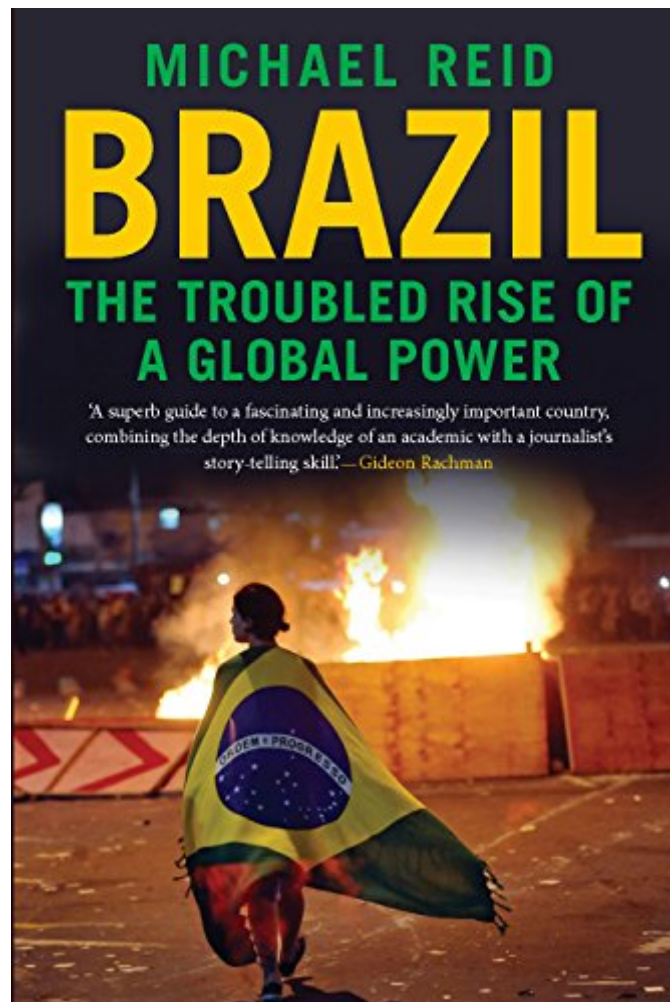


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Brazil



Synopsis

Experts believe that Brazil, the world's fifth largest country and its seventh largest economy, will be one of the most important global powers by the year 2030. Yet far more attention has been paid to the other rising behemoths Russia, India, and China. Often ignored and underappreciated, Brazil, according to renowned, award-winning journalist Michael Reid, has finally begun to live up to its potential, but faces important challenges before it becomes a nation of substantial global significance. After decades of military rule, the fourth most populous democracy enjoyed effective reformist leadership that tamed inflation, opened the country up to trade, and addressed poverty and other social issues, enabling Brazil to become more of an essential participant in global affairs. But as it prepares to host the 2014 soccer World Cup and 2016 Olympics, Brazil has been rocked by mass protest. This insightful volume considers the nation's still abundant problems—an inefficient state, widespread corruption, dysfunctional politics, and violent crime in its cities—alongside its achievements to provide a fully rounded portrait of a vibrant country about to take a commanding position on the world stage.

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Customer Reviews

That is an excellent book. If you are interested in knowing about Brazil and why there are so many protests going on, that is the book to buy. Unfortunately, it took a major event like the World Cup to inspire someone to write a book in English about a poor country that dreams one day to be rich. The so called *paÃ-s do futuro*. The author understood that the reality Brazil is facing has its roots in history and culture. But it is the people who are ultimately responsible for how things are in general, not prepared to sacrifice *alegria* for modernization, at least not yet. Growing up during the "Brazilian Miracle" of the 70's, I thought the country would be a super power in next twenty years or so. That did not happen, even with the military having total political control, there was not enough reforms done in time to deal with the oil crisis. I saw the same euphoric reaction during the Lula presidency as a repeat of those years, and once again, the excitement gave way to disillusion. Living in the US for so many years, I now understand and agree with what the author mentioned will take to achieve that better future waited for so long. I recommend it.

Michael Reid gives his readers a much-needed overview of the history, economy, society, and politics of Brazil since 1500. Too often, the country seems to live in the shadows of the other BRICS, i.e. Russia, India, China, and South Africa. To his credit, Mr. Reid examines with much objectivity the repeated disappointments that Brazil has had to endure both domestically and abroad. In summary, the book under review will hopefully give its readers a better appreciation for a country which is called to play an increasingly important role in the 21st century.

Although there have been many news stories about the recent economic development of Brazil, "Brazil: the Troubled Rise of a Global Power" is one of the few books that provides a historical context and an analysis of the current country. Historical events discussed in Part I are carefully focused to help the reader understand their importance to modern Brazil. These include Brazil's unique transition from a colony to an independent nation, the traditional power of landowners such as coffee planters, the effects of Getulio Vargas' incorporation of many Fascist labor laws, and finally the transition from the military dictatorship to democracy. Part II is the most interesting section for readers interested in current Brazil. Reid discusses the administrations of three post-military-dictatorship presidents: Cardoso, Lula, and Dilma. He points out how each has helped change Brazil into a nation with a expanding economy with a growing middle class. His discussions of the current middle class and of the developing agriculture and petroleum industries are especially interesting. And of course, his information about the development of the Rain Forest is of

international interest. Michael Reid spent several years as an Economist of London reporter in Brazil and published this book as the country prepared to host the World Cup Soccer tournament. He knows his subject. He is objective, but he writes from his British perspective supporting democratic development. It is an excellent resource for anyone interested in Brazil, its current development, and the changing world economic situation as BRICS nations take a larger role.

This book is a must read for any English speaking person living in Brazil. It also needs to be translated into Portuguese. Many Brazilians would find themselves in agreement with most of what is written here. As a foreigner living in Brazil, for more than 10 years now, I found this book very insightful and highly recommend it.

I am an American who has lived and worked in Brazil since '74...not continuously but, spiritually and intellectually, have never really left and have family living there. I recommend this book if you want a refresher course on Brazil but not if you merely want to familiarize yourself with the country. It was written by an economic journalist who for years was The ECONOMIST's reporter in Brazil and, in my humble view, was intended for serious students of the country, business people and the academic classroom. It reads, needless to say, much like a lengthy column about Brazil written from the perspective of a newspaper person stationed in the country and, as a result, is stuffed with facts and data....and with possibly a bit of factual overkill in some sections, but I found few if any errors or flaws in Mr. Reid's research, information, observations and prose style. While the author is more than aware of the perverse corruption that infects most facets of Brazilian life, especially at all levels of government (and admittedly it truly is hard to get a credible, statistical handle on it even after years of residence and day-to-day life in the country), it is the one area of Mr. Reid's effort where his in-depth analysis breaks down. The author is not to blame - corruption is just too perversely hidden to detect and comment on in objective terms. Read this book if you are serious about Brazil, its past, present and future. By the way, Mr. Reid, is it just my imagination but you and Lula do share an odd resemblance judging from your photo on the inside rear cover flap!

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