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978-1-107-07162-9 - Intellectuals and the Search for National Identity in Twentieth-Century Brazil

Ronald H. Chilcote

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Intellectuals and the Search for National Identity in Twentieth-Century Brazil

This book discusses twentieth-century Brazilian political thought, arguing that whereas Rio de Janeiro intellectuals envisaged the state and the national bourgeoisie as the means to overcome dependency on foreign ideas and culture, São Paulo intellectuals looked to civil society and the establishment of new academic institutions in the search for national identity. Ronald H. Chilcote begins his study by outlining Brazilian intellectuals' attempt to transcend a sense of inferiority emanating from Brazilian colonialism and backwardness. Next, he traces the struggle for national identity in Rio de Janeiro through an account of how intellectuals of varying political persuasions united in search of a political ideology of national development. He then presents an analysis by São Paulo intellectuals on racial discrimination, social inequality, and class differentiation under early capitalism and industrialization. Last, the book concludes with a discussion on how Brazilian intellectuals challenged foreign thinking about development through the state and representative democratic institutions, in contrast to popular and participatory democratic practices.

Ronald H. Chilcote is professor of economics and political science at the University of California, Riverside. He is a founder and managing editor of the bimonthly journal *Latin American Perspectives* and is the author or editor of more than two dozen major books.

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RONALD H. CHILCOTE

University of California, Riverside



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*For Brazilians of all persuasions who have enhanced my
understanding of Brazil, its culture and politics, and from whom I
learned a great deal.*

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Preface

My early work in Portugal brought me in contact with the opposition to the Salazar dictatorship, as well as with young African students in Lisbon. I wrote about the opposition and conditions in Portugal and about the revolutionary independence movements that challenged the Portuguese empire in Africa, culminating in my being forbidden to return there until the coup of April 25, 1974, deposed the dictatorship and formally acknowledged independence for the African colonies. During the summer of 1964, I visited Brazil, just after the military had seized power, and I met young intellectuals such as Leôncio Martins Rodrigues and Theôtonio dos Santos in clandestinity and wrote a piece about the coup (1964). During a sabbatical leave in 1967, I spent two months in Rio de Janeiro, where I was able to interview most of the intellectuals who had participated in the founding of the Higher Institute of Brazilian Studies (Instituto Superior de Estudos Brasileiros [ISEB]). I carried on with other interviews after reaching Recife and Olinda, Pernambuco, where I lived for a year and came into contact with many other intellectuals. At the time, I envisaged two serious studies: one on intellectuals in pursuit of a national culture and the other a study of contiguous communities in the backlands of the Northeast.

Until the death of Stalin in 1953, prominent intellectuals in Brazil had tended to cluster around the Brazilian Communist Party (Partido Comunista Brasileiro [PCB]), and during the early 1960s, the party split, with a pro-Chinese wing forming the Communist Party of Brazil (Partido Comunista do Brasil [PC do B]). My study of these intellectuals became a book (1974) and contributed to a bibliography on the Brazilian left (1980). I also organized a series of colloquia that brought together scholars of Brazil and Portuguese Africa (see 1972), as well as fieldwork in the

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Northeast (1969–1971 and 1982–1983) that led to another book (1990), but my commitment to a study of intellectuals never wavered. Indeed, during the mid-1980s, I conducted additional interviews, drafted an introductory chapter, and published two journal articles (both in 1985) on the theme. When at the turn of the century I was able to dedicate more time to writing, I returned to the interviews and the books, newspaper clippings, ephemera, and pamphlets on which this book draws. Rather than simply identify the interviews, I have integrated some of their content into the stories they tell through the brief profiles I weave through my book, especially about Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo intellectuals. The intent here is also to show how intellectuals of different persuasions and outlooks can cluster together as they work toward ambitious goals aimed at shaping culture around an autonomous national identity. Some of them are prominent, others less well known, but I take seriously their institutional participation and devote some attention to their scholarly productivity and activism. I include a lengthy bibliography, including some of their work, drawn from the tens of thousands of sources I have gathered over the years. The sources cited in the book are occasionally referenced with some detail, whereas others are included to give the reader a sense of the scope of an intellectual's contribution. As succinctly as possible, I try to characterize their writings, not with a desire to provide a review essay, but to show the reader how their intellectual productivity has evolved over time. These materials are now in the Special Collections of the Tomás Rivera Library of the University of California, Riverside; a finder guide is available at <http://library.ucr.edu/content/collections/spcol/universityarchives/u012.pdf>.

Over the years, Brazilians have been receptive and supportive of my fieldwork, and in a small way I have tried to repay them by devoting portions of four years as a Fulbright professor, teaching graduate courses and working with Brazilian doctoral students in political science and sociology at the Universidade Estadual de Campinas (UNICAMP) and the Universidade Federal de Ceará (UFC) in Fortaleza. This commitment has yielded new and interesting experiences and learning for me and brought me closer to an understanding of Brazilian culture, political economy, and academic life.

I must especially thank my wife, Frances, and our sons, Stephen and Edward, who spent years with me in the field. At last, I can formally thank Marie Zentai for her early work on the interviews and her exhaustive research in my collection of Brazilian materials. My work is largely of my own making, but I am indebted to the Brazilians who I interviewed and

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FIGURE 1 The image of renowned sociologist Florestan Fernandes is drawn from the Fundo Florestan Fernandes and the special collections of the Universidade Federal de São Carlos, Brazil, where his library is now housed. Thanks to Ana Alibris and to João Roberto Martins for locating and allowing use of the image. The image also appeared on the cover of the now-defunct journal *Revista Praxis*.

to those who read and offered extensive suggestions on the manuscript, in particular Jawdat Abu-el-Haj of the UFC and James Green of Brown University, who read the manuscript in various drafts, and Luiz Carlos Bresser-Pereira, who read portions of an earlier draft. I have always appreciated the encouragement of Thomas Skidmore over the years, especially his insistence that I finish this project. I appreciate the extensive editing that Barbara Metzger, who has read all my recent work, gave to an early draft of the manuscript. Finally, I am grateful to Deborah Gershenowitz, senior editor for American and Latin American History at Cambridge University Press, who remained committed and encouraged revisions and publication of my book.

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List of Acronyms

ABPN	Associação Brasileira de Pesquisadores Negros (Brazilian Association of Black Researchers)
ACM	Associação Cristão de Acadêmicos (Christian Association of Academics)
ALN	Ação Libertadora Nacional (National Liberation Action)
ANL	Aliança Nacional Libertadora (National Liberation Alliance)
AP	Ação Popular (Popular Action)
ARENA	Aliança Renovadora Nacional (National Renovation Alliance)
ASN	Ação Social Nacionalista (Nationalist Social Action)
CAPEX	Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel)
CEBRAP	Centro Brasileiro de Análise e Planejamento (Brazilian Center for Analysis and Planning)
CEDEC	Centro de Cultura Contemporânea (Center for Studies of Contemporary Culture)
CESIT	Centro de Sociologia Industrial do Trabalho (Center for Research in the Sociology of Industry and Labor)
CESO	Centro de Estudios Socioeconómicos (Center for Socioeconomic Studies)
CGT	Comando Geral dos Trabalhadores (General Command of Workers)
CLACSO	Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales (Latin American Social Science Council)

COB	Confederação Operária Brasileira (Brazilian Workers' Confederation)
COLINA	Comando de Libertação Nacional (National Liberation Command)
CONCLAT	Coordenação Nacional da Classe Trabalhadora (National Confederation of the Working Class)
CPC	Centro Popular de Cultura (Popular Center of Culture)
CUT	Central Única dos Trabalhadores (Unified Workers' Central)
DASP	Departamento Administrativo do Serviço Público (Administrative Department of Public Service)
ECLA	Economic Commission for Latin America. Established by the United Nations in 1948 and became ECLAC in 1984 when it admitted Caribbean nations
ESG	Escola Superior de Guerra (Superior War College)
IBESP	Instituto Brasileiro de Economia, Sociologia e Política (Brazilian Institute of Economy, Sociology, and Politics)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISEB	Instituto Superior de Estudos Brasileiros (Higher Institute of Brazilian Studies)
IUPERJ	Instituto Universitário de Pesquisas de Rio de Janeiro (University Institute of Research of Rio de Janeiro)
MDB	Movimento Democrático Brasileiro (Brazilian Democratic Movement)
MNU	Movimento Negro Unificado (Unified Black Movement)
MPB	Música Popular Brasileira (Brazilian Popular Music)
MR-8	Movimento Revolucionário do 8 de Outubro (Eighth of October Revolutionary Movement)
MST	Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem-Terra (Movement of Landless Rural Workers)
ORM	Organização Revolucionária Marxista (Marxist Revolutionary Organization)
PACS	Políticas Alternativas para o Cono Sul (Alternative Policies for the Southern Cone)
PC do B	Partido Comunista do Brasil (Communist Party of Brazil)
PCB	Partido Comunista Brasileiro (Brazilian Communist Party)
PCBR	Partido Comunista Brasileiro Revolucionário (Brazilian Revolutionary Communist Party)
PD	Partido Democrático (Democratic Party)

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PDS	Partido Democrático Social (Social Democratic Party)
PDT	Partido Democrático Trabalhista (Democratic Labor Party)
PFL	Partido da Frente Liberal (Liberal Front Party)
PL	Partido Liberal (Liberal Party)
PMDB	Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro (Brazilian Democratic Movement Party)
POLOP	Pólitica Operária (Worker Politics)
POR	Partido Operário Revolucionário (Revolutionary Workers' Party)
PPS	Partido Popular Socialista (Popular Socialist Party)
PRP	Partido Republicano Paulista (São Paulo Republican Party)
PSB	Partido Socialista do Brasil (Socialist Party of Brazil)
PSDB	Partido da Social Democracia Brasileiro (Brazilian Social Democratic Party)
PSR	Partido Socialista Revolucionário (Revolutionary Socialist Party)
PSR(T)	Partido Socialista Revolucionário (Trotskista) (Trotskyist Revolutionary Socialist Party)
PT	Partido dos Trabalhadores (Workers' Party)
PTB	Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro (Brazilian Workers' Party)
PUC	Pontifícia Universidade Católica (Pontifical Catholic University)
SUDENE	Superintendência do Desenvolvimento do Nordeste (Superintendency of Northeast Development)
ULTAB	União dos Lavradores e Trabalhadores Agrícolas do Brasil (Brazilian Laborers' and Agricultural Workers' Union)
UME	União Metropolitana dos Estudantes (Metropolitan Union of Students)
UNAM	Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Autonomous National University of Mexico)
UNE	União Nacional dos Estudantes (National Union of Students)
UNESCO	United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture
UNICAMP	Universidade Estadual de Campinas

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USP	Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo)
VAR-Palmares	Vanguarda Armada Revolucionária-Palmares (Palmares Revolutionary Armed Vanguard)
VPR	Vanguarda Popular Revolucionária (Popular Revolutionary Vanguard)