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**Kirsten Schultz.** *Tropical Versailles: Empire, Monarchy, and the Portuguese Royal Court in Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1821.* New York: Routledge, 2001. XI + 325 S. $28.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-415-92988-2; $120.00 (library), ISBN 978-0-415-92987-5.

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## Redefining Monarchy in a Slave Society

Redefining Monarchy in a Slave Society.

It is an old commonplace to note the unique nineteenth-century political stability of Brazil. Usually, it is argued that this derives from the singular circumstances of its gaining independence with the institutions and the heir of the Portuguese monarchy in place in Rio de Janeiro. It is often suggested that the stability thus owes a great deal to the fact that Brazilian colonial political and social structures remained relatively intact because of this odd transition. Schultz's successful intellectual and cultural history of the royal court in exile sets aside these commonplaces in examining how much the monarchy changed and was perceived to change between 1808 and 1822, and the way in which these changes were seen and manifested in thought and daily usage.

However much this study owes to the last decade or two of fashionable cultural history, it is grounded in a very thorough study of archival sources and published contemporary works. Indeed, some of the central concerns of the book are based upon the close reading of private and state correspondence, police records, theater and literature, contemporary political pamphlets and other ephemera, and an enviable command of the era's other published sources from both Portugal and Brazil. Moreover, Schultz has profited from the recent concern among her colleagues with this era, citing a number of newly published works and unpublished theses and dissertations from both Brazil and the United States. She is also to be commended for the dispassionate quality of her analysis and conclusions. However provocative the subjects, she conveys the perspective of contemporaries with care and comes to her own assessments with judicious detachment.

There are, inevitably, imperfections. In my reading, these seem to collect in the third chapter, where often one or two sources are the only evidence for the thought or response of a number of people (e.g., pp.73-74, 78-80, 81, 85), or in the third and fifth chapters, where a quotation will not necessarily bear the weight of the interpretation put upon it (e.g., 73-75, 103, 164, 166). One also wonders, in a book making so many important points with such good evidence, why the author should feel compelled to cite so many recent authors in the text (rather than in the notes) to support her arguments or suggest issues in

common. But none of these occasional flaws is of importance to a central argument of the book, and they are a small price to pay for the information, the analysis, and the suggestions the author gives us here.

The contribution of the book has to be understood in historiographical context. It may be said that the political meaning of the Brazilian monarchy has suffered terribly from an ahistorical extrapolation backwards from its historic success. That is, the unity of Portuguese America after independence and its relative political stability tend to be taken for granted. Most historians, for some time, have spent their energies on studying the later monarchy, to understand the passing of the regime, or, more often, they have dismissed the political history of the monarchy as an unchanging window dressing of little interest and concentrated on analysis of social or economic history, particularly slavery and its demise. These trends have been only slowly reversed in both Brazil and the United States.

Jose Murilo de Carvalho capably knit an elegant political analysis to socio-economic concerns in the 1980s Portuguese publication of his 1974 Stanford dissertation. In 1985, Emilia Viotti da Costa reworked a number of her seminal articles into a history of the empire; in 1988, Roderick Barman provided us with an impeccable political narrative explaining national formation between the 1790s and 1853. Richard Graham attempted a provocative model of political behavior at the local and national levels in 1990. Others have focused on more particular political analyses, with Thomas Flory, in 1981, addressing the ideology and reforms of the liberal opposition of the 1820s and '30s, Neill Macaulay penning a delightful revisionist study of the first emperor in 1986, Eul-Soo Pang trying to work out an understanding of the nobility in 1988, Barman providing an acute and thorough biography of the second emperor in 1999, and, in that same year, Judy Bieber publishing a close study of political history and behavior in the hinterlands of Minas Gerais. Very recent articles by Jeffrey Mosher and Jeffrey Needell suggest upcoming books on the political history of Pernambuco and the Conservative Party, respectively, and we have articles and books by Hendrik Kraay (2001) and Peter Beattie (2001) tying a significant institution of the monarchy, the army, to the social and political history of the regime. In Brazil, Carvalho's work was preceded by a rich, pioneering anthology on independence edited by Carlos Guilherme Mota in 1972, and then followed by Ilmar Rohloff de Mattos's ambitious study of statist ideology in 1990. In 1998 we had Iara Lis Carvalho Souza's sophisticated analysis of the public culture of the late colonial monarchy and early national monarchy and Lilia Moritz Schwarcz's fascinating tour of second-reign public culture and iconography. In 1999, Cecilia Helena de Salles Oliveira provided her probing analysis of the socio-economic interests influencing independence; in 2000, Isabel Lustosa published her thoughtful analysis of the polemical periodical press of the 1820s, cockpit of the contending interests and ideologies.

In a phrase, the magisterial work of such pioneers as Murilo de Carvalho, Viotti da Costa, and Barman have allowed us to tackle smaller parts of the whole, doing away with much that was superficially and poorly understood. Schultz's book is, then, only the latest contribution to the rediscovery and re-evaluation of the monarchy's political history. It is, however, one that is especially compelling for the methodology informing its insight and the centrality of its focus. The Portuguese and Brazilian transition to constitutional monarchy and independence have been ably traced by Macaulay, contributors to the Mota anthology (particularly Maria Odila Leite da Silva Dias and Francisco D. Falcon and Ilmar Rohloff de Mattos), and Barman, among others. They and, more recently, Salles Oliveira, have already served us by the detailed political narrative and informed analysis of the transition in terms of ideology, political contingency, and socio-economic interests. Schultz's contribution is in going beyond the events and the socio-economic or political forces driving them to an understanding of how the transition occurred in the lived experience of Brazil's political center.

Schultz does these things by tying together both the archival analysis typical of the best of traditional historiography with the innovative political cultural concerns common among many historians recently. She does so in a study of how the flight and exile of the Portuguese court led to a reevaluation and reconstruction of the institution of monarchy in a revolutionary age and in a slave society marked by racial distinctions. The chapters are arranged chronologically, addressing key issues: the impact of exile on the nature of the Portuguese empire and the legitimacy of the monarchy, the metamorphosis of the viceregal seat of Rio de Janeiro into the court of an empire, the impact of the monarch's proximity upon his American vassals, the ambiguity of the monarch's role with respect to the institution of slavery, the metamorphosis of Atlantic commerce and the role of Brazilians, Portuguese, and British within it, and the challenge of liberal constitutionalism in the former metropole and the new realm of Brazil.

In these chapters she demonstrates that the exile

transformed the monarchy from a European absolutist regime with overseas colonies to a regenerated, even new, monarchy, and, then, finally, to a constitutional institution attempting to contain political revolution and straddle co-equal realms on either side of the Atlantic. In so doing, she explores the way in which discourse, policy, and ceremonial indicate and incorporate the changes and challenges of the era, and are reflected in the usages of the monarch, the appearance of the city, the measured repression and patronage of the enslaved, the correspondence and memoranda of crown officials and courtiers, and the perception and agency of the poor and the captives. This cultural approach and close ideological reading are an innovative contribution with clear potential for further work by others. Indeed, this is something to which Schultz alludes when she notes that many of the contradictions the monarchy's transition incorporated were bequeathed intact to the Empire of Brazil. It is a welcome book, clearly written, vigorously argued, and potentially seminal. It is sure to endure.

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