

sented a perceptive analysis and a frequently revisionist interpretation of a vitally important aspect of Brazil's economic history.

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O ciclo de Vargas. Vol. VIII: 1935. *A revolta vermelha*. By HÉLIO SILVA. Rio de Janeiro, 1969. Editora Civilização Brasileira. Illustrations. Notes. Index. Pp. 476. Paper.

Just before the invasion of Brasil in 1623, Willem Usselinx warned his fellow principals of the Dutch West India Company that Brazil was not "the kind of cat to be taken without gloves," and that it would cause no end of headaches for those who thought to take and tame it with ease. The same admonition seems singularly timely and appropriate for the historian—native or foreign—who wishes to provide us with meaningful interpretations of the events in the life of that complex country.

Too many authors have rushed their treatments of modern and recent Brazilian history into print as premature syntheses without having gone through the painstaking work of first collecting and then winnowing the documentary evidence in order to determine what has contributed to making Brazil a different kind of "cat."

Hélio Silva does not fall into this conventional error. His unique contribution to Brazilian historiography consists in providing fellow-historians with narratives heavily based on documents culled from archives, private papers, and other primary sources, which more often than not he cites *in extenso*. The present volume—the eighth in a series entitled *O ciclo de Vargas*—is another building block in the documentary foundation which Silva has been laying for recent Brazilian history. Hence the historian interested in Brazil's evolution during the last half century would ignore Silva's formidable array of primary evidence at his own peril.

Having said this, however, we must point out that this work, like most of the companion volumes preceding it, is much more valuable for the documentary evidence which it brings to light than for the historical interpretation which it provides. There is little here to help us understand the interrelationship of the socio-economic forces underlying the conflicts involving liberal-leftists on the one hand, and traditionalist-rightists on the other, with the *Getulistas* in the middle. What we need here is a gold thread of meaning which can run through the skein of men and events leading up to 1935, a crucial year in the recent history of Brazil, culminating in the ill-starred leftist-

military revolt. How explain the origins and the ineptitude of that revolt, or the ability of Vargas to keep control of the political system by retaining the loyalty of most officers? Silva has missed a challenging opportunity to come up with answers to these and other provocative questions.

In a word, Silva has let the Brazilian cat out of the bag—a highly useful service in itself, to be sure—but historians must now put on the trainer's gloves to lay hold of and tame this different kind of "cat."

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The Politics of Brazilian Development, 1930-1954. By JOHN D. WIRTH. Stanford, 1970. Stanford University Press. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. viii, 278. \$7.95.

The Politics of Brazilian Development, 1930-1954, is a title in search of a book. It is about "politics" and "development" (by which the author means economic development) but only in a narrow sense. What John D. Wirth does is to document competently and objectively, from original sources, three not necessarily interrelated "politicized" economic case studies. The issues examined are those of foreign trade, petroleum, and steel.

The book is reasonably successful in accomplishing the first objective of the author, "to tell the story of these three issues and to relate them to the domestic and international political context of the times" (p. 2). He is less successful in achieving his second objective, which is to "explain policy-making within the historical context. Who identified problems and goals? Who could enforce his point of view, i.e., who controlled the policy-making machinery? How did the policy-makers perceive their opportunities and constraints" (p. 3)?

These objectives are set out in a very brief introductory section which would seem to be the justification for the "politics" of the volume's title. The brief discussion of policy-making and the listing of the author's six principal conclusions do not provide a suitable social science framework for a consideration of the book's goals. The conclusions, offered in summary form, concern foreign capital, the perception and analysis of balance-of-payments problems, the Vargas presidency, the nationalism, and the Army. The three case studies rarely refer to the theoretical issues raised in the introduc-