

MORE ON THE MILITARY IN POLITICS

- POLITICAL-MILITARY SYSTEMS: COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES*. Edited by CATHERINE MCARDLE KELLEHER. (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1974. Pp. 299. \$15.00/\$7.50.)
- SOLDIERS, GUERRILLAS, AND POLITICS IN COLOMBIA*. By RICHARD MAULLIN. (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1973. Pp. 165. \$10.00.)
- REBELLION, REVOLUTION, AND ARMED FORCE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FIFTEEN COUNTRIES WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON CUBA AND SOUTH AFRICA*. By D. E. H. RUSSELL. (New York: Academic Press, 1974. Pp. 210. \$14.50.)
- EL SISTEMA SOCIAL-MILITAR EN LA SOCIEDAD MODERNA*. By BENJAMIN RATTENBACH. (Buenos Aires: Editorial Pleamar, 1972. Pp. 152.)
- MILITARY RULE IN LATIN AMERICA: FUNCTION, CONSEQUENCES, AND PERSPECTIVES*. Edited by PHILIPPE C. SCHMITTER. (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1973. Pp. 322. \$15.00/\$7.50.)

This collection of recent and not-so-recent books is a fair sampling of both the best and the worst in contemporary scholarly thinking about the Latin American military. On the positive side, the incredible diversity of issues discussed—ranging from the policy preferences of military governments to the meaning of “civilian control” in socialist Cuba—reflects the general disillusionment with the narrow range of questions which traditionally preoccupied scholars in this field. “The causes of military intervention” are scarcely mentioned. In addition, these works generally reflect the growing sensitivity to the reciprocal nature of the interaction of armed forces and society. Thus Maullin’s study of the impact of counterinsurgency warfare on the Colombian military neatly complements Russell’s analysis of the impact of military organization and morale in the suppression of mass rebellions. Both disavow purely military or purely political explanations for military behavior. Thirdly, with some exceptions, these works also demonstrate the trend toward explicitly comparative modes of analysis as opposed to isolated single-country case studies.

Of the three individual monographs, Maullin’s study of the Colombian military is by far the most impressive. Taking issue with Huntington’s classic work on civilian control of the military in the United States, Maullin argues that professionalization can often lead to greater military involvement in politics. In particular, he documents the changes in the size, budget, training, and professionalism of the Colombian military resulting from their extensive involvement in *la violencia* and counterrevolutionary warfare. These changes in the institutional character of the military in turn led to changes in the military’s traditionally subordinate role in politics. The armed forces became first an arbiter in the partisan violence of the 1950s under Rojas Pinilla and later a key prop for the government and frequent participant in national policy decisions under the National Front. The continuing guerrilla warfare of the 1960s also stimulated

the diffusion of “national security and development” doctrines among a substantial group of officers (identified first with General Ruiz Novoa and later General Valencia Tovar) who felt the military should become directly involved in attacking the root causes of the insurgency problem, even if this involved conflict with the traditional elites and their political spokesmen in the Liberal and Conservative parties. Nevertheless, to date the developmentalist faction remains a minority and its leading spokesmen have been effectively suppressed. Indeed, Maullin does not satisfactorily explain why Colombia has been one of the very few countries to escape military rule for the past twenty years. Here Maullin may have been limited by his heavy reliance on aggregate data and public sources. In the absence of individual-level data, the macro-generalizations are not really very novel and not always very convincing. Indeed one might argue on the basis of Colombia and Venezuela that prolonged guerrilla campaigns help keep the military out of politics.

Rebellion, Revolution, and Armed Force is a book which probably should have been an article. Challenging the view that repressive policies breed revolutions, Russell does pose an interesting question—why has South Africa’s apartheid regime escaped (at least until recently) the kind of “mass rebellion” which led to the Cuban revolution? After surveying fifteen cases of successful and unsuccessful mass rebellions, Russell concludes that the critical difference between success and failure is the willingness of the armed forces to fight to defend the regime. Thus, even though the South African regime is rated more repressive, the all-white South African army has been willing to fight to uphold apartheid, whereas the Cuban army was at best reluctant to do battle on Batista’s behalf. A weak, demoralized, internally divided military may therefore be an essential precondition for a radical seizure of power. However, the empirical basis for these conclusions is rather slim, drawing heavily on secondary sources and complex formulae for “measuring” the extent of military disloyalty and the scale of mass rebellions. Nearly half the book consists of sketchy summaries of the coding decisions for each of the countries studied, with the rest devoted to an extended exegesis of what boils down to a relatively simple hypothesis.

El sistema social-militar en la sociedad moderna is easily the least interesting of these works. Despite the promising title, for the most part this is a rehash of U.S. military sociology à la Huntington and Janowitz applied somewhat superficially to Argentina. Its value as a personal statement by a Latin American military officer is vitiated by the fact that General Rattenbach retired in 1952. Despite certain rhetorical concessions to national security doctrines, Rattenbach generally espouses an older brand of professionalism, stressing, for example, the military’s limited understanding of political questions. Ironically, the author does at times show some political sophistication, appreciating the role of conflict in politics, attributing most military intervention to political causes, and acknowledging the failure of most military regimes to do anything to correct those political problems. On the other hand, in his insistence that military officers are almost always motivated by a special idealism, and in his claim that military coups result largely from military opposition to corruption and political “ex-

tremists," Rattenbach falls into self-serving generalizations that do not square with available data on military behavior. Stylistically, *El sistema social-militar* is methodical, comprehensive, and occasionally plodding, with frequent digressions including, for example, several pages on the ethics of moonlighting in nonmilitary jobs.

The remaining books are edited collections of papers presented at the 1972 and 1973 conferences of the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society. *Military Rule in Latin America* opens with an attempt by Alan Rouquié to explain the appearance of leftist military regimes in several countries, most notably Peru. Rouquié argues that internal conditions (unstable governments, weak middle class, high social tensions) played some role, but places greater emphasis on the contradiction between the nationalist mission of the armed forces and their material and ideological dependency on the U.S. Thus, according to Rouquié, the key to the emergence of the "military left" was the thaw in the U.S.-Cuban cold war after 1968. The argument is not especially convincing as it fails to account for the resurgence, if not dominance, of rightist elements in Peru and other "leftist" regimes. In two very closely complementary articles, Jerry Weaver and Philippe Schmitter then attempt to test empirically several hypotheses about the policy biases and goals of military governments. Drawing on the case study literature on Brazil and Bolivia, Weaver concludes that military governments do not generally favor the traditional oligarchy. Indeed, the working class seems to have received some benefits from the military's pro-growth policies, despite the general military disinterest in economic redistribution. Some but not all of the "middle sectors" benefited from military rule, although here there seemed to be little difference between the military's policies and those of prior civilian governments. Not unexpectedly, he also found that both the Bolivian and Brazilian military regimes were supportive of U.S. foreign policy and highly receptive to foreign capital. Overall, the benefits of military rule were distributed in a manner not really consistent with any of the initial hypotheses. In the remainder of his paper, Weaver reviews various quantitative studies of the impact of military rule, concluding with a sharp and thoughtful critique of the conceptual, measurement, and statistical problems which have plagued a number of these works. Acknowledging many of these difficulties, Schmitter presents an extensive statistical test of several rival hypotheses about the relationship between foreign military aid, military spending, and military rule. Using cross-sectional data from nineteen countries, he finds little connection between U.S. military assistance and military rule, either before or after 1960. Domestic military spending was found to be most highly correlated with GNP, though aid seems to raise spending somewhat above what would otherwise be expected. Military spending and military rule were only weakly correlated, as the highest spending regimes were those under intermittent military governments. A longitudinal analysis of six countries over a twenty-year period confirmed the cross-sectional findings, but again revealed a wide variation over time and from country to country, leading Schmitter to conclude that our attention ought to be redirected toward more contextually sensitive analyses of military rule. In a largely technical article, Geoffrey Kemp then discusses some

of the problems involved in formulating a coherent arms control policy for Latin America. Finally, James Kurth reviews the competing explanations for U.S. foreign policy toward Latin America and corollary propositions about the impact of those policies, finding most of them wanting. Kurth then proposes a non-Marxist alternative to dependency theory based on the idea of great power hegemony. The comparisons to other hegemonic systems are interesting, but most of the evidence cited from other studies is methodologically suspect. Nevertheless, the overall quality of the essays in the Schmitter volume is relatively high.

The same is true of *Political Military Systems*, although only two of its thirteen articles deal with Latin America. In an already widely read paper, Abraham Lowenthal also addresses the question of explaining the relatively comprehensive reform program adopted by the Peruvian military government after 1968. According to Lowenthal, Peru's relative backwardness and weak state combined with a fairly rapid rate of modernization since 1945 to produce a political vacuum. Given the weakness of civilian political forces, it should not have been surprising that this vacuum was filled by Peru's politically aggressive and relatively well-trained armed forces. Far better than Rouquié, Lowenthal's emphasis on Peru's socioeconomic "lag" accounts for the increasing conservative orientation of the regime now that the first burst of reforms has been completed. In another excellent article, Jorge Domínguez attacks those who have denounced "the militarization of the Cuban Revolution." Domínguez argues that Cuba is governed by "civic soldiers," bearers of the revolutionary tradition and ideology, who have internalized civilian norms. Thus the high percentage of military officers in elite positions, the extensive use of the armed forces in nonmilitary tasks like sugar harvest, and the high overlap of military and party leadership are all indicative of a fusion of military and civilian roles, rather than military domination of the Revolution. Nevertheless, the argument is somewhat misleading as the military leaders in question were almost all guerrilla and/or militia commanders, not regular military officers, and some tensions do seem to have arisen with the Russian-trained regular army over nonmilitary uses of the armed forces. Among the remaining articles, those on the socialist countries provide some interesting insights into alternative models of civil-military relations and the articles by Lemarchand and Welch on the African military again suggest some interesting parallels to military intervention in Latin America.

The virtues of these works have already been alluded to. On the negative side, this is a very miscellaneous collection of books, articles, viewpoints, hypotheses, methods, approaches, and perspectives. In their very diversity, these five books demonstrate our continued inability to transcend the conceptual and theoretical eclecticism, at times bordering on anarchy, which characterizes most writing on the Latin American military. In the absence of any commonly accepted theoretical frameworks, everyone has his own pet hypothesis, but the research produced is very rarely cumulative. After each pet hypothesis has been expounded and to some degree "tested," we are not much closer to a theory of military behavior than we were before.

Exhortation alone is not likely to have much impact, but significant improvements could result if more attention were paid to theory-building in the design stage of the research. Even if there is no single generally accepted analytical framework, the literature to date presents several relatively distinct ways of looking at the political behavior of the armed forces. The neo-Marxist view, most fully elaborated in José Nun's notion of the "middle-class military," adopts a system-level perspective, relating military behavior to internal and international conflicts and class divisions. The "institutionalist" view associated with the works of Stepan, Einaudi, Needler, and this author focuses more on the perceptions and values of individual officers and on the interaction of the armed forces with its political environment. Other models could be articulated with relative ease; however, the objective is not a proliferation of theoretical models but rather a conscious attempt to relate any particular research proposal to the current version of one of the several available models. Likewise the concluding section of any research report should logically focus on the additions and modifications called for in that model. While several of the studies reviewed do begin with conflicting hypotheses drawn from these competing models, not much is gained by the attempt to test whole models. At worst, these predictions become mostly straw men to be shot down. At best, reality is still almost always more complex than any single model predicts. Unless this leads to successive iterations in which the various models are revised, updated, expanded, and pruned, not much has been gained. Nevertheless, these five books make it clear that cumulative theory will not be forthcoming except by conscious design.

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