

AN INSTITUTIONAL Festschrift

STUDIES IN HISPANIC HISTORY AND LITERATURE. Edited by B. JOZEF. (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, The Hebrew University, 1974. Pp. 267.)

Enormously uneven in quality and carelessly printed, this *festschrift* was published to commemorate the seventh birthday of the Hebrew University's department of Spanish and Latin American studies. Its twelve contributors, several of whom were at the time visiting professors at the Hebrew University, hail from six different countries. The essays are divided equally between history and literature. To several of the latter I shall afford only the following brief mention: Joel I. Feldman's "First Person Narrative Technique in the Picaresque Novel," which belabors the obvious; Eli Rozik's "A Structuralist Approach to Lorca's Metaphorics in the 'Romancero Gitano,'" which I find absolutely unreadable and which evokes wonder that anyone dealing professionally with language can so abuse it; and Sara Fishman's "O Humor na Poesia Através de Carlos Drummond de Andrade," a very short piece which I am not competent to appraise.

In the opening essay, Martin Sable discusses "Latin American Studies Today." The article, apparently completed in 1972, does not take into account, among other recent developments, the crisis in graduate education. Noting the number of Latin American studies programs in Israel, he writes (p. 7): "This causes me to estimate that a proportionate representation of programs among United States institutions would result in something on the order of one thousand programs in that country." If the general level of essays in this book is any indication, excepting those three or four of high quality, it appears that Israel is no more equipped than the United States would be to handle such a spread of programs.

The second article, Fred Bronner's "Peruvian *Arbitristas* under Viceroy Chinchón, 1629–1639," is far and away the most valuable scholarly contribution and awakens desire to read the author's 1972 Hebrew University doctoral dissertation, "Peruvian *Arbitrios* under Viceroy Chinchón (1629–1639): A Case of Frustrated Absolutism." Apparently, *arbitristas*—those convinced they knew a "way out," a means of dealing with the generally adverse circumstances of the seventeenth-century viceroyalty—abounded in Peru, although most of them were Spanish by birth. In general, Chinchón regarded them as troublesome cranks and, if Bronner's study is broadly based enough to provide a true indication, he was justified in doing so. The viceroy himself, though, turns out to have been an *arbitrista*. His pet project for solving the ills of Peru was the introduction of galley treasure fleets.

Arbitristas wished essentially "to restore a past that never existed," Bronner maintains. Thus they were revolutionaries in the sense generally attached to that word in the seventeenth century: they wished to turn back to a good period in history, rather than progress to a new kind of good world. Much insight into

their thinking could be derived from the important new work by Melvin J. Lasky, *Utopia and Revolution* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1977).

While many arbitristas offered hare-brained solutions, they nevertheless could be shrewd diagnosticians of prevailing ills, a dualism, Bronner notes, "reminiscent of nineteenth-century radicals from Saint Simon and Marx down to Sorel and Lenin" (p. 59). In a way the arbitristas remind one of still more contemporary radicals. In their obsession with one-shot, simplistic remedies that would bring off a miracle, they bring to mind the new school of utopianists whose panacea is liberation from economic and political dependence through consciousness raising.

In recent years, Spanish arbitristas operating within Spain have attracted considerable attention from the writers of doctoral dissertations.¹ The results of their research show that by no means all arbitristas were crackpots when it came to remedies. Some could prescribe sensibly as well as diagnose perceptively, and apparently they paved the way for the better known reformers of the eighteenth century, thus providing a little suspected continuity to Spanish history. One wonders if future research will unearth a similar, serious side to arbitristismo in the New World. It might just possibly have been serious enough to open in the seventeenth century a serious breach between innovating *peninsulares* and stand-pat *criollos*, the latter convinced they could flourish best under the relative autonomy afforded by the status quo.

In "Politics and Politicians in the Reign of Ferdinand VII, 1814–1820," Enoch Resnick, whose 1970 American University doctoral dissertation was on a related topic ("The Council of State and Spanish America, 1814–1820"), presents some of the revisionist views with which historians have recently been assessing this autocratic and unappealing monarch.² He notes the king's difficulties in dealing with uncompromising opponents (he would have had additional confirmation of this in Iris M. Zavala's *Masones, comuneros y carbonarios* [Madrid, 1971]); and he suggests that Ferdinand's constant changing of ministers, which destroyed all semblance of political continuity, was the result, at least occasionally, of an almost statesmanlike attempt at compromise. This could imply that even in the early period of his reign there may have lurked the tendencies that some recent historians think they have found in that monarch's last nine years of rule.³ On the whole, though, Resnick justifiably depicts Ferdinand in the customary light, attributing the monarch's shifting of personnel, for example, not so much to statesmanship as to paranoia.

Noting puzzlement in England and the United States over the ability of Ferdinand to maintain himself in power as an autocratic, arbitrary monarch, Resnick stresses the contrast in public opinion within Spain. Here, liberal reforms inspired massive resistance and "the monarch retained his popularity, in particular with the apathetic lower classes" (p. 83). In this day of emphasis on human rights, apparently one of the last remaining causes for crusaders intent upon uplifting "backward peoples," Resnick affords a timely reminder of how differently things can be perceived within and without countries that cling to a traditional political culture.

At this point, a further digression is hazarded. In contrast to the age of Ferdinand, post-1836 liberal assaults against the established order, and especially the Church, did not meet with widespread hostility. This is particularly true of southern Spain, where liberally inspired changes in land structure had their major impact. A partial reason for this change in popular attitudes is provided by Temma Kaplan's probing new study *Anarchists of Andalusia, 1868–1903* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977).

In her second chapter, Kaplan notes that in order to extract more revenue from the predominantly rural sectors in the difficult days following the loss of the American colonies, government sought to reduce the clerical hold on land so as to reorganize the country's fiscal base. In fact, Ferdinand attempted to impose—after 1820—an agricultural revolution from above, through the means of a direct tax system. The object was to force self-sufficient peasants to produce surpluses of specialized crops. Once accustomed to selling surpluses for cash, they would acquire not only the means to pay taxes but to buy manufactured goods that other Spaniards, hopefully, would produce. The result was partial rural modernization and the initiation of more intensive wheat production. This yielded, among others, two significant results: (1) unemployment and under-employment as a consequence of a shift from labor intensive to capital intensive production; and (2) anticlericalism, as peasant proprietors were caught between the Church's continuing demand for tithes and the state's new exactions. Thus did Spain antedate most of Latin America in the consequences of incipient capitalist modernization.

Returning to our festschrift, we find ourselves in Brazil of the 1920s confronting the uprising of the *tenentes*, the most colorful incident of which has been dealt with recently in masterful fashion by Neil Macaulay (*The Prestes Column: A Revolution in Brazil* [New York: Franklin Watts, Inc., 1974]). In the essay that now concerns us, "Brazil's *Tenentes*: Military Protest and Radicalization," Ilan Rahum depicts tenente discontent as originating more in grievances against an outdated military establishment than against social injustices. To some extent, though, the tenente insurrection did manifest middle-sector discontent with the rule of the oligarchy. All in all, the ideology of the junior officers was confused and multifaceted, although it was clearly, I believe, influenced by the antecedents of dependencia theory that were very much in the air throughout Latin America in the 1920s. Some of the tenentes became social revolutionaries in hindsight, but many of them, like their most prestigious spokesman Juarez Távora, remained basically conservative. And many simply waxed indifferent to affairs of state, their problems solved by 1934 because they "were raised to the rank of captain" (p. 119).

One of the conspicuous features of the confused program that the tenentes had formulated in 1924, to which Rahum calls attention, is the advocacy of the corporative reordering of society. This provides one of the many parallels that can be drawn between the tenentes and those who directed the successful Portuguese revolution of 1926 against a corrupt and inefficient "parliamentary republic." The Portuguese revolution, to digress briefly again, is depicted by Howard J. Wiarda in an important new book (*Corporatism and Development: The*

Portuguese Experience [Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1977]) as a bourgeois movement against the established oligarchy, using the quest for social justice as its rationale. Once entrenched in power the bourgeoisie saw no further need to mobilize mass support and so, predictably, abandoned interest in social reform.

Dealing with student-government confrontation in the Mexican crisis of 1968, Yoram Shapira finds, and this is nothing new, that the students were interested not so much in reforming the university as society at large. But the students failed badly in their drive to attract large-scale lower-class support, though they were backed by such groups of intellectuals as teachers, artists, and writers, and also by a minority of traditionally dissident workers' syndicates. Government skillfully used an anti-intellectual tone in weakening the students' cause, accusing them (with considerable accuracy?) of trying to obtain undeserved prerogatives reminiscent of the colonial *fueros* and to place themselves above the law and the common citizen.

In a starry-eyed, *viva la revolución* approach, Edy Kaufman in "La Guerrilla y la Protesta Estudiantil en América Latina desde 1960" presents the following thesis (in itself, reasonable enough): the phenomenon of the Latin American guerrilla in the decade of the 1960s, inspired by the success of the Cuban Revolution, was essentially an expression of student protest conditioned by the accumulated experience of political action in the universities of the continent, by the renovation of the international movement of student protest, and by legitimization of the use of violence as a means of political change in Latin America. The author deals also with the debate as to whether student guerrilla types are rational idealists or irrational destroyers. Maybe they are neither so much as they are frustrated elites out to improve their lot.

Kaufman places undue emphasis on the "generation gap" theory in explaining violence. Both in the United States and in Latin America a good deal of agitation by the young represented the mobilization of naive and impressionable youths by various intellectuals, with university professors in the forefront, who felt the system was not adequately recognizing and rewarding their unique talents. Unfolding was another skirmish in the ongoing battle that has flared periodically in North and South America alike, ever since colonial times, pitting the "culturepersons" against the "businesspersons." Often when the economy is at its best the culturepersons feel they can most readily dispense with the businesspersons.

The antibusiness mood that helped spawn student and guerrilla movements in the 1960s was, one may speculate, in some ways an outgrowth of a general intellectual milieu rather similar to that at the turn of the century when *pensadores* launched their reaction against positivism. Involved in part was an idealist (in its philosophical sense) approach that, if it did not question the reality of, at least downgraded the importance of material, quantifiable phenomena. Both at the beginning of the century and in the 1960s, intellectuals seemed to be returning to what Carolly Erickson calls "The Medieval Vision" in her 1976 book of that title. Not nearly so restricted as modern vision, medieval vision perceived all kinds of noncorporeal beings which inhabited an "enchanted world."

Essayists and poets formed the vanguard of the reaction against positivism, while novelists remained largely in the school of realism. In the mid-century return to the medieval vision, however, novelists have taken the lead. The new novelists, as described by Balla Jozef in "La Nueva Realidad de la Novela Hispanoamericana," sought what was without time, what was removed from objective and external reality. Seeking to create their own world, with words, they felt that literature should apprehend "the real" in all its possibilities. Like Miguel Angel Asturias, they mixed myth and reality, considering myth a prolongation of the magic and invisible world. This was the reaction of artists confronting a crisis of "institutional culture, a technological civilization, . . . in which man feels the insufficiency of reason to guide the process of knowing" (p. 209). The new novelists sense, even as the poets García Lorca and Pablo Neruda (described in this collection by Myran Solotorevsky in a beautifully written essay "Vida y Muerte en García Lorca y Pablo Neruda") that persons in societies where myth is alive live in a world that is open and mysterious, a world that talks to man but can be comprehended best through symbolism and what is non- or suprarational (in this passage Solotorevsky is using the words of Mircea Eliade).

Last to be considered is the essay by Nahum Megged, "Las Fuentes Históricas de *El papa verde* y su Significado Literario," a fascinating piece despite the rough edges that suggest a work in preliminary draft. Megged concentrates on one of the novels (*El papa verde*) in Miguel Angel Asturias' trilogy on life in the banana republics, specifically Guatemala, during the days of Estrada Cabrera and the rise of the United Fruit Company. Skillfully separating fact from fiction in the Asturias approach, Megged argues that the figure of the "Green Pope" was modeled on Samuel Zemurray. Asturias saw Zemurray as the prototype of exploitative capitalist imperialism, the man of action and competitive aggressiveness who delights in controlling events and never scruples over means. The novelist deals also with persons within the United Fruit Company (specifically, Charles Kepner and J. H. Soothill) who, shocked by the outrages they witness, seek to hold up to public scrutiny the horrors of dollar imperialism (*The Banana Empire: A Case Study of Economic Imperialism* [New York: The Vanguard Press, 1935]). For Asturias, these men are Bartolitos, for they are reincarnations of Bartolomé de las Casas.

In many ways, the banana trilogy seems to me a more accurate appraisal of present-day than of early dollar imperialism. Asturias' work ignores the fact that much of the early imperialism was motivated not just by lust for dollars, but also by security considerations and crusading zeal for uplifting people by converting them to the allegedly superior bourgeois capitalist ethic and the progress-and-success myth. Today, however, as countless works attest, the United States suffers grave doubts about the viability of the ethic and myth that served so well in the past. The "spatial expansion" that once served to make the operations of businessmen seem virtuous (in this connection one simply must read J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment* [Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975], esp. p. 544) no longer operates, and so even in the land that once found them heroic, businessmen are increasingly villified. Less sure of their own iden-

tity, filled with doubts as to whether material success should be the great goal in life and whether, when it comes, it is the result of dedicated hard work or just luck (the luck thesis, reminiscent of traditional Hispanic views, is argued by Lester C. Thurow, *Generating Inequality: Mechanisms of Distribution in the U.S. Economy* [New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1975]), many North Americans reject the regenerationist strain of imperialism that once thrilled them.

By depicting imperialists of an earlier age as responding only to the obsession for profit, Asturias and other Latin American intellectuals were issuing a self-fulfilling prophesy. Today the most notable practitioners of economic imperialism are directors of international firms who are indeed single-minded in the pursuit of profit. Prophetically, the person Asturias used as his model for the "Green Pope" was himself a man virtually without a country, an immigrant from the Middle East who in his concern for gain probably stood above (or beneath) nationalist commitment of any sort. Before the new tide of internationalized capitalism, Latin America stands vulnerable and impotent as it clings to nationalist rivalries that have provided a pretext for claims of nationhood.

Who, and where, are the new Bartolitos?

FREDRICK B. PIKE

University of Notre Dame

NOTES

1. See H. G. Hambleton, "The Economic Decline of Spain in the 17th Century: Contemporary Spanish Views," Ph.D. dissertation, London School of Economics, 1964; Michael Gordon, "Morality and Politics in 17th-Century Spain: The Arbitrista Pedro Fernández Navarrete," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1972 and "The Arbitristas: An Historiographical and Bibliographical Survey," *Newsletter of the Society for Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies* 2, 7-8 (May 1974):168-84; Thomas Niehaus, "City vs. Countryside in the Spanish Arbitristas of the 17th Century," Paper presented at the meeting of the Society for Spanish and Portuguese Historical Studies, Washington, D.C., 1973; and Mario L. Sánchez, "The Attempts at Reform in the Spain of Charles II: A Revisionist View of the Decline of Castile, 1665-1700," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 1976.
2. A previous Ph.D. dissertation deals with aspects of this period in Spanish history: Charles Wentze Fehrenbach, "A Study of Spanish Liberalism: The Revolution of 1820," University of Texas, Austin, 1961. See also his "Moderados and Exaltados: The Liberal Opposition to Ferdinand VII, 1814-1832," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 50 (1970):52-69.
3. For the view that Ferdinand, in the late stages of his rule, allowed himself to be influenced by advisers shaping a gradual opening toward change, see Luis Alonso Tejada, *Ocaso de la Inquisición en los últimos años de reinado de Fernando VII* (Algorta, 1969), and the five-volume *Documentos del reinado de Fernando VII*, prepared by the Seminario de Historia Moderna under the principal editorship of Federico Suárez (Pamplona, 1968-70). These works challenge many of the interpretations of Miguel Artola, long considered the foremost contemporary authority on Ferdinand VII.