependencia* as a matter of fact or as a theoretical foundation of at least descriptive relevance. The point is that they all visualize *dependencia*, more than the Latin American authors, in its double sense as a concept of analysis and a slogan for struggle. The result of this endeavor is a series of statements that withhold a direct political commitment either by taking *dependentista* interpretations of ideology for ideology themselves or, more frequently, by simply introducing facts that are not compatible with the sometimes ritualized arguments. The first case is best demonstrated by the article of Hans-Jürgen Puhle on nationalism in Latin America. His major point is that this ideology, at least in its contemporary anti-imperialistic version, originates from a position of weakness that will not be overcome without effective solidarity among the Latin American nations and hence not while national rivalry and even conflicts prevail in the region. The second case is illustrated by the article of Manfred Nitsch on foreign trade and development. He shows, first, that the *dependencia* concept, compared with the CEPAL position of the early fifties (which was, *inter alia*, based

upon Raul Prebisch's assumption of the secular decline of terms of trade) is by no means a completely opposite or even new interpretative pattern; and he shows, second, that, except for two or three important export goods, there is no secular decline of terms of trade as assumed in international discussions on that topic.

The other articles fall between these two authors. Manfred Wöhlcke deals with the economic, social, and political aspects of interethnic relations, especially in Brazil, and emphasizes the transformation of class conflicts into conflicts of ethnic origin and race; Heinrich W. Krumwiede points out the progressive attitude of the Catholic Church and its official benediction of the CELAM conference in Medellín in 1968; Klaus Lindenberg gives a survey of political parties in Latin America and tries to classify them by structural and programmatic criteria; Germán Kratochwil—on whose book I will comment later—illustrates the link between development aid and the dependencia syndrome by analyzing the decisive role of Latin American elites in that kind of business; and Wolf Grabendorff, whose subject is Latin America's emancipation from the United States as a dominant "external actor" in foreign policy, examines the growing cohesion within Latin American systems of political action and the diminishing strength of inter-American relationships as represented by the OAS.

The issue of the OAS is submitted to more detailed analysis in Brock's book. This outstanding Ph.D. thesis, qualified by the West Berlin social scientist Ulrich Albrecht as *opus maxime laudabile*, questions the effectiveness of international organizations in promoting the interaction between developed and underdeveloped countries. The basic question is whether such organizations really give the "Third World" a better means of defending its resources and interests or whether they do not rather tend to stabilize the internationally institutionalized distribution of wealth and power. Brock takes the example of the OAS in order to answer the question. He argues that the OAS, whose foundation in 1948 was the result of an initiative by several Latin American countries, may well illustrate the few possibilities and narrow limits of such an *associative* conflict strategy—a term related to the fact that this strategy was to become effective in political fields that were dominated, so to speak, by an external actor being invited to become an internal one.

Brock approaches his subject on three levels. First, he discusses Galtung's "structural theory of imperialism" by comparison with different dependentista concepts and concludes that the Latin American contributions, though lacking the quality of consistent theories, seem to be a more useful tool of analysis. He makes clear his choice when moving to the second level, which gives a fully detailed historical interpretation of Latin America's integration into the modern capitalist world and of her special role in the international division of labor. This part also includes an evaluation of various attempts made by Latin America since the end of the nineteenth century to build up a polycentric political structure within the then established inter-American system and its conference diplomacy. On the third level, finally, Brock introduces structural elements of analysis, pointing at the specific function of the Latin American *compradores bourgeoisie*, which on the one hand is vitally interested in a substantial change in

the international division of labor but which on the other is unable to give this goal more than a verbal backing. This bias—Brock calls it *Reproduktionsdilemma*<sup>2</sup>—is due to the weak position of the compradores bourgeoisie characterized by the need for internal and external support all at once. Both sources of support, however, do not coincide with respect to the specific political situation of Latin America; they contradict each other and hence explain the failure of the inter-American system and of the OAS as conflict solving instruments.

The book by Kratochwil is perhaps the one that most obviously corresponds to the second trend mentioned above. Its subject is related to technology and international cooperation with Latin America, and covers theoretical and empirical aspects as well. The theoretical aspects refer to the specific function of science and technology in Latin American development, the empirical ones to the position of West Germany within the competitive transfer of know-how to the region. Kratochwil, at least in principle, also takes a dependentista point of view, but his statements are based upon a more structural and functional method of analysis. One of the major topics is Latin America's need for externally produced science and technology. The author gives a double explanation by the fact that, first, research in Latin America is oriented towards the "centers" and hence is "irrelevant to the basic needs of the region" and, second, that its application is mediated through "'feudal' structures of interaction," which monopolize the newest know-how for the military, industry, and the modern segment of the tertiary sector. Consequently, science and technology in the "periphery" frequently have a consumptive character, whereas in the "centers" they are able to display their role as a decisive productive force. Kratochwil therefore interprets science and technology in Latin America as an area of the periphery where modernity and dependence reinforce each other—even if several Latin American countries, like Mexico through the Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología, try to control this mechanism politically. The author also elaborates on the important aspect that, at least in the long run, economic and political conflicts between the centers and the periphery will be disguised as a debate on the legitimate or illegitimate transfer of science and technology—notwithstanding the fact that certain Latin American countries may well compete with the United States or Europe in certain areas of this kind (social sciences, mathematics, biology). Kratochwil also deals with the origin of academic institutions in Latin America and her present infrastructure of scientific and technological research. This part of the book is descriptive and contains a series of recent statistical and other data. They all illustrate the growing consciousness of Latin American governments with regard to the importance of a more deliberate policy in this area. Such a policy has begun to take shape since the second half of the sixties, being initiated and subsidized in many cases by international organizations like UNESCO, the OAS, and CEPAL.

With respect to the transfer of science and technology from West Germany, Kratochwil emphasizes its increasing reliance on the import of energy and raw materials and on the export of manufactured goods. In the past five years, West Germany imported about 57 percent of her energy resources and exported about 42 percent of her automobile production (machinery 37 percent,

chemistry 32 percent, total industrial production 20 percent). The author attributes to West Germany the status of a country which in the long run will be extremely dependent upon scientific and technological cooperation with the international community including the developing countries, which probably offer the most promising prospects for the future. Such a possibility, however, will only be realistic if international cooperation is not reduced to a one-way system. Kratochwil argues that, in structural terms, West Germany's relationship with the developing countries must become interdependent, provided that she does not want to weaken the foundation of her own world-market-oriented economy.

An important issue that gives evidence of this growing interdependence is the high percentage of West German direct investment in Latin America (14 percent of all direct investments abroad in 1973, related to a West German investment stock in Latin America then totalling DM 4 billion). Kratochwil believes that direct investment has a far-reaching impact on the infrastructure of science and technology in Latin America. He partially agrees with statements of West German businessmen, including the leaders of corporations like Siemens or Volkswagen, who justify their investment strategies towards the developing countries with the organized transfer of compact knowledge and with the dynamic effects deriving from its implementation. He objects, however, that the transfer of knowledge and its application must not be confused with its production; the "technology" by which technology is produced will not easily be made a subject of this deal. Kratochwil therefore predicts a double trend in the future relationships between Latin America and West Germany: a higher degree of scientific-technological cooperation on the one hand and more frequent opportunities for manifest conflicts on the other.

The author finally deals with the institutional framework of science policy in West Germany. He emphasizes the increasing importance of public administration, especially of the Federal Ministry for Research and Technology, and gives an almost complete survey of all the other public and semipublic organizations that intervene in this field. With regard to the West German research institutes that work on issues related to the developing countries, it might be interesting to point out that they numbered 150 in 1972 and that 32 of them were working on Latin America (the figure for 1978 would be 35). Many of these institutes are small; twenty of them have a staff of five or less. Compared with Africa and Asia or the developing countries as a whole, Latin America is by far the least represented in this context. Additionally, about 80 percent of the institutes working on the region dedicate their activities to the social sciences. They are, so to speak, submitted to *marginalidad* within the general framework of West German science and technology policy towards Latin America, being at best its critical observers. This judgment does not contradict the fact, however, that some of them have important advisory functions in politics.

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NOTES

1. A German McCarthy-type witch-hunt of political dissenters. Applicants for public jobs are not admitted if they are or have been members or even "sympathizers" of political groups considered "radical" by federal or local authorities. The terms "sympathizer" and "radical" are open to arbitrary definition. "Berufsverbot" is an expression used by the opponents to such a policy, emphasizing its consequences for young people, especially for the students: in some cases lifelong exclusion from a profession chosen before the political sinfall.
2. The term refers to the need of any power group for permanent "reproduction" of its political basis.