

Os construtores do império. Ideais e lutas do Partido Conservador Brasileiro. By JOÃO CAMILLO DE OLIVEIRA TÔRRES. São Paulo, 1968. Companhia Editôra Nacional. Notes. Appendix. Pp. xvi, 221. Paper. \$12.00 (Braz.).

Over the last twenty-five years the prolific Mineiro historian João Camillo de Oliveira Tôrres has been intermittently concerned with what he calls "a series of monographs that constitute my 'History of political ideas in Brazil'" (p. xv). In four previous volumes he successively dealt with the portentous subject of Positivism (*O positivismo no Brasil*, 1943); the growth of liberal, constitutional government during the Imperial period (*A democracia coroada*, 1952); the development of an unsuitable ideology of federalism for a culturally and socially unified Brazil (*A formação do federalismo no Brasil*, 1961); and the rise of presidential government (*O presidencialismo no Brasil*, 1961). Now we are offered a fifth work, *Os construtores do império*, as well as a promise that the series is by no means completed.

The title of this latest work is somewhat misleading, since Tôrres' intention—as stated in the preface—is to present his long-promised study of the Conservative party. The intention is largely unfulfilled, since the book is only occasionally a study of the Conservative party. Most of it is an essay on the political thought and policies of several well-known statesmen of the Imperial period whom Tôrres approvingly labels conservative. These include such eminent men as Vasconcelos, Uruguai, Eusébio de Queirós, Paraná, Caxias, Itaboraí, São Vicente, and the elder Rio Branco. In Tôrres' view, they were all conservatives as well as the principal architects of the Empire, because of the way they demonstrated how to manage the two great problems which beset Imperial Brazil. That is, they provided Brazil with effective ministerial government without usurping the real powers of the Crown, and they presided over the organization of national political union.

How did they realize these achievements? Tôrres points to the law of December 3, 1841, which returned local police power to the control of the central government. He also lavishes praise on the strong-willed Marquês de Paraná and his Conciliation cabinet (1853-1857). But most of the credit belongs to those several generations of high-minded, moderate Conservative statesmen who were a force in Imperial political life, at least until the slaveocrat Barão de Cotegipe assumed command of the Conservative party in 1877-1878.

The key words here are "moderate conservative." Tôrres sees the admirable conservatism of his favorite statesmen as the result of a judicious, pragmatic political approach. These men avoided political extremes, and although conservative, they accepted necessary reforms so long as these were consonant with national experience. Thus they rejected both *imobilismo* and *reacionarismo*. Recognizing the need to end the slave trade and later the need to abolish slavery itself, Conservative leaders sponsored the three great laws which struck down slavery. Recognizing the need for national unity, this same leadership and party favored, unlike their Liberal opponents, the retention of the *Poder moderador* as prescribed by the Constitution of 1824, the life-term Senate, and the Council of State, and they emphasized the theme of national grandeur at the expense of provincial autonomy. Therefore, the Conservative party and its leaders "consolidaram a autoridade do Governo Imperial e fizeram do Brasil uma nação unida e coesa, encerrou a sua aventura com a Abolição, que uniu o povo brasileiro, destruindo as distinções legais entre filhos da mesma terra."

What can be said for this interpretation? Not a great deal. Tôrres has added little to what he previously asserted in his *A democracia coroada*, unless it be a new conviction that the Conservative position was more suitable to nineteenth-century Brazil than the Liberal. He has told us nothing about the structure of the Conservative party, or of the socio-economic origins of its leaders and supporters. He does say that Liberal power flowed from urban centers, while Conservative strength waxed in the countryside, a generalization which needs considerable refinement. As usual, he has not bothered to look beyond readily available and thrice-familiar published works, be they primary or secondary sources. Indeed, *Os construtores do império* provides about as much new information on the Imperial period as the next rerelease of *Gone with the Wind* will offer on antebellum life in the South.

Temple University

PHILIP EVANSON

Civilian-Military Relations in Brazil, 1889-1898. By JUNE E. HAHNER. Columbia, 1969. University of South Carolina Press. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xiii, 232. \$7.95.

On November 15, 1889, a small group from the upper echelons of the army overthrew the Brazilian Empire, proclaimed the Republic, and assumed control of the national government. A few pro-Republic civilians, who hoped to utilize the military as a means of attaining