

interested in issues of distributive politics, state capacity, and the enforcement of formal institutions in the region.

Carlos Freytes
Universidad Torcuato Di Tella

REFERENCES

- Acemoglu, Daron, and James Robinson. 2006. *Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Boix, Carles. 2003. *Democracy and Redistribution*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Fairfield, Tasha. 2015. *Private Wealth and Public Revenue in Latin America: Business Power and Tax Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Holland, Alisha. 2015. The Distributive Politics of Enforcement. *American Journal of Political Science* 59, 2: 357–71.
- Kurtz, Marcus. 2013. *Latin American State Building in Comparative Perspective: Social Foundations of Institutional Order*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Meltzer, Allan, and Scott Richard. 1981. A Rational Theory of the Size of Government. *Journal of Political Economy* 89, 5: 914–27.
- Soifer, Hillel David. 2015. *State Building in Latin America*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Kenneth P. Serbin, *From Revolution to Power in Brazil: How Radical Leftists Embraced Capitalism and Struggled with Leadership*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2019. Photographs, 462 pp.; hardcover \$60, ebook \$36.99.

The dictatorial regimes of Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s have increasingly become the focus of research in recent years, especially in the disciplines of political and cultural history. There is still much to learn, particularly in the case of the regime that ruled Brazil between 1964 and 1985, often erroneously assumed to have been the mildest authoritarian experience of the region, but the field is clearly expanding. Some of the main recent works include *We Cannot Remain Silent: Opposition to the Brazilian Military Dictatorship in the United States* (James N. Green, 2010), *Speaking of Flowers: Student Movements and the Making and Remembering of 1968 in Military Brazil* (Victoria Langland, 2013), *Securing Sex: Morality and Repression in the Making of Cold War Brazil* (Benjamin A. Cowan, 2016), and *Politics in Uniform: Military Officers and Dictatorship in Brazil, 1960–80* (Maud Chirio, 2018), which collectively enrich our understanding of multiple facets of the transformative and deeply fraught social experiences that unfolded during the dictatorial years in that fascinating and complex country.

Competently adding to this list of relevant scholarly titles, in a long-anticipated book, Kenneth P. Serbin, a Brazilianist based at the University of San Diego, whose knowledge of Brazilian history stretches over different periods and covers diverse

topics and themes, offers readers what is likely to become a new classic in the area. *From Revolution to Power in Brazil* is indeed a work that innovates in scope, focus, and goals. To begin with, Serbin sets out to examine more than fifty years of the winding political trajectory of Brazilian society through the lenses of some of those who engaged in violent actions in the late 1960s, in a failed attempt to depose the military regime in place. In so doing (largely by means of oral histories), the book not only tells the stories of those who resisted an oppressive regime but also seeks to assess the role, effectiveness, and ultimately the impacts (or lack thereof) of armed resistance in bringing about democratic rule in Latin America's largest nation.

In specific, based on more than three hundred hours of detailed interviews and time spent with informants while they ran their businesses, enjoyed family life, and conducted political activities, Serbin's book provides multiple accounts of how former militants described their experience of armed struggle; their traumas associated with the experiences of torture, imprisonment, and life in exile; and above all, the failure to change things through the use of violent means. What's more, richly grounded on the wealth of works on the dictatorship and the gradual, controlled, and protracted transition to democracy unfolding in the country in the last decades of the twentieth century, *From Revolution to Power in Brazil* provides a detailed first-hand account of the country's longest dictatorial experience from some of those who most painfully suffered its most damaging impacts.

Starting with a vivid account of the famous and consequential kidnapping of US ambassador to Brazil Charles Elbrick on September 4, 1969, the book scrutinizes the lives of nine former members of Brazil's most active guerrilla organization of late 1960s, the ALN (National Liberating Action), created in 1967 to provide an alternative to the Brazilian Communist Party's approach of peaceful coexistence with the military regime. The group was composed mostly of highly idealistic and educated youngsters (mostly in their late teens and early 20s!), who saw no other option to resist an ever more repressive regime that was arresting, torturing, and disappearing colleagues and friends in colleges and schools, particularly in the main urban centers, where organized resistance (such as demonstrations, gatherings, events, and publications) was taking place in more assertive ways.

The work is structured in three parts. The first one, "Revolution and Repression," which is subdivided into five chapters, details how each informant experienced the course of armed struggle. Each militant's motivations to join the fight, their hopes, frustrations, and ultimate forced exit is examined, largely on the basis of the informant's direct accounts. The second section, "Resurgence," divided into four chapters, deals with the experiences of life in prison (torture and the fight for recognition of the status of political prisoners), exile, and private lives in the country. Here the analysis centers on trying to understand how these initial years provided the detachment for former guerrillas to reflect on their choices of violent action. The last section, "Rule," divided into six chapters, examines lives after the transition to democracy in the 1980s, 1990s, and the first years of the twenty-first century. The main thread here is to recount how, in their own individual ways, each former militant sought to remain engaged in the political life of their country.

From Revolution to Power in Brazil is uniquely meritorious in being able to insightfully examine one of the most important periods of the recent history of this complex nation by following the lives of some of those who engaged in violent actions to change a regime but who later on, through multiple paths, reinserted themselves in the public life of a nascent and, in many ways, curtailed democratic political order. Through these original analytical lenses, the book engages, even if perhaps indirectly, with one of the most central issues of the discipline of history, and perhaps of other social sciences in general; namely, the matter of representativeness. Specifically, it would be important to reflect about how representative the lives of Serbin's nine informants are for the experience of armed struggle and, more so, for the evolution of political life in Brazil in the last quarter of the twentieth century.

One of Serbin's main claims, which serves also as one of his analytical threads, is that nonviolent resistance was what brought about the end of the dictatorship, not the path of armed struggle initially pursued by his informants. In this, he is closely supported by the voices of his interviewees, all of whom came to see—while not disavowing their own individual choice in the late 1960s—that violent actions did not work! In fact, all of the former guerrillas highlighted in the book recount their own lives along very consistent lines, in which, though their views changed over the course of time, they claim to have remained nonetheless loyal to the goal of promoting a more equitable and economically autonomous country—now in the context of a capitalist economy and a democratic political order.

It would further enrich our knowledge of the field if other works could portray the lives of other former militants who perhaps still hold on to their earlier positions. Much in the same way, as the book accurately indicates, the nine former ALN members do not share congruent views of what has been happening in Brazil in recent years. In fact, some of those who became politically more influential in the country in the last several years—namely, Aloysio Nunes Ferreira, former chief of staff for Fernando Henrique Cardoso, and Paulo Vannucchi, former cabinet minister for Lula da Silva—have even become political adversaries, the former having become one of the most vocal forces in favor of removing from office, on shaky legal grounds, Lula's successor and also a former guerrilla, Dilma Rousseff, in mid-2016.

What's more, though they are an inherent feature of a work significantly grounded in oral histories, it would have been nice if some of the personal accounts of key informants could have been contrasted a bit more with other actors' accounts or other types of sources. Likewise, despite the fact that the book was finalized before most of the recent Intercept revelations of Sérgio Moro's politically motivated actions against Lula became public, it would be equally important to assess a bit more critically the current state of democratic consolidation in Brazil. To be sure, the author seems drawn a bit too much into the overly optimistic accounts of some of his key informants; namely, the aforementioned Nunes Ferreira, who became foreign minister of the postimpeachment administration of Michel Temer in 2017.

None of these limitations, however, diminishes the many achievements and great significance of this unique book. In fact, as a final note on a topic that still

merits a more definitive account, Serbin lays out one of the best analyses available in English of the role of social movements, particularly religious ones, in the transition to democratic rule in Brazil. One can only hope that, with some minor revisions (mostly of typos), this important work is quickly translated into Portuguese, so that its manifold insightful and well-argued reflections on the broad developmental trajectory of one of world's largest economies and most unequal societies can be made available to broader audiences of Brazilian scholars and students alike.

Rafael R. Ioris
University of Denver

Başar Baysal, *Securitization and Desecuritization of FARC in Colombia: A Dual Perspective Analysis*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2019. Figures, tables, bibliography, index, 202 pp; hardcover \$90, ebook \$85.50.

In this book, Başar Baysal analyzes the securitization of the FARC and the Colombian government during their six-decade-old conflict; that is, how they constructed each other as existential threats that required extreme responses. Baysal advances a “dual securitization framework,” which extends the focus of securitization theories about the state by analyzing the securitization by a nonstate actor, a communist-inspired guerrilla group. Baysal has two goals. The first is to expand securitization and international political sociology and insecurity theories by considering the Global South and non-Western democracies that have not been central in securitization analyses. Second, Baysal aims to advance a theory that conceptualizes securitization as a process, considers both state and nonstate actors, theorizes types of security professionals, and includes the actors that are harmed (insecuritized) by the securitization process.

In chapters 2 and 3, Baysal provides a review of critical security studies and securitization theories that can be useful for students and for those looking for an insightful introduction to this literature. In chapter 2, he explains how securitization theory emerged in response to traditional security analyses rooted in realism, which define security from a military, state-centered perspective. Critical security studies contest such a definition by arguing that security goes beyond military issues and is not simply a material reality. The securitization theory initially advanced by Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap De Wilde (*Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, 1998), argues instead that security is constructed through the speech acts of elites.

In chapter 3, Baysal explains securitization theory and the responses to it from the international political sociology and insecurity approach. Baysal persuasively criticizes each approach but also highlights its contribution to understanding securitization. The securitization approach's focus on elite speech acts highlights the importance of top-level politicians and bureaucrats in framing security threats.

© The Author 2020. Published by Cambridge University Press on behalf of the University of Miami. DOI 10.1017/lap.2020.22