**Discussion Questions (09/27)**

**Discussion Questions on Skidmore:** (submitted by Manasi)

1. How did Vargas’s repudiation of the ‘gendarme’ theory, which held that the state should be a policeman, not a participant, strengthen federal power, weaken the power of the states and municipalities and simultaneously increase Getúlio’s presidential leverage? What were the other effects of such an increase in the federal intervention in the economy?  

Pg 34, 35, 36, 46

2. What was the grand significance of the way Vargas departed from power on October 29th, 1945? What does this say about the political role of the military in Brazil as well its psychological niche in the minds of the Brazilian people? Lastly, could Vargas’s removal from the presidency been a part of his larger plan? Pg 53…

3. “Getúlio was following the charismatic strategy of keeping a foot in both camps” (Pg 65). What does this say about the ‘non-idealogical’ nature of Brazilian political parties and how did Vargas exploit this fact to his fullest benefit?  

Pg 65, 67, 75

**Discussion Questions on Stepan:** (submitted by Sefalana)

1. Stepan’s book articulates the controversial nature of the second clause of the constitutions adopted in 1891, 1934 and 1946: “The second clause made the military obedient to the executive, but significantly stated that they should only be obedient ‘within the limits of the law’.” (pg 75)

This seems to assume that the military will always behave in a rational manner and will always behave lawfully. If the military is to play the key role of checking the actions of the chief executive, using its discretion to judge whether or not the president is acting within the limits of the law, what checks are there upon the military to ensure that the military does not abuse that power? Should the military be given this much autonomy and power within the political system?

2. If the military is often assigned the tasks of checking executive activity due to the inefficacy of civilian institutions to perform this task, does the military’s prolonged assumption of this “moderator role” consequently inhibit the development of these institutions, perhaps to the point where such institutions are ultimately viewed as unnecessary or redundant?

3. If it is commonplace for Brazilian presidents to use military officers as personal instruments of their government, could this create an allegiance to the chief executive that prohibits the military from effectively performing its role as “moderator” and fulfilling its constitutional obligation to defend the prerogatives of the Congress?
4. This study focuses on the period of 1945-1964, during “The Democratic Experiment” in Brazil. Can democracy be truly achieved when the military, as a national institution, is so heavily involved in the political apparatus, or does such power and autonomy allotted to the military hinder the process of democratization? Is there/should there be a middle ground in the resolution of such a vital issue?

Discussion Questions on Baer: (submitted by Pablo)

1. When looking at development options for a country like Brazil what are the available options for development? Do any of the options not include influxes of foreign capital?

2. Could ISI have worked without the foreign capital that propelled it? Could Brazil have loosened its dependency on foreign markets? Should it have?

3. ISI led to a growth in the middle class because many former peasants were able to get jobs in factories, however it also added to the social inequality by making the factory owners particularly wealthy, was ISI's social influence more positive or negative?

4. Could Brazil have grown into an industrial economy, or a developed economy without the complex system of rules and tariffs that Baer outlines in the first few pages of his paper? Could Brazil have had the same growth in the free market?