

# The corporatist thought in Miguel Reale: readings of Italian fascism in Brazilian *integralismo*<sup>1</sup>

*O pensamento corporativo em Miguel Reale: leituras do fascismo italiano no integralismo brasileiro*

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## RESUMO

O jurista Miguel Reale se destacou no movimento integralista brasileiro por vários motivos. Em primeiro lugar, pelo cuidado especial com que se dedicou à questão da organização do futuro Estado integralista. Em segundo, pela sua preocupação social de atingir os operários e resolver a chamada ‘questão social’ a partir da reorganização do Estado e da aplicação da doutrina corporativista. E, por fim, pela sua formação, tanto pessoal como educacional, a qual foi muito marcada pela cultura italiana, o que levou a uma especial influência do fascismo italiano em seu pensamento e em sua ação política. Este artigo procura explorar a concepção de Estado em Miguel Reale, a diferença entre o seu pensamento e o dos outros líderes do integralismo (como Plínio Salgado e Gustavo Barroso) no tocante ao Estado e como ele elaborou o programa corporativista do movimento.

Palavras-chave: fascismo italiano; corporativismo; integralismo; Miguel Reale.

## ABSTRACT

Within the Brazilian integralist movement, jurist Miguel Reale is outstanding for many reasons. First of all, for the special attention he dedicated to the issue of the organization of the future integralist State. Secondly, for his social concerns, as he aimed to reach workers and to solve the so called ‘social question’ beginning with the reorganization of the State and the adoption of the corporatist doctrine. Finally, for his personal and educational background, marked by the Italian culture, which led to a special influence of Italian fascism on his thinking and political activity. This article explores the conception of the State in Miguel Reale, the difference between his ideas and those of other integralist leaders (such as Plínio Salgado and Gustavo Barroso) concerning the State and the way he designed the corporatist program of the movement.

Keywords: Italian fascism; corporatism; Integralism; Miguel Reale.

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Miguel Reale (1910-2006) was one of the most important leaders of the Brazilian Integralist Action [AIB = Ação Integralista Brasileira] and in this movement he was outstanding for the special care he gave issues involving the organization of the future integral State. His reflections on the social issue, the State, corporatism and others were more strongly marked by a reading of the national and international reality than those of Plínio Salgado and Gustavo Barroso. The latter had romantic, almost mystical views that did not prevent them from keeping in touch with reality, but caused them to be much less concerned about practical issues than Reale.

This text seeks to explore the conception of State in Miguel Reale, emphasizing how he intended to solve the pressing issues of Brazil in the 1930s, such as incomplete modernity and social problems, by means of theoretical and practical instruments present in his time, like corporatism and planning. For this I will seek to analyze not only the texts he produced, but also his specific intellectual and political background among the integralist leaders. A final section attempting to discuss the hypothesis that he may be the most ‘modern’ integralist leader will close the article, with the perspective that it will help us gain a better understanding of the various viewpoints that interacted within the integralist movement.

## MIGUEL REALE AND INTEGRALISM

Traditionally it is said that there were three great sections in Brazilian Integralism: a more conservative one, mystical and close to Catholicism (Plínio Salgado); a corporatist one, close to Italian fascism and more concerned with the organization of the State and the social issue (Miguel Reale); and a more romantic one, focusing on Catholic traditionalism, anti-Semitism and to some extent close to Nazism (Gustavo Barroso). This division, of course, may be questioned, and other variations, using other criteria, could be established. However, it is a division that in general lines is correct and gives one a more precise notion of the various ‘Integralisms’ that existed alongside within the Brazilian Integralist Action.

It should only be emphasized that we must be careful not to see Integralism as an agglomeration of currents and groups that were fighting each other, without anything in common. No matter how much they disputed power and had ideas that up to a certain point were diverse, the various integralist currents basically remained united to the last, based on a common minimum. It is really essential to perceive that Integralism was a movement with internal

currents and much discussion on several topics, but not a shapeless amalgam, so that one will not fall into the trap of giving up its study and critique because one considers it excessively heterogeneous and multiple (Paim, 1999; Souza, 1982). It was multiple, but not to the point of becoming disunited.

The figure of Miguel Reale is extremely important in this context, since he was definitely one of the main leaders of the movement. Born in São Bento do Sapucaí (SP) in 1910, he was the son of the Italian physician Brás Reale and of Felicidade da Rosa Góis Chiaradia, with almost completely Italian ancestry. As a reflection of this, he received most of his high school education at the traditional Dante Alighieri School in São Paulo, which at the time was completely dedicated to the diffusion, not only of the Italian culture, but also of the fascist ideology.

This Italian origin of course did not mean an automatic connection with the regime that was then dominant in Italy. But the fact that he was socialized at the Dante Alighieri, his fluency in Italian, and his contact with the culture of that country certainly influenced his view of the world and gave him access to information and debates involving Italian fascism, which would have been more difficult for other integralist leaders.

However, more than being of Italian origin, Reale was a social thinker and a nationalist, in the sense in which the word was used at the time, i.e. someone who was concerned with his country (and, as the child of immigrants, his need to test his 'Brazilianism' appears to have been even more intense) and advocated a total reform of Brazil towards authoritarianism and control and solution of the social issues.

Reale was above all a lawyer, and even more a jurist, and this strongly influenced his professional and personal life. He graduated from the traditional law school, Faculdade de Direito de São Paulo in 1934, and there he obtained his PhD in 1941. Until the end of his life he became known as one of the most respected Brazilian jurists, and published dozens of books and occupied many public and private positions, always as a lawyer, jurist and social thinker.

These three conditions – Brazilian nationalist of Italian origin, conservative and a jurist – were essential in shaping his thinking, especially during the period of the Integralist Action, to which he became affiliated already in 1932. In the six following years he would be one of its main leaders, having published many books about the doctrine and political practice of the movement, editing journals and newspapers, such as *Panorama* and *Acção*, and holding relevant positions, such as National Secretary of Doctrine.<sup>2</sup> After the integralist period he held several public and private positions, including the Presidency of the

University of São Paulo (USP), and was an important participant in the movement that led to the 1964 coup.<sup>3</sup> He was also one of the most active participants in the process of legal institutionalization of the military regime.

Reale was certainly not someone isolated within the AIB, and his ideas and perspectives were shared, in whole or in part, by other activists and leaders. Furthermore, much of what he wrote or thought was clearly in the ‘spirit of the time’, as we shall see below. All the same, his way of seeing the problems of his time, and Integralism itself, presented significant specificities that deserve to be highlighted if we want to gain a better understanding both of Reale and of the movement in which he participated.

As regards the relationship between Integralism and fascisms, for instance, Miguel Reale had no problem in identifying in these (which he preferred to identify as “nationalist movements” [Reale, 1934; 1935b]) the source of inspiration from which Integralism, after also absorbing the essence of Brazilian thinkers, had found the strength to be born. In his several books of the 1930s he clearly indicates how Integralism, although national, was part of the fascist world, especially the Italian model.

On this point, it is worthwhile considering a citation from his work in which he leaves no doubt regarding his position:

First it was Italy that reacted, expelling from the altar of the Fatherland all exploiters of popular passions. And then fascism arose, not as a simple reaction against Communism, but as a new conception of life, spiritualist, voluntarist and profoundly moral and heroic. Then comes the turn of Portugal and then Hitler definitively annihilates the Communist-Jewish core from his land, beginning a powerful work of national reconstruction, at the cost of immense sacrifices.

At the same time fascism became universal, shaking the English soul with Mosley, the French one with “Francism” and Colonel La Roque, the Dutch, Polish, American, Mexican, Belgian, Austrian, and so on, and gave rise, through the energy of *Brasil Novo* [New Brazil], to the marvelous integralist movement, the pride of the American continent. (Reale, 1935a, p.102)

Many years later, in his memoirs, he said that Plínio did not know much about the fascist doctrine, but that he was convinced that fascism was in accordance with the ‘spirit of the time’ in which we lived. However, both he and Plínio also believed that this ‘spirit of the time’ would have to be adapted to the national imperatives.<sup>4</sup>

Likewise, he confirms – with the unconcern of someone who, in 1986, no longer had to worry about admitting the fact – that Integralism was part of the fascist universe and contained a national/international polarity, similarly to what happened in modernism:

One might say that there was a paradox or a certain ambiguity in the search for ourselves, under the influx of foreign experiences such as that of fascism, but this had also occurred with the Week of Modern Art in 1922, when the more nationalist claims were inspired by European writers and artists, including Marinetti, a leading figure of fascist culture ...

Actually, no matter how faithful we wish to be to what emanates from the purest sources of our own national being, this can never be separated from the values that constitute the “spirit of a time”: in this case, however, when there is an intentionality to discover or reveal ourselves based on ourselves, the alien models are not an object of mere transplantation, but act as a graft on a tree that we ourselves planted, often enabling us to reveal something specific and peculiar to us through that enriching reception. (Reale, 1986, p.76-77)

Reale was, thus, a fascist and above all a fascist close to the model of Italian fascism, as indicated by the number of Italian authors cited in his books. In one of the newspapers that he ran (*Acção*, between 1936 and 1938), his prediction for Italian fascism and even more for corporatism as a solution to the problems of the world becomes equally evident and explicit (Barbosa, 2007).

Therefore, it is not surprising that the Italian government ascribed to Reale a key role in the penetration and development of the fascist influence in Integralism, considering his origin and admiration for the Duce and for fascism.<sup>5</sup> Reale, indeed, after the integralist coup of 1938, took refuge precisely in Italy, where he was very well received,<sup>6</sup> and, according to a letter to friends in São Paulo at the end of that year, said that he regretted that Mussolini had not approved his request for help to turn around the defeat of the movement.<sup>7</sup> This is a fact that indicates how his ties with Italian fascism were and continued to be consistent to the last.

Reale’s specificities are even more evident when we consider the matters of anti-Semitism, racism and the Catholic influence. In several of his books and in his memoirs, he refused the idea of Jews as a racial problem and anti-Semitism as combatting the Jewish race (Reale, 1935b; 1986, p.63 and 93-99). Anti-Semitic terms and expressions – such as when he praised Hitler for eliminating the “Communist-Jewish core” that threatened Germany (Reale, 1935a,

p.102) – appear here and there (Tucci Carneiro, 1988, p.379-381), but to me they seem to be more form than substance. He also spoke out openly against racism of the Aryan kind (Reale, 1935c, p.130-132).

Despite this, in the newspaper that he ran, *Acção*, there is a background anti-Semitism and during the last phase of the periodical, in 1938, the intensity of this sentiment increases (Barbosa, 2007, p.134, 201) in what appears to be a clear reflection of racial laws in Italy and of Reale's connection with Rome. The assumption that his newspaper received some type of financial assistance from the Italian Consulate, and for this reason presented greater closeness to the new Italian racial guidelines, although not confirmed by documents, is perfectly plausible, given the firm ties between Integralism and fascism and Reale's prestige in Rome (Bertonha, 2001). Anyhow, I believe that anti-Semitism in this case was rather an instrument for political mobilization than really part of a denser feeling, more form than core of Reale's thinking and concerns.

As to the Catholic influence, differently from Barroso and, especially, from Salgado, in Reale it appears to be very small or almost non-existent, which reflects his intellectual and political background (1934; 1983, vol. 3, p.223-233). In fact, Miguel Reale claimed (1986, p.75-88) that his texts made explicit the fact that Integralism was not a monarchical and Catholic movement, which appears to have irritated ultraconservative Catholic thinkers such as Plínio Correa de Oliveira and the *O Legionário* newspaper group. A few later observers (Merquior, 1991) tried to show Reale as a thinker closer to Catholic Integralism than to fascism, closer to Charles Maurras than to Mussolini, but this is difficult to advocate.

The issue of workers was also fundamentally important in the thinking of Reale, a lot more than in Salgado or in Barroso. According to his book of memoirs (Reale, 1986, p.110-117), after being exonerated from his position as head of doctrine in 1937, he created the already mentioned newspaper *Acção*, in São Paulo, precisely to be the mouthpiece of the São Paulo integralists, who laid special emphasis on the workers and workers' unions-corporatist problems. This focus, in fact, was characteristic of Integralism in São Paulo and was further strengthened when Jeová Motta became director of the Province in 1936.

Reale's perspective, emphasizing corporatism and the collaboration between classes and praising the 'good boss', may have had a limited impact among the worker classes. But it indicates a peculiar view (even if not exclusive, since other leaders, such as Olbiano de Mello, were also close to it) of the problems of his time, with a strong concern about the workers' movement, which is easy to explain by the influence of Italian fascism on Reale and by the

industrial concentration in São Paulo in those days, which made the problem of workers highly important and something that had to be solved at any cost. And it would be, in Reale's view, by reformatting the State and by corporatism.

Reale's reading, however, is not simply that of a sympathizer of Italian fascism and a resident of the largest industrial center of the country, but also and especially that of a jurist. Plínio Salgado, for instance, also experienced the modern daily life of the São Paulo capital and sympathized with Italian fascism, but his reflections on the State were vague and generalizing, and he identified the base of a future integral State not in the workers' unions but in the natural groups, especially families (Roque, 2000, p.305-307). Reale thus shared with Plínio influences, concerns and solutions, so that both were together in the AIB, but they had differences about some details and consequences.

Reale also did not advocate a completely totalitarian perspective with continuous mobilization of the masses for society, except as a way of achieving power. Salgado's perspective, in this regard, was different. As clearly indicated by Ricardo Benzaquem de Araújo (1987), Plínio Salgado's perspective was to mobilize society in order to change it. Whether this can be called totalitarianism is a question that remains open, but this mobilizing perspective is present both in Salgado and, in different patterns, in Barroso.

This perspective is not evident, however, in Reale, who preferred a hierarchical and authoritarian control of society at the top and the mediation of difference by corporatism. The State, more than race or man, was the key to Reale's thinking, and the conquest and reformatting of the State meant the key to the desired change.

## THE STATE AND CORPORATISM IN MIGUEL REALE

It is not really surprising that the most famous book by Miguel Reale in the 1930s is called precisely *O Estado Moderno* [The Modern State], published in 1934. For Reale, as expressed in this book, fascism would create a new concept of State, which would overcome individualism and ensure the supremacy of the collective. The State, as the embodiment of the Nation, had the duty of distributing and defending the common good, but could not be totalitarian, above moral law and ethics.

According to Reale, in the fascist world there were two concepts of the State: in one, the individual could not enjoy any autonomy. In the other, between the State and the individual there was a reciprocal cession of faculties

for the common good. The first was the whole absorbing the parts (totalitarianism), while the second was the integration of all in the whole, but respecting specific, exclusive values. This, according to him, was the perspective of Italian fascism, which he advocated for AIB.

Reale, in fact, was a lot more conscious of the worldwide debate on work and corporatism than, for instance, Plínio Salgado, as can be seen in several of his works (Reale, 1935c; 1937). In a book published in 1935, indeed, he comments and discusses documents such as the Italian “Carta del Lavoro” and the “Estatuto do Trabalho” from Portugal, which shows how he was involved in an international dialogue on the topic.

The criticism of liberalism and the proposal to overcome its contradictions by reforming the State thus form the general lines of Miguel Reale’s integralist thinking. According to him, in the liberal State there was a contradiction between the individual and the State, a contradiction that was typical of capitalism and could only be overcome by reorganizing the State on other terms.

The formulation of the integral State resided in the redefinition of the notions of individual and State. He does not consider eliminating the differences between people and classes possible or desirable, but they should be integrated and included in the State in a hierarchical and controlled manner – a strong and ethical State, able to control the differences instead of eliminating them. It would therefore be up to the State to coordinate the uniquenesses among the citizens, making it possible for them to participate according to each person’s own *capacities* and *conditions*.

In this scenario, the most capable of governing would be at the *top* of society and the government should be under the responsibility of the dominant classes that should govern for the people, and the less apt should at most have the right to participate on the local level. Based mainly on Italian authors, such as Pareto and Mosca, Reale therefore concluded that only the dominant classes had the right and the duty of governing, and that any hope for social order would only come from them.<sup>8</sup>

In Reale’s model, the corporations and municipalities were the keys to allow the constitution of the integral State, diluting and absorbing the tensions and differences. The municipality was the fundamental cell of the corporate structure and should have full administrative autonomy. The municipal leaders would be elected by universal suffrage, acceptable in local realities, whereas on the national level the power should come from the top.

However, the integral State would also have solutions to regulate and balance the probable distortions between territorial dimension and representativeness, between representativeness at the local level and extreme political centralization, thanks to the corporatist structures. Whereas liberalism had provoked the exaggerated strengthening of the states of the Federation, this structure would be corrected by maintaining the federative form, as long as it were combined with the corporations, the autonomy of municipalities and political centralization, aiming to balance the forces between the regions and the Nation-State.

Although the integral State advocated absolute political centralization, the division of the country into states (provinces) would be maintained, since it was considered that if there were no intermediation of provincial agencies, the municipal corporations would have to be linked *directly* to the national structures, which would not be feasible in practice in a continent-sized country. On the regional level of the provinces, the “trade union/association federations” (formed by the gathering of the representatives of all trade unions/associations of the same professions) would join together to form the Provincial Council that would choose the governor.

The gathering of the federations on the national level would establish the Trade Union/Association Confederations, which would constitute the National Economic Council. Finally, the Corporations would be the official bodies that integrated the representatives of the different professions in one and the same field of production. Each corporation would elect its representative to the National Corporate Chamber. The Senate would be constituted by members of “non-economic” (social and cultural) corporations, and its union with the National Corporate Chamber would form the National Congress – tasked with electing the Head of the Nation.

According to Ricardo Benzaquem de Araújo and Cintia Rufino Franco (Araújo, 1988, p.23-24; Silva, 2011), Reale thought that trade unions/associations and corporations were not exactly the same thing. Trade unions/associations would be used to solve class conflicts, gathering together all the participants – the employers and the employees – in one and the same sector to settle and annul conflicts. The corporations, on the other hand, would be the union of the trade unions/associations to solve common problems on a larger scale and for broader purposes.

It is impossible to know whether this complex system would have worked in practice. It is most likely that it would have repeated the Italian model and be converted into a bureaucratic structure with scarce power and functionality,

limited to forbidding strikes and subduing the workers' movement. It is interesting to see how Reale made his own reading of the problem of the State and conceived a model in which hierarchy is essential and corporatism is the key to allow this hierarchy to be maintained.

Trade union/association representativeness together with the “administrative decentralization-political centralization” binomial are the solutions suggested to correct the distortions of a damaging liberal federalism and a system of power that had brought people closer to the social and economic abyss. This was a corporate solution that essentially had its origin in foreign models, but whose emphasis not only on the trade unions/associations and on corporations but also on the municipalities reveals an adaptation designed to allow it to work in a continent-sized country and the concern about the excessive power of the states, typical of the Brazilian anti-liberal intellectuals in the 1930s.

Finally, Reale saw the strengthening of the Brazilian national state as a practical task to be dealt with by logic and by spatial reorganization. While Plínio Salgado and Gustavo Barroso saw something almost mystical in the national space, as a place where the “cosmic communion” of the races had taken place, and were close to a more ruralist perspective that defended agriculture and rural elements (or at least rural values) as a way of recovering old values, Reale was a lot more modern and rationalizing.

For Reale, space was simply the place where the State existed and where the economic activities that sustained it took place. He saw space as something malleable, to be reorganized according to criteria of regional balance, emphasizing the municipalities and national growth. He saw it as a space that, within the framework of corporatist and authoritarian thinking, would serve for the enlargement of the State, and only thence of society.

Reale's view of modernity can be thus seen in his texts, which show that he tended to favor policies of industrialization and economic development, and was a firm advocate of economic planning, although with a corporatist accent, controlling disputes and various interests of the regions or of the economic sectors through the mediation of the corporations (Bonfim, 1995, p.47-75; 2001). Regarding this point Reale is clearly a modern thinker, probably the most modern among the main integralist leaders, and his Italian matrix was also modern. Integralism in general also was modern as a whole, according to the sociological meaning of the term, but Salgado and Barroso had very romantic and ruralistic tones, which are not repeated by Reale.<sup>9</sup>

## REALE AND THE *ESTADO NOVO*: A NATURAL OPTION?

It is very well known that when Miguel Reale returned from Italy he re-neged Integralism and was coopted by the clientelistic apparatus of Getúlio Vargas. He was free to continue his university career at USP and was appointed to several positions in the public system both of the State of São Paulo and at the federal level.

This choice was certainly not unique, since several other integralist leaders and activists, such as Gustavo Barroso, did the same. It was also not a choice without immediate concerns, such as ensuring material survival, joining the winning side and/or having access to the advantages reserved by the regime to the intellectuals who joined the new system. It was also, however, a matter of ideological proximity, which allowed a more or less easy transposition between Integralism and Varguism.

Actually the *Estado Novo* project was gestated during the 1930s based on several influences, including that of integralists, such as the defense of nationalism and corporatism, disdain for the political parties and organizations, and the adoption of anti-Communism as a line of government. The project also included the idea of a great leader, intensive use of propaganda and education to create a new man, and the reinterpretation of the historical past to create a new Brazilian, peaceful and obedient. Obviously these practices did not come directly from Integralism to the *Estado Novo*, but they were being gestated in the same cultural broth, in parallel, which implied close although not equivalent ideas.

In this sense, Vargas, with his ideals of reinforcing the power of the State and of emphasizing the modernization of Brazil while maintaining order, was much more of an authoritarian than anything else. For him and for the forces that supported him, as already exhaustively shown by historiography, the essential point was to win over the elites and control the State to manage the changes that they considered necessary for the country, but without a break in traditional order and hierarchy. The population in this context was even to be encouraged to join the project, but should always be kept under control.

Maybe, as suggested by Adalberto Paranhos (1999, p.115), there was a mobilizing perspective, as a reserve potential, to be used in times of crisis, as in 1942-1943, which afterwards reappeared in the era of the labor movement. Nevertheless, it was a potential that was never fully explored, and it is not surprising that Vargas refused all requests by intellectuals such as Francisco Campos to give the *Estado Novo* a more precise doctrinal foundation as well

as requests for a party and organizations that could mobilize the masses in the fascist sense, to defend the State (Schwartzman, 1984). Even the reading of Italian fascism by the *Estado Novo* intellectuals, according to Oliveira (1982, p.14-30), emphasized order and hierarchy to the detriment of popular mobilization.

In an exercise of contrafactual history, it is possible to imagine how an *Estado Novo* would look like in which the integralist projects had been successful and Vargas had been defeated. In the Program Manifest of AIB, in 1946, it can be seen how the political system would probably have been reassembled in more corporatist and authoritarian tones, at the same time as the power of the State would be expanded and an administrative rationalization would be performed. The autonomous trade unions/associations, the state powers and the left and democratic forces would be repressed and an attempt would be made to integrate the popular masses and the world of culture in the State. On this point it would probably not have been very different from what Vargas did.

The great difference would probably lie in what should be changed, given the integralist ideology, but could not be openly stated in the 1936 manifesto for electoral reasons. The new regime would have had a party to serve as a channel between the State, the leader and the popular masses (Integralist Action), bodies dedicated to mobilizing youth, like the “National Organization of Youth” (which had already been proposed in 1937 by Francisco Campos), would be created (Schwartzman, 1984) and, actually, all of society would be much more mobilized. Very probably, thanks to the influence of Reale, corporatism would be taken much more seriously, possibly going beyond Vargas’ labor laws, even if it is likely that in practice it would be the simple bureaucratic apparatus to control the workers that it became in Italian fascism.

In brief, an integralist State would be much closer to the standards of a real fascist State than the Vargas regime. The latter was called fascist by its opponents, but theoretically this is an unrealistic description. It was precisely to prevent the country from becoming fascist (with all the advantages, but also with all the resulting risks) that the leading elites supported the *Estado Novo* and allowed Integralism to be eliminated.

In this context it is not surprising how Reale – the person who, among the main integralist leaders, was least concerned with the continuous mobilization of the masses and closer to the perspectives of the authoritarian elements – made an easier transition from Integralism to Vargasism.

Bonfim (1995; 2001) mentions an extremely interesting point in this regard. According to him, Reale approaches the beliefs of other authoritarian

– Brazilian and international – elements for whom the liberal system might even work, as long as there were citizens capable of dealing properly with it. Initially, real participation in power should have been only for the elites, represented in the corporations and at the top of the power structure. Over time, however, if educational conditions and the consciousness-raising of the masses improved, they might cease their limited participation in the municipalities and become full citizens within the State. This is a proposal similar to the ones made by several authoritarian elements in the *Estado Novo*, such as Oliveira Vianna, and which may have made Reale's transition from one group to the other much easier.

## CONCLUSIONS

In his memoirs Reale (1986, p.74-75) justifies his option for fascism by identifying the fascism to which he was referring. He indicates how the first Italian fascism, that of the 1920s and beginning of the 1930s, represented a really creative perspective, influenced by Giovanni Gentile and Ugo Spirito. This first fascism reflected the universal appreciation of corporatism as a way of overcoming Communism and liberalism (such as that of Michail Manoilescu, whom he greatly praised) and a time at which Mussolini had not yet gone over to totalitarianism and racism. Thus he admits that, in elaborating the integralist program and in his particular version of Integralism, there were influences of this first fascism and also of the great interpreters of Brazil's problems.

Even if this was a view aimed at external consumption, designed to justify his choice of fascism, it is not without truth. Reale in the 1930s was a fascist, as he himself admitted without any attempts at dissembling. His fascism, however, had less to do with the Nazi matrix or clerical fascisms of Central Europe, and more with that of Mussolini, especially that of the 1920s and beginning of the 1930s, which was more authoritarian than totalitarian.

This is not the place to discuss the validity of the concept of totalitarianism (even though I consider that, within certain limits and avoiding the pitfalls of the Cold War, it may be of some use) nor the path taken by the Italian fascist regime during its two decades in power. My view, in brief, is that the totalitarian perspective of continuous popular mobilization and maximum control of society by the State was an intrinsic part of the fascist project, but that Mussolini was not able to implement it. Really, although the fascist regime was clearly following the paths of totalitarianism at the end of the 1930s, this was

a project that failed, as several Italian political institutions continued to have a certain amount of independence, like the Church, the Monarchy and the Armed Forces.<sup>10</sup>

It should be highlighted that neither Nazi Germany nor Stalin's Soviet Union managed to construct a truly totalitarian State that established a single way of thinking and eliminated all powers alternative to the State and the party. But they were able to advance much further in this direction (in the case of Germany thanks to a much superior control of the State apparatus and to a different balance of political forces) than fascist Italy, where the totalitarian project, despite effort and some successes in this regard (especially in the second half of the 1930s) really did not take root, partly due to the Italian culture and political structure. Likewise, it can be said that Mussolini's regime, for reasons that include its imperfect totalitarianism, was much less violent in dealing with its own population than Hitler or Stalin (Bertonha, 2008).

As already mentioned, we must be a bit careful about the later arguments presented by Reale (1986, p.80) that he had little to do with Salgado's Integralism and especially with that of Barroso. This effort by Reale and his followers is essentially political, trying to present him as a more moderate integralist, far from Barroso's 'radical' line. Likewise, identifying him with the first Italian fascism, before the alliance with Hitler, racial laws and other totalitarian elements, is an eminently political camouflage to avoid confounding him with the more objectionable phase of Mussolini's regime. This is an effort, indeed, close to that made by the school of Renzo de Felice in Italy, which continuously tried to separate 'moderate' or 'conservative' fascists, like Dino Grandi or Luigi Federzoni, from dangerous radicals, such as Roberto Farinacci or Achille Starace.

After all, Reale did not break with Mussolini and the fascist regime (nor with Integralism) except at the last moment, even when the fascist regime was becoming openly totalitarian. Alleging that he did not know what was happening in Italy before he went to that country for the first time in 1938, or what his fellow integralists were doing and thinking, is, to say the least, an abuse of people's credulity. Reale preferred the fascism of the years before 1936 to that which came later and could question the ideas and projects of other integralist leaders, but he only abandoned the ranks of Salgado and Mussolini at the last minute, which really allows one to relativize his total separation between the larger projects of Italian fascism and Integralism.

In spite of these qualifications, his view of the world really appeared closer to the first fascism than to the second, so that corporatism, hierarchy and order

made much more sense to him than racism, anti-Semitism, and popular mobilization. There are also clear signs that his perspectives, within the AIB, were not precisely the same as Salgado's or Barroso's. It is a point to be discussed whether, based on this finding, one can separate Salgado and Reale as representatives of "totalitarian Integralism" and "conservative Integralism", as done by Ramos (2008a; 2008b). Nevertheless, there really was a difference, and the more authoritarian and conservative perspective of Reale, together with practical contingencies, made his quick transition to Vargas's authoritarianism easier. This indicates how, in the context of the 1930s and 1940s, the ideological and political positions were more fluid and had more points in common than a less profound reading might suggest, and that the various 'right wings' had more in common than they would want to admit to later.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Paper presented at the 54<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Americanists, July 15-20, 2012, section on “Corporatist States and Ideas in Europe and Latin America: Counter and Pro-Mobilisation, Catholicism and Transfer (Austria, Portugal, Brazil and Argentina in the 1930s and 40s)”.

<sup>2</sup> On Reale, besides the authors I mention in the following, see COUTINHO, 2001, p.4908-4910; LIMA, 2004; POLETTI, 1982; SANTOS, 2002.

<sup>3</sup> PINHO, 2008. On Reale’s reelaboration of memory, it is worthwhile to see NETO, 2011.

<sup>4</sup> Author’s Introduction to the 1983 edition. In: REALE, 1983, vol. 1, p.5-18; 1986, p.71.

<sup>5</sup> Archivio Storico del Ministero degli Affari Esteri (ASMAE)/Affari Politici 1931-1945 (Brasile), b. 16, report of the new chargé d’affaires Menzinger on October 19, 1936.

<sup>6</sup> Archivio Centrale dello Stato/DGPS, Div. Affari Generali e Riservati, 1939, b. 1/J, “Brasile – Notizie”, several documents. On the sending of books with dedications to Mussolini by

Reale in 1939, see ASMAE/Affari Politici 1931-1945 (Brasile), b. 15, report by the Ministero degli Affari Esteri, January 28, 1939.

<sup>7</sup> ASMAE, Affari Politici 1931-1945 (Brasile), b. 16, f. “Brasile – Rifugiati politici”, telesspresso from the Italian embassy on December 3, 1938. Evidently, in his later memoirs his stay in Italy is presented from a different perspective, in the light of a disillusionment with fascism. See REALE, 1986, p.135-138.

<sup>8</sup> Reale, 1935a; 1937. Essential are also BONFIM, 2006; and MELO, 1994.

<sup>9</sup> CRUZ, 2011; BERTONHA, 2010. I resume the discussion in *Integralismo: problemas, perspectivas e questões historiográficas* (in press).

<sup>10</sup> See, among others, TOBIA, 1991, p.44-56.