

## CHILE AFTER 1970

*PODER POLÍTICO Y TRANSICIÓN AL SOCIALISMO: TRES AÑOS DE LA UNIDAD POPULAR.* by JAIME RUIZ-TAGLE P. (Caracas: Instituto Latinoamericano de Investigaciones Sociales. September 1973. Pp. 196.)

*CHILE 1970–1972: LA CONFLICTIVA EXPERIENCIA DE LOS CAMBIOS ESTRUCTURALES.* By MANUEL J. BARRERA. (Caracas: Instituto Latinoamericano de Investigaciones Sociales. March 1973. Pp. 280.)

*ALLENDE'S CHILE: THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE RISE AND FALL OF THE UNIDAD POPULAR.* By STEFAN DE VYLDER. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976. Pp. 251. \$13.95.)

The proliferation of writings on Chile after 1970 is only exceeded by the proliferation of reviews, critiques, and catalogs of those writings. It becomes ever more difficult to read a book or article on the Allende years whose main points or lines of argumentation have not been made before. In addition to the running commentary on the Unidad Popular period by proponents of the various Chilean political movements and parties engaged in the political process from 1970 to 1973, we also have available analyses by foreign ideologues, journalists, and academic specialists and numerous monographs on the bottlenecks or resistance confronted by the Unidad Popular government. A recent typology and discussion of these writings by Arturo and Samuel Valenzuela (LARR 10, no. 3 [Fall 1975]) provided an extremely helpful synthesis and overview of this literature in relation to the ideological premises, intellectual concerns, and alternative explanations of the process in Chile at that time.

Perhaps the single most salient conclusion to be drawn from this literature on Chile since 1970 is that the Chilean polity as well as the sociopolitical struggle (1970–73) were incredibly complex. From the simplistic ideological affirmations of guilt by various Marxists and reformers to the most sophisticated analyses by other Marxists and other reformers, it becomes clear that if socialism was impossible to achieve (and Lenin's critique of Kautsky was confirmed), there existed extensive opportunities for fundamental reforms in Chile in 1970 that were lost because the idea of reform, and the very label "reformista," had been discredited among important elements of the Marxist parties and movements as well as among certain "Christian revolutionaries." To label a program "merely reformist" was to say it was somehow despicable or incompatible with the *real* revolutionary task. There would be no two steps forward, one step back for the revolutionary militants. Calls for full speed ahead, no compromise, and shrill rhetoric polarized the opposition despite pleas by the wiser, battle-scarred Communists and other members of the coalition. Not even Allende could call himself a reformer in public, even if this concession to reality—for he was a reformer in a system amenable to reform—might have saved Chile from the military coup that many of the shrillest of the "revolutionaries" predicted and clearly helped to provoke. Incredible as it might seem, here were self-proclaimed

Marxist-Leninists openly declaring that they were in fact infiltrating the armed forces and seeking to subvert military discipline. This was not a strategy for revolution but, as the Chilean Communists and the Christian left correctly recognized, a design guaranteed to incite counterrevolution.

Published in September 1973, Jaime Ruiz-Tagle's *Poder político y transición al socialismo* consists of a series of articles published in 1972 and 1973 in the Jesuit-oriented monthly, *Mensaje*, along with an article by the same author, from *Études*. These articles represent a documentary history of what leftist Christian Democrats and Christian Socialists called "apoyo crítico" of the Unidad Popular government. In general the thrust of the articles insists upon the need for reconciliation of the UP coalition with sympathetic middle-class elements. In this vein, the lead article in the volume (dated 10 September 1973) follows an analysis of the "problem of power" with a call upon the Allende government to recognize that "the proletariat can only secure the support of other sectors to the extent that those [other sectors] are assured along the way that their interests will be protected." The irony of this passage, published a day before the military coup, reflects the continuing disbelief by many Chileans that irreconcilable differences existed between the government coalition and the Christian Democratic party, even as political polarization intensified. Indeed, a careful reading of the Ruiz-Tagle volume provides a clear picture of both the radicalization of the middle-class opposition to the Allende administration and a detailed critique by "Christian socialists" of the Unidad Popular experience. Of added interest in this volume is a bibliography with more than four hundred entries on the Chilean experience—almost all published after 1970. Arranged thematically (e.g., "problems of the transition to socialism," "agrarian reform," "copper nationalization") it offers the student of the Chilean process a monumental challenge that no sane academic can fail to resist.

In contrast to the partisan political orientation of the Ruiz-Tagle volume, Stefan de Vylder's *Allende's Chile* is a highly readable, professional, and sympathetic—yet critical—assessment of the political economy of Unidad Popular. It is perhaps the single most useful monograph published to date as a general evaluation of the economic policies and dilemmas of the Allende administration from 1970 to 1973. The author recognizes the ideological diversity of the UP parties, the defects in the government's economic strategy, and the inseparable interplay of domestic and international politics and economics that makes economic analysis without political analysis of the Chilean case practically meaningless. *Allende's Chile* considers critically all the major elements of the UP programs, the sources of intra-coalition and Rightist-Christian Democratic opposition and regretfully concludes that "The most likely explanation of *why* the Unidad Popular was economically and politically defeated may be that the administration's economic policies simply did not work." However, de Vylder's explanation of this seemingly simplistic statement departs considerably from the by-now common liberal critiques of the UP economic program and offers a sophisticated insight into the radicalization of the bourgeoisie, middle class, and *gremialista* movement that eventually provided the social base for counterrevolution. De Vylder's book will please neither the sectarian ideologues, revolutionary purists, nor righteous

reactionaries. Its conclusion, that "the policy actually pursued by the Unidad Popular was doomed to failure," can be accepted by all of them—for different reasons.

Manuel J. Barrera's *Chile 1970–1972* provides a less global picture of the Allende years, prefaced by consideration of socioeconomic development in Chile in the 1960s. Barrera's analysis of the UP program and political conflict occasioned by efforts to implement the program relies heavily upon contemporary newspaper, periodical, and journal articles, thereby summarizing the socio-ideological cleavages of Chilean society as manifested in the mass media and professional publications. Barrera's macro-analysis of the Allende period is not original nor in any way unique. However, materials in chapters 4–6 offer a more detailed analysis of efforts to create a sector of "social property" in the economy (along with a useful case study of workers' participation in the enterprises in the "social property" sector) than is available in most treatments of the UP experience. In contrast, a final chapter on the agrarian sector during the Allende administration relies almost entirely upon the well-known ICIRA studies and newspaper articles.

Though published by the same social science institute, in the same series as the Ruiz-Tagle volume discussed above, Barrera's study is not included in Ruiz-Tagle's extensive bibliography—though more specialized studies by Barrera on workers' participation and copper are included. Notwithstanding the value of the case studies on worker participation in the area of "social property," the Barrera volume is not an indispensable reference for even the most dedicated students of the Unidad Popular experience in Chile.

Taken together, these three studies fail to represent the full ideological and analytical spectrum of writings on the Chilean experience. None of these studies offers the unabashedly reactionary viewpoint of Robert Moss' *Chile's Marxist Experiment* or the Trotskyist insistence on the inevitable perils of reformism (Les Evans, ed., *Disaster in Chile*). Likewise, none of these books conveys fully the bitter sectarianism among and within the Unidad Popular parties and between the Allende government and the opposition. Nevertheless, each, in its own way, adds to our understanding of the process that culminated in the imposition of a brutal military government that not even the Trotskyists will criticize for being "merely reformist."

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