Book Reviews

Socialism, Communism, and Liberation Theology in Brazil: An Opinion Survey Using Q-Methodology. (Monographs in International Studies, Latin American Series, No. 15.) By N. Patrick Peritore. Athens: Ohio University Press, for the Center for International Studies, 1990, 245 pp., $15.00 paper.

Peritore juxtaposes a history and exposition of leftist politics in Brazil with a Q study of selected Brazilian leftists. The two aspects complement one another well, and the contextual material provides a good backdrop for the Q study. Any study of this sort faces some formidable obstacles. Radical politics in Brazil is a serious business, not to be entered into lightly. Most of the leftist parties have experienced long periods of suppression and illegality. Along with more universal leftist sectarianism, this situation presents major problems to the would-be fieldworker. The subjects of interest have good reason to be suspicious of social scientists dropping in from the outside -- especially if they come from the United States, even though not all of the latter are necessarily CIA agents. Peritore confronts and solves these formidable practical problems in impressive fashion. And Q methodology is of considerable help to him in his task, given that it is unobtrusive and enables researcher and subjects to approach subjects in private, anonymous, constructive, and relaxed fashion. Certainly, it is hard to imagine conventional survey research or structured interviewing working in such a setting.

The country's history, and the influence of disparate international ideological currents, mean that Brazilian leftist politics is complex and convoluted. Peritore's analysis helps make sense of this complexity. He finds three types of individuals: socialists, who are sensitive to liberal democratic values as well as the interests of the oppressed; Eurocommunists, who equivocate when it comes to balancing Leninist tenets and pluralist democracy; and militant, uncompromising Marxist-

Leninists. Interestingly, these factors cut across leftist party lines.

Having completed his study of the secular left, Peritore turns his attention to the Catholic Church and, in particular, the place of liberation theology therein. Unsurprisingly, a Q analysis here reveals major differences between conservatives and liberationists. Peritore concludes with a discussion of Paulo Freire's "Catholic Marxism," though this discussion does not really draw upon the preceding Q analyses. Throughout, Peritore's own ideological commitments are clear, and made clearer still by his inclusion of his own Q sort, which classifies him as a "socialist." The analysis does not always support the passion, but this study is none the less instructive for that.

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Discursive Democracy: Politics, Policy, and Political Science. By John S. Dryzek. Cambridge, England, and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990. 254 pp. $39.50.

John Dryzek's new work merits some of the same attention rightly secured during the past 20 years by Rawls' *A Theory of Justice*. Dryzek's book does not chart a lot of brand new theoretical ground in the manner of Rawls. In perspective, Dryzek shares a house built on classical Greek foundation with other occupants like Rousseau and Carol Pateman and Benjamin Barber. Dryzek explicates the theory with finesse and incisiveness, but what entitles the book to the claim of significance is the normative and practical purpose of its author. Dryzek's work is partisan and polemical, though without an ideological ax to grind. Dryzek intends no less than to alter the political world (or to contribute thereto), in part by revising the manner of comprehension and of study of poli-

tical phenomena. Unfortunately, the necessary complexity of his presentation will limit this book's readership to a precious few political scientists and other social scientists, some of whom, perceiving Dryzek's challenges to the orthodoxies of their disciplines, will reject his arguments out of hand. Shame on them.

Dryzek's is a call for strengthening and deepening democracy, for transforming its processes, policies, and many of the assumptions (especially those of scholars) on which contemporary democracy rests. Akin to Barber's "strong democracy," Dryzek's vision is of (the term itself is important) *discursive democracy.* This author is a foe of "liberal democratic" and "polyarchic" conceptualizations and of the distinguishing assumptions of self-billed democratic realists (e.g., that widespread public apathy stabilizes the system; that it is meaningful to assume that "democracy" requires nothing more than rule by an elite selected from at least two options offered to the public). Dryzek stringently rejects the "objectivism" that effectively restricts ordinary men and women (as voters, survey respondents, whatever) to passive selectors from preset menus.

Dryzek finds the heart of politics, the essence certainly of anything meriting the term "democracy," to be in the communication, the "talk" -- the *discourse* -- among citizens as actors and "subjects" freed from all that would limit them to being mere "objects." Like others grounded in classical thinking, he finds psychological-ethical-normative-remediative purpose in the interaction (especially the "talk" or discourse) of participation and decision making. (Dryzek, by the way, avers that much paraded today as democratic idealism or as the "classical model" of democratic theory really is a strawman set up by so-called realists.) This book includes important chapters that may (certainly they *should*) interest policy analysts, structural-functionalists, and specialists in international relations.

Two chapters will be of particular interest to readers of *Operant Subjectivity* and to the general community of Q methodologists. Chapter 8 ("The Mismeasure of Political Man")

critiques and repudiates R methodology, specifically the opinion survey, "the most popular instrument in the 'scientific' study of politics." Chapter 9 ("The Measure of Political Man -- and Woman") is an elaboration upon Q methodology which, "though far from perfect," Dryzek embraces and presents as curative replacement for the opinion survey and its irremediable defects.

The author's aim at the opinion survey is with a deadly accuracy. As instrument the survey becomes "opaque" to those who employ it; causal assumptions and claims of neutrality and empiricism block the path to development of "critical theory" and mask a defense of -- at least the acceptance of -- the "is"; for example the close connection between survey data-gatherers and democratic "realists" defending limited democracy. (Q methodologists may wish to remember this when next hit by survey proponents for being "atheoretical"; Dryzek is saying the aim of that charge should be at R, not Q.) Respondents are objectified, even kept in the dark about the study's character and inference lest their awareness pollute the data produced. Though they worship at the altar of "science," the large-N surveyors are far from being proficient scientists. "The Q approach," Dryzek maintains, "is closer to what successful *natural* sciences actually do than are the opinion surveys, regression equations, and other paraphernalia beloved by those objectivists in the social disciplines who idolize what turns out to be a largely mistaken conception of successful natural science. However, the justification for Q offered here is ultimately political rather than scientific; Q can contribute to a program of discursive democratization."

Those already familiar with the underlying assumptions and experienced in the use of Q should appreciate the skill and clarity with which Dryzek presents and illustrates these points to the uninitiated. The author articulates Stephenson's concourse theory and relates it to Q methodology. Dryzek's most persuasive illustration of the "discursive" potential of Q comes in his presentation of the 1985 Steven Brown study, one in which a single subject sorted one set of statements 18 times, each time under a different set of governing conditions.

Dryzek offers a Q study of his own in which 23 individuals from 11 nations who were active in Antarctic affairs responded to statements pertaining to Antarctic resources, environmental, political, and treaty issues.

Even so, readers already knowledgeable of Q may find in Dryzek's Chapter 9 little new to be learned of its theory and practice. The author's explanation of Q technique becomes belabored and somewhat pedestrian, if perhaps necessarily so. Pragmatists whose feet somehow have managed to plant in both the R and Q camps will feel uneasy about Dryzek's strongly implied imperative that one choose either right or wrong. This author in fact writes in some of the absolutist spirit of one just born again -- in Dryzek's case, into the Church of Will Stephenson.

One of the points made in Chapter 9 begs for challenge. Despite his legitimate trashing of the opinion survey, Dryzek appears unable or indisposed to forsake the last vestiges of the particular inferential thinking associated with the surveyors; his inferential claims for Q make him vulnerable to charges either of duplicity or of a failure to understand the far more substantial rewards that Q promises in return for what Q researchers must candidly deny. At least, Dryzek would have done well to omit this observation from his book:

> When it comes to extending its results to some larger population, Q does seek generalizations, but of a different order than those sought by survey research. Opinion researchers make general statements such as "vote choice in England is more affected by religion than by social class" or "50 percent of the population identifies with a political party." Generalizations in Q take the form "the environmental factor found in our Q study of Antarctica represents the orientation of a larger number of individuals concerned with Antarctica"; but we cannot determine the size of this larger group, in absolute terms or relative to the size of other groups. (p. 180)

Another point, not inaccurate, seems overstated by the author in his zeal to showcase the "discursive" properties or potential of Q. Dryzek's presentation of the Q-sorting scenario well may be the ideal; if so, I have never administered Q, nor

have I observed its administration, in a setting approaching the ideal. Dryzek writes that "conducting a Q sort is a political encounter," a central element of which is "discussion between subject and investigator." Through this encounter or action, Dryzek says, a "coherent profile for the subject" is produced (not discovered). I have always assumed, in contradistinction to Dryzek, that the "discursive" element in Q comes in the conscious and deliberative interaction between Q sorter and statements far more than between subject and investigator.

Flaws it has, but *Discursive Democracy* is strongly allied with the objectives and concerns of the community of Q methodologists. It is, more importantly, a poignant call for strengthening democracy and for altering the assumptions underlying it -- one made at a time when global trends point more affirmatively toward democracy than at any time in the past half century. Dryzek's book deserves, even if unlikely to receive, the serious consideration of American political science today.

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Descent into Subjectivity: Studies of Rawls, Dworkin and Unger in the Context of Modern Thought. By Cornelius F. Murphy, Jr. Wakefield, NH: Longwood Academic, 1990. 244 pp. $30.00 cloth, $14.95 paper.

Liberalism, "to make the human person the center of political, legal, and social existence," is what is at stake in this narrow slice of jurisprudential philosophy.

Murphy looks to three 20th century thinkers -- John Rawls, Ronald Dworkin and Roberto Unger -- in the reaction against totalitarian governments "to make the world hospitable to human freedom."

Murphy uses the works of Rawls, Dworkin and Unger to analyze the larger problems of jurisprudence: the failure to acknowledge "indebtedness" to classical thinkers (Rawls); problematic relationships drawn between literary theories of interpretation and "deeper views of human subjectivity" (Dworkin); and romanticism of projects which seek to "more fully empower us" (Unger).

The attempt to weave these writings under the umbrella of "subjectivity" is ambitious, though potentially problematic in its own right. Dworkin's work, for example, is seen as positioning a judge as "creator of values" in an ideal sense:

> The subjective ground gives a special significance to the phenomena of judicial interpretation. The power of interpretation makes it possible for the self to transform the world in ways that have not yet been fully imagined. Every interpretation creates the meaning which it attributes to the text. As mode of interacting with the world, textual interpretations make constant additions to an indeterminate object, and new interpretations are justified if they are the best interpretations we have so far developed.

Behind Murphy's modern spin, that subjectivity, which he never defines with precision, is a tool to understand modern jurisprudential thought, is a sprinkling of the traditional: the natural law of St. Thomas Aquinas, the positivism of John Austin, the sociological jurisprudence of Benjamin Cardozo, and the science of Myres McDougal. So it is not surprising that the analysis ends up faced with the timeless questions about the nature of concepts such as law, justice, reason, rights, morality, freedom, and politics.

Murphy ultimately dismisses the theories of Rawls, Dworkin, and Unger as aspiring "to transform the existing world according to some emancipatory ideal."

> In their hopes for progress the three also refuse to draw upon any sources of understanding beyond the self. To arrest this descent into subjectivity there must be a recovery of the power of reason. It must not repeat the mistakes of Rationalism and it must also avoid the reduction of thought to a mode of self-consciousness which collapses transcendence into im-

> manence. At the same time, reason must be relevant to temporal human possibilities.

The Descent into Subjectivity ultimately is a decidedly normative view of the nature of such things as law, and perhaps because of this, falls short in the recognition of the empirical political aspects. Jurisprudence continues to suffer from its unwillingness to accept the possibility that observation of the law (behavioral studies of lawyers and judges, content analysis of decisions, bibliographic analyses) might well contribute to knowledge. As such, the sociology of law (the nature of legal work and paradigms of court research) never enter the discussion (Tomasic, 1985).

As a useful study of the philosophy of law, *Descent into Subjectivity* falls short of the more analytical approach of Edgar Bodenheimer (1978), who views Dworkin as a critic of legal positivism acknowledging "the importance of nonformal sources of the law," Rawls as moving beyond Kant in seeing liberty as more than simple absence of constraints ("There remains the possibility, however, that a step towards greater egalitarianism might result in a curtailment of liberty"), and Unger as not falling under the jurisprudential umbrella.

Murphy's main contribution, then, might be seen as pushing the subjectivity-objectivity question into the arena of jurisprudence:

> In the domain of the virtues, the subject, as a person, is not an abyss of indeterminate liberty. Endowed with a spiritual center, he is a being in whom reason and will are mutually illuminating. As he is dignified by understanding, the range of his actions is not limited by the dialectic of history or what can be justified by the logical structures of the mind. Moving within and beyond the realm of human interaction, he finds a balance between transcendence and immanence.

Subjectivity is not only a useful tool of jurisprudential thought; as readers of Stephenson's work will recognize, scientific methods may use the concept to study jurisprudential and other forms of social rules. In fact, Cohen and Gleason (1990), in the communication arena, call for a merging of le-

gal philosophy and science: "the fabrics of law and communication are too heavily interwoven to reasonably believe that we can ignore the tenets and postulates of one while trying to understand the other" (p. 13). Kerlinger (1973) recognized that a major strength of Q method "is its close affinity to theory" (p. 594). (And Steven Brown, in a private correspondence, has reminded me, too, that the origins of these writings are not entirely independent: "Incidentally, Charles Stephenson, William Stephenson's eldest, was a student of Myres McDougal at Yale.") Hence, the writings of Rawls, Dworkin and Unger (no less than Murphy's) are subject to systematic investigation. A kind of beginning can be cited in Barbara L. Poole and Gertrude A. Steuernagel's, "A Subjective Examination of Theories of Justice," *Operant Subjectivity,* 1989, *12,* 65-80, which was a study of Rawls' theory.

The idealist in you will probably benefit from this quick read, although it will leave you questioning whether your research attempts to transform the world as you would like to see it, and whether the subjects of your research have subjective self-minded aims.

References

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