ANTONIO MANUEL, ARTUR BARRIO, CILDO MEIRELES: ***Brazilian Art under Dictatorship***. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012.

In 1970, Brazil's brutal military dictatorship granted artists permission to exhibit their work in an official capacity in a municipal park. Far from totalitarian celebrations of an industrial and abundant Fatherland, many of the works criticized the state and challenged traditional sensibilities. Thereza Simões reproduced Malcolm X's call to action, "Act Silently"; Luíz Alphonsus Guimarães worked with napalm; and Cildo Meireles burned live chickens as a metaphor for the torture of political prisoners and the asphyxiation of civil society at large. How were such incendiary works produced under a military regime? Claudia Calirman's *Brazilian Art under Dictatorship* argues that the emergence of conceptual-based and ephemeral trends, combined with poorly enforced censorship led artists to become critical voices of ideological dissent despite social control and political repression.

Arguing against predictions of a *vazio cultural* (cultural vacuum), Calirman examines the careers of three Rio de Janeiro-based experimental artists, Antonio Manuel, Artur Barrio and Cildo Meireles, from the enactment of Institutional Act 5 (AI-5) in 1968, which shuttered the legislature, established censorship of art and media, and suspended habeas corpus, up to 1975, just three years prior to the repeal of AI-5 that marked Brazil's gradual return to democracy. Calirman's monograph is organized around individual case studies detailing the events, criticism, theory, and influences that informed the artists' work and trajectory and comparing them to their international equivalents. Calirman discusses Manuel's media-based interventions relative to the counterculture Tropicália movement and his efforts to bring art into the realm of popular culture. Barrio's public spectacles and macabre objects recall the international Fluxus movement and inspire local questions of postcolonialism. And Cildo Meireles provokes a lengthy, if unresolved, discussion of on-going debates regarding the significance of "conceptual art" in the Latin American context.

The book begins with a thorough examination of the international boycott of the 10th São Paulo Biennial in 1969 (a protest that would last the decade), establishing the deeply imbricated nature of art and activism that permeated the era. Thus, when Antonio Manuel stripped naked at the 1979 National Salon of Modern Art, declaring that his body was the work of art—the second event that propels the study—it was the jurors, not the police, who censured the work, for artistic rather than moral violations. The event sets the tone of the study, in which anxious institutions self-censored to avoid reprisal and in which all speech is implicitly political, Calirman lauding Manuel's act as "establishing the body as a rebellious force and a political tool in a repressive society" (49). Yet

an unexamined notion of dictatorship obscures the deeper relation of art, state and society, generally reduced throughout the book to the tandem constructs of repression and censorship. Contrasting Manuel's piece to body art in the U.S., Calirman concludes, "In Rio de Janeiro the artist's body was used as part of a celebratory tradition rather than in a self-afflicting way" (44). Yet the complexities of gender and sexuality under dictatorship far exceed tropes of Brazilian corporeal abandon, as the generals sought to re-entrench a patriarchal, Christian moral order, threatened by the free love and open sexuality of the counter-culture and the perceived destabilizing force of women's liberation—issues on which there is a rich, scholarly literature. Moreover, the physicality of repression—through torture, rape, and disappearance (the extreme opposite of habeus corpus) that likewise inflect his gesture, warrant significantly deeper examination.

Calirman also explores the role of madness and marginality, particularly in relation to Barrio's art and philosophy, noting the influence of schizophrenic mental patients on the development of modernism in Rio. Although not pursued, these themes offer opportunity to consider the military's use of psychological warfare and the arbitrary, often irrational practices of the dictatorship itself, aimed at creating anxiety and suspicion—a psychosocial neurosis—as a means of social control. The singularity of Brazilian aesthetics and the contribution that its example holds for understanding the relation of art to politics more broadly relates to a specific—if illogical—ideological discourse that permeated society and no doubt influenced both the production and reception of art.

Indeed, questions of dictatorship punctuate the narrative somewhat sporadically, often appearing as brief remarks at the conclusion of a section rather than as a sustained analysis. This reflects not only Calirman's respect for the artists' aesthetic explorations and efforts to distance themselves from Brazil's repressive politics, but also the challenges the author faced gauging reception. From the outset Calirman laments, "There is no easy way to identify how these works of art were received, as the media were censored . . ." (9). Yet the aggressiveness with which the public destroyed Manuel's Hot Ballot Boxes, the spontaneous transformation of the gallery into a site of peril and resistance when Cildo Meireles' Fiat Lux provided the opportunity to disobey armed guards, and the real police actions catalyzed by Barrio's "Bloody Bundles" (cow bones and meat tied with bloodied twine and left in public places) suggest a catharsis and communication beyond the metaphors of repression and art's evasion of censors with which Calirman ties such works to the context. How did relative artistic freedom compensate for the loss of civil liberties? Were artistic actions a way to reclaim public space curtailed and controlled by the military presence and prohibitions against public gathering? Toward this end, Calirman draws comparisons with French theorist Guy Debord's critique of urbanism—but Rio

of the 1970s was emphatically not Paris of the Situationist Internationalists in the late 1950s. What happens to the "society of the spectacle" when civil society is repressed, mute and powerless? Did artistic collaboration fill a void left by anti-politics? Brazilian Art under Dictatorship begs these questions, which warrant more nuanced exploration.

Calirman acknowledges her reluctance to "credit the dictatorship with having had a predominantly stimulating effect on the artistic production of the time," (a notion she dismisses as "absurd") (146), turning instead to a descriptive agenda: to create "a portrait of the time" and "to *provide a context* for understanding the impact of AI-5 . . . over the visual arts" (7; italics mine). The absence of a clear central thesis weakens the book's organization, which meanders from theme to theme and repeats key events, figures and texts as they influenced each individual artist. Yet the context Calirman provides, particularly the arbitrary role of museums and public institutions, provides explanatory variables beyond the narrow parameters of state repression vs. individual creativity. Her depiction of a sophisticated artistic culture, fed on more than a decade of international exposure to "universal forms" through the activities of the São Paulo Biennial, suddenly shifting with the boycott "from international exhibitions and grand gestures to local exhibitions and impromptu happenings" (35) suggests a more palatable causality, as the introspection and local collaboration demanded by the political context catalyzed a watershed of Brazilian innovation that anticipates Brazil's meteoric market and critical ascent after the fall of the regime. Copiously researched, imminently readable and introducing a wealth of invaluable material not readily available in English, *Brazilian Art under Dictatorship* opens fertile terrain that should inspire further scholarship on this vital period of creativity amidst adversity.

Edith Wolfe *Tulane University*

JUAN CARLOS KOROL, CLAUDIO BELINI: ***Historia económica de la Argentina en el siglo XX***. Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI editores, 2012.

This book traces the economic history of twentieth-century Argentina from the outbreak of the First World War to the collapse of the currency convertibility plan that marked the end of the neoliberal economic reforms enforced in the country during the 1990s. In so doing it takes up the controversial economic performance of a leading South American country that has long received widespread scholarly attention, and that at the onset of the last century many