

tations of the roles of both industrialists and labor in the history of twentieth-century Brazil.

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*Os militares e a república: um estudo sobre cultura e ação política.* By CELSO CASTRO.  
Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editor, 1995. Notes. 207 pp. Paper.

This modestly-presented little book takes a refreshingly new look at the Brazilian army before the November 1889 republican coup. Castro analyzes the development of republican ideals among the students at the Escola Militar da Praia Vermelha and the officers recently graduated from it (the so-called Military Youth), recounting the precarious articulation of alliances that led to the monarchy's overthrow.

An anthropologist by training and author of a remarkable study of contemporary Brazilian army cadet life, *O espírito militar: um estudo de antropologia social na Academia Militar das Agulhas Negras* (Rio de Janeiro, 1990), Castro elegantly combines anthropological insights with new sources to produce an "ethnography" of student culture at the Escola Militar, grandly dubbed the "Tabernacle of Science" by its students. They created an extracurricular academic culture, voraciously consuming an eclectic mix of philosophers—Comte, Spencer, Haeckel—whose ideas shared a "faith in progress and the leading role of science" (p. 73). More important than the exact filiation of students' ideology was its spirit, eminently suited to their position in Rio de Janeiro society. Attending the most "scientific" academy in a capital dominated by law graduates, taking to heart the school's principles of promotion on the basis of individual academic merit in a society founded on patronage, constituting an educated elite in an army dominated by officers who lacked formal training, the students readily adopted "scientific" ideals and socialized freshmen into this culture through hazings, literary societies, and civic rituals. A republican regime, with its emphasis on individual merit and cachet of scientific rationality, appealed to these men, and Castro thus firmly establishes the social context for republicanism.

The relationship of Lt. Col. Benjamin Constant Botelho de Magalhães to the Military Youth is a major theme of this book. Castro's Constant is an unassuming professor more interested in Comte's mathematics than his politics, not the positivist ideologue who indoctrinated a generation of officers. To be sure, Constant and the Military Youth shared many characteristics—relative poverty, marginality in Rio society, and career frustration—but these did not automatically lead to their alliance. Rather, the self-taught (at least when it came to positivism and republicanism) Military Youth selected Constant as their champion, affirming his leadership in elaborate rituals, including extensive tributes staged to commemorate his promotion to lieutenant colonel in 1888.

Castro's use of personal papers, letters, and diaries allows him to humanize his subject; his wry sense of humor makes this a highly readable book. In November 1889, after a hard night of plotting against the regime, Constant returned home to daughters

who importuned him into renting a launch so that they could better observe the extravagant imperial ball held in honor of Chilean dignitaries on an island in the bay. Two weeks later Constant was minister of war and his family guests of honor at the farewell dinner for the Chileans.

In some respects, this book is uneven; the chapters on student culture and Constant are more effective than those that recount the politics of the coup. Nevertheless, these latter chapters do contain important revisionist insights that call attention to the precarious and short-lived alliances of November 1889. The Military Club, for instance, was a "virtual" institution convoked only when segments of the army wished to speak for the "military class" (p. 180). Reinterpreting data on officers' careers gathered by Schulz and Dudley in the 1970s, Castro concludes that the Paraguayan war experience had but minimal influence on officer politics in the 1880s. He also reminds us that some in the army were willing to die for the monarchy: late 1889 saw two anti-republican mutinies of enlisted men, suppressed with loss of life.

In short, Castro's anthropological emphasis on culture, combined with his historian's interest in ferreting out new sources, has given us a richer, more nuanced understanding of an institution all too often reified as "the army."

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*Struggle for the Spirit: Religious Transformation and Popular Culture in Brazil and Latin America.* By DAVID LEHMANN. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1996. Photographs. Glossary. Bibliography. Index. xiv, 244 pp. Cloth, \$59.95.

In *Struggle for the Spirit*, David Lehmann compares and contrasts the progressive Catholicism of Christian base communities (which he calls *basismo*) with the growing Brazilian Pentecostal movement. His goal is to explain the popularity of the latter and the apparent decline of the former. As with others before him, Lehmann argues that the Pentecostal emphasis on personal conversion, on free will, and on self-empowerment promises an immediate change and immediate improvement in one's life. By contrast, progressive Catholicism's emphasis on the "*caminhada*," the long path toward structural transformation, offers a better life that is much too far into the future for increasing numbers of poor Brazilians.

Lehmann's more forceful argument is that "Pentecostalism is operating a cultural revolution" by rejecting "Brazil's shakily dominant Catholic culture" (p. 167). Pentecostalism openly attacks feasts, rituals, dress, and other components of popular culture. Lehmann then powerfully argues that despite its claims to radical change and politicized and political action, and for all of its reformist talk of an option for the poor, *basismo* is simply one more example of an age-old Brazilian practice of cultural borrowings across race and class. It is, like populism, another attempt on the part of intellectuals to define and shape "the concept and even the reality of the people" (p. 227). Brazil, Lehmann continues, has a long history of intellectuals who have invoked "the people"