

all who wish to probe more deeply into the political labyrinth of Latin America's largest nation.

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*O Populismo na Política Brasileira.* By FRANCISCO CORRÊA WEFFORT. Rio de Janeiro, 1978. Editora Paz e Terra. Tables. Notes. Pp. 181. Paper.

The Latin American etymology of the term "populism" is uncertain, but one of its earliest uses was in Hélio Jaguaribe's *Cadernos do Nosso Tempo*, in a 1954 article entitled, "Que é o adhemarismo?" It was an unflattering portrayal, but it contained many of the elements of later definitions, such as urban mass bases, lack of class consciousness, and charismatic leadership from nearly discredited dominant groups. Since then the term has been used increasingly to describe the whole period from 1945 to 1964 in Brazil, and it has become indispensable for explaining the rise of military rule in 1964.

The book under review reflects the changing interpretations of populism through the 1960s, as the author attempted to come to grips with this complex and ambiguous phenomenon. The book is comprised of Weffort's writings on populism from 1963 to 1968, with a critique of dependency theory at the end. Part one includes articles from the mid-1960s which established the author's credentials as a political theorist, and part two is drawn from his 1968 São Paulo doctoral dissertation. Few changes were made for the present edition in Paz e Terra's *Estudos Brasileiros* series.

A major drawback to using populism as an analytical device has been the lack of definition: the term was used intuitively, and inconsistencies riddled internal as well as cross-national comparisons. Populism was a political style, an ideology, a social movement, a developmental phase, a new version of personalism and caudillismo, and so on. In the end it reflected the biases of the beholder toward his subject.

Weffort provided a valuable service in the 1960s by giving theoretical specificity to the concept. The introduction poses the problem nicely (p. 11): "How to explain the dual paradox of dominant groups promoting participation by the dominated, and of masses that serve as support for a regime in which they are the dominated." The chapters explore class relations, the state, the masses, and ecological

conditions which favor populism. Some of the most suggestive contributions are his *estado de compromiso*, the exchange relationship between leader and followers, incorporation from above, the interest in folklore and popular culture as a search for legitimacy, and the observation that early twentieth-century crises of prepopulist regimes were political rather than socioeconomic. The final chapter argues that dependency is an ideology rather than a theory and that it contains serious contradictions. Weffort failed to examine populism within the dependency framework, however, an approach recently in vogue among political scientists.

The flaws of the book stem from its publication without revisions. Each chapter works on populism with various instruments from the 1960s analytical toolkit. Many seem to fit but none are entirely satisfying. As a result Weffort ends up with several different and sometimes incompatible definitions of populism (for example, pp. 28, 34, 62–63, 84–85), leading to some confusion. Moreover, some sections are out-of-date or contain factual errors. This reviewer would have preferred a better integrated volume which imposed a uniform definition and took into account studies published after 1968. As it stands, the book is a welcome compilation of Weffort's 1960s essays, which offered great insights but ultimately reflected the conceptual immaturity of the subject.

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#### RELATED TOPICS

*In the Shadow of Tlaloc: Life in a Mexican Village.* By GREGORY G. RECK. New York, 1978. Penguin Books. Illustrations. Appendix. Pp. 224. Paper. \$3.95.

In this splendid volume, based on thirteen months of fieldwork carried out in 1967 and 1969–1970, Gregory Reck presents a convincing argument for the importance of humanistic ethnographies which invoke the spirit of the people rather than tests of statistical significance. Using the experiences of an *indio*-become-mestizo called Celestino de la Cruz (a pseudonym) as the fulcrum of his plot, the author tells the story of Jonotla, a village of 1,500 in the Sierra Norte of Puebla,