

BOOK REVIEW

Routledge Handbook of Brazilian Politics**by Bruno Bolognesi¹**<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1483-7501>**by Luis Felipe Guedes da Graça²**<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7955-3243>**by Robert Bonifácio³**<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3071-2378>**by Wellington Nunes¹**<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9344-7324>¹Universidade Federal do Paraná, Curitiba/PR, Brazil²Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Florianópolis/SC, Brazil³Universidade Federal de Goiás, Goiânia/GO, Brazil

(Ames, Barry. *Routledge Handbook of Brazilian Politics*. New York: Routledge, 2019)

The first part of the 'Routledge Handbook of Brazilian Politics', entitled 'The Input Side', is dedicated, as the title suggests, to a societal approach rather than an institutional one with an emphasis on political phenomena and processes. There is a markedly socio-political bent to the book's treatment of the themes of its eight chapters: corruption; political participation; gender and race relations; religion and politics; social movements; innovative democratic decision-making processes; representation of interests. The makeup of book's chapters does not follow what might be considered standard for handbooks, i.e. they do not merely set forth an overview of the specialized literature; they also include critical readings of the work and analyses of extensive current databases.

<http://doi.org/10.1590/1981-3821202000010008>

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The chapter by Senters, Weitz-Shapiro and Winters (2019) addresses the theme of corruption, a perennial leitmotif of Brazilian politics and one that has assumed greater importance in public debate since 2005 thanks to the Mensalão scandal, itself reinforced by the June 2013 protests and Operation Lava-Jato from 2014. The authors seek to provide an overview of attitudinal patterns related to corruption and explanatory factors for them. To this end, they survey a large sample of opinion polls: 69 of them, covering three decades, from 1985 to 2015. Key findings include: 01. sustained growth – from 2005 onwards – of the perception that corruption is the worst of Brazil's problems, combined with a diminishing perception of the capacity of successive governments to combat it; 02. the existence of a positive correlation between being male, well-off and/or having been asked to pay bribes and the perception that corruption is Brazil's biggest problem; and 03. the existence of an association between party sympathy and perception of corruption, in the sense that party sympathy for the Workers' Party (PT) – during the period in which it was in government – is associated with a reduced perception of corruption being Brazil's number one problem.

The chapter on political participation, authored by Ribeiro and Borba (2019), achieves three goals: definition, description and explanation. In respect of the first item, they do not offer an authoritative definition of political participation but highlight its multidimensionality. They cite the following as valid practices: voting, working in political campaigns or helping to fund them, contacting campaign staff, protesting, working informally in the community, acting as a member of a local council, joining a political organization and contributing to a political cause. In the descriptive part of the chapter, some results stand out: 01. the level of voter turnout in Brazil is close to the average of other democratic countries that have compulsory voting; 02. there has been a significant drop in so called 'blank' and 'null' votes cast since 1998, following the adoption of electronic ballot boxes; 03. political participation is multidimensional; and 04. there has been a gradual decline in participation on the part of certain types of entities, such as unions, political parties, environmental organizations and professional associations. In the analytical section, Ribeiro and Borba (2019) test four explanatory variables: gender, age, education and interest in politics. It is noteworthy that interest in politics and schooling played an important role in all of the participatory activities that were analyzed (political activism in unions/ political parties/ environmental organizations/ professional organizations/ petitions/ boycotts/

marches). In all of the periods looked at (1991, 1997, 2004 and 2014) there was invariably a positive and almost invariably a statistically significant association.

The chapters on gender and race relations provide an historical overview of access to rights on the part of women and black Brazilians. Santos and Wylie (2019) provide a narrative on the evolution of women's rights and place particular emphasis on one achievement, namely the women's political candidacy quota law, which came into force in 1995. The authors explore data indicating progress has been made over the years in terms of both women's candidacies and the election of women to office. These data also show that said progress remains modest and disparate, in the sense that more women run for office than are elected to it. Mitchell-Walthour (2019) presents a study on contentious racial issues that includes a historical reading of notable events, a re-examination of disputed concepts, a political interpretation of historical commemorations and a critical appraisal of recent public policies focused on racial affairs.

In her chapter on religion and politics, Smith (2019a) adds yet another paper to her research agenda on the topic (ANDERSON, RAMIREZ and SMITH, 2018; BOAS and SMITH, 2015; DJUPE and SMITH, 2019; SMITH, 2019b). This time, she discusses religion and secularism in Brazil, provides information on religious affiliations and analyzes the influence of religion on politics. In respect of the last point, she refers to dozens of studies on the matter and provides a consistent and objective overview of its main contributions. According to Smith (2019a), although Catholicism remains Brazil's dominant religion, the Catholic/Protestant ratio has changed from 5:1 in 1970 to 3:1 in 2010. She points out that Protestants are keener churchgoers than Catholics; data from a 2010 opinion poll show that more than 50% of Protestants attend church services at least a week, the same is true of approximately 15% of Catholics.

In the chapter by Abers and Von Bulow (2019), a review of the literature examines the relationship between social movements and the state in Brazil, from the time of the democratic transition to the present. According to them, this period can be divided into four phases, the last of which began with the June 2013 protests. The chapter characterizes these four phases with reference to historical facts and well-regarded studies. Finally, the authors list four factors that they understand to be essential for further analysis of this research agenda: 01. the effects of global changes in national policy; 02. the rise of the far right and associated conservative political

actors; 03. the interactions between social movements and political parties; and 04. the interactions between social movements and legislative and judicial institutions.

Wampler and Romão (2019) analyze democratic innovations at the municipal level. They point out that the heyday of such innovations was the 1980s and 90s, the legacy of which, by 2016, was more than 50,000 councils and close to 100 active participatory budgeting programs, as well as a proliferation of public policy conferences throughout Brazil. Wampler and Romão (2019) highlight the case of Belo Horizonte, where these democratic innovations contributed to the reallocation of financial resources to the poorest regions of the city. Council creation has been more prolific in more traditional areas of public policy and is most frequently seen in municipalities with higher Human Development Indexes (HDI). It is worth noting the role of the Workers' Party (PT) in shaping these democratic innovations. This helped it to form a consistent base of popular support, broadening the debate and democratizing the decision-making process vis-à-vis financial resources and public policy within society. Nonetheless, they feel that such movements were insufficient to alter the structure of national policy, and that the impeachment of former president Dilma Rousseff provides eloquent testimony to this effect.

In the closing chapter, Santos (2019) characterizes the representation of interests in Brazil (conventionally known as 'lobbies'). The analysis covers the period 1985 to the present and is based on the definition of Thomas and Klimovich (2014, p. 169), who state that a 'system of interest groups' is the variety of formal and informal groups and organizations – and the lobbyists who represent them – who work to influence public policy to a certain extent within the nation, state or other political entity. Their main contributions include: 01. the mapping of interest representations at local, state and national levels; 02. quantification of the number of entities in existence; 03. the identification of the main political arenas of action of the most active interest-representing entities, and some of the specific action taken by them; and 04. the debate on the professionalization of lobbying in Brazil.

The second part of the book is divided into two sections. The first is devoted to political institutions and features five articles that discuss executive-legislative relations, participatory institutions, the judiciary and political appointees. They represent well-developed literatures, both empirically and in the production of explanatory theories. They take a general look at federal government institutions, while

subnational institutions, important in a federal country like Brazil, appear only in some articles. The construction of theories that consolidate the role of subnational dynamics and their relationship with national politics represents a new horizon for the study of political institutions. The second section explores executive-legislative relations and starts at chapter 16 (reviewed below).

Avelino and Fisch's (2019) chapter describes the relationship between money and elections in Brazil. They point out that, although money does not equate to votes in a perfectly symmetrical mathematical relationship, money is an essential prerequisite to enter and remain within the world of Brazilian politics. The data presented are descriptive and their analysis of them provides valuable insights into Brazil's electoral dynamics. The fact that funds are concentrated in the hands of a few candidates – and this is especially the case in federal disputes – reinforces the perception that participation in Brazilian elections is a competitive matter in purely numerical terms but not otherwise. Institutional arrangements are taken as an important intervening variable. District magnitude is associated, albeit to a lesser extent, with both the concentration and the proportion of campaign spending. As a rule, the larger the district, the higher the expenses. This is for two complementary reasons: 01. larger districts call for coverage over a larger canvassing area; and 02. the associated high magnitudes lead to a more competitive fight. Analysis of the data allows us to conclude that Brazil's electoral competition patterns lead to high campaign spending.

In Chapter 10, André Borges (2019) addresses the interaction between the federal system, party politics and the dynamics of coalition government. The chapter proposes ambitious questions: what are the incentives that shape competition for the executive in Brazil? and what is the impact of multilevel elections on electoral coordination and party fragmentation? Borges (2019) is able to partially answer both questions. The mixed incentives of Brazil's institutional arrangements centralize electoral disputes around a strong presidency. On the other hand, they provide room for autonomous regional disputes in such a way that federal deputies and senators are able to adopt patterns of interaction focused on contenders for the state executive. The debate summarized in Chapter 10 presents the full array of possible institutional interactions that can be seen in studies of federal arrangements and political representation. The coexistence of factors such as the governance capacity of regional governments, the strength of political parties, the (non-)

occurrence of simultaneous elections and the centralization of the national executive have led comparative studies to present idiosyncratic results that only an especially attentive reader would be able to make sense of. Echoing theoretical assumptions, the empirical findings make it clear that forces exist that tend in opposite directions. While presidentialism and constitutional centralism tend to centralize electoral coordination, the power of regional agendas tends to strengthen governor-centered behavior and party fragmentation.

Continuing the focus on structural aspects of voting and electoral competition, Daniela Campello (2019) tests the weight of the economy in electoral choice as an expression of presidential accountability. Parties and their candidates are punished or rewarded in accordance with voters' perceptions of the economic performance of a given administration. However, the most interesting finding lies in the impossibility of associating economic performance with a particular candidate or party. Instead, what we have are presidents who enjoy waves of economically favorable times – essentially those who enjoy the commodity boom and low interest rates in the US market – and who are then branded as good managers, regardless of their ability to get through tough times or get the best out of favorable economic winds. Although the rationale for the argument takes into account a president's ability to do his or her best in times of bonanza or crisis, the voter can identify the relationship globally and the economic vote is an indirect one.

In Chapter 12, Carreirão and Rennó (2019) also address how voters relate to presidential voting and party structure. The first point that stands out is the conception of political parties presented in the text. While criticism may be made of the need for political parties to put down roots in broader society – a factor that has condemned Brazilian political parties to cartelization – it is important to recognize that advanced industrial democracies have a long history of using political parties as the primary way to establish ties of loyalty and control between voters and their elected representatives (BOLLEYER, 2013; LUPU, 2014). Carreirão and Rennó (2019) conclude that surveys on the partisan behavior of Brazilian voters have clearly shown that the main cleavage is between pro-PT-ism and anti-PT-ism. Although most Brazilian political scientists and pundits had predicted that national elections would continue to be competitions between the PT and PSDB, as was the case for six elections in a row, it is interesting to note that vast quantities of research into electoral behavior

had been ignored by experts in the lead-up to the 2018 election, which put an end to the artificial tradition of PT-PSDB polarization. Chapter 12 could be read as something of a clarion call for integration between behavioral and institutional analysis, the alternative to which is the prospect of a discipline merely masquerading as member of the real world while draped in the colors of academic rigor.

The next chapter follows in the same lines as the previous ones and continues the focus on electoral behavior, but this time by seeking to measure voter ideology. Kearney and Machado (2019) look into the relationship between ideological positions held by the general public and those of the political elite. This is a topic of special interest and focus in US research. Here, the text attempts to point out how side-by-side interests coalesce around certain programmatic axes. A useful methodological discussion for those well versed and/or interested in survey techniques and questionnaires, this is one of the few texts in the collection that considers Brazilian politics from this angle. By drawing on this type of data, Kearney and Machado (2019) show that, despite party fragmentation and voter difficulty in relating programmatic positions to political parties, there does exist an ideological gospel formed by consistent opinions held by members of the Brazilian electorate. Drawing on comparisons with other countries with more consolidated democracies, they point out that Brazil's public opinion oscillations generally follow those such different political systems as Canada and the United States.

In Chapter 14, Power and Rodrigues-Silveira (2019) consider the political Right (and its partisan surrogates) as an actor in Brazilian democracy's recent history. Some caveats must first be made. In classifying the MDB (known from 1979 to 2017 as the 'PMDB') as a center-right party, the authorial duo stumble over the problem of ideological self-classification, which they themselves identify in the literature. There is no consensus as to the proper position of the MDB other than belonging to an amorphous center made up of federated local elites coagulated around an organization made up of every distinct ideological color (BOLOGNESI and BABIRESKI, 2018; CARREIRÃO, 2006; DANTAS and PRAÇA, 2010; TAROUCO and MADEIRA, 2013; ZUCCO JR. and LAUDERDALE, 2011). The same can be said regarding Progressistas (formerly known by the acronyms PDS, PPB and PP), which they label a rent-seeking party, but which most analysts would describe as a programmatic vehicle. Likewise, the PSC is branded as the representative of a church but the Republicanos party (formerly the

PRB), which constitutes the political wing of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, is not. These quibbles aside, the chapter deals directly and concisely with the trajectory of the Brazilian Right. It provides a great introduction to the topic. The chronological and thematic division of the chapter sets out currents of thought in the Brazilian Right, although it does not engage in serious dialog with its programs or representative wings across political parties. The conclusion on the resilience of the Brazilian Right reveals not only how some traditional themes have been kept alive, but also how the combination of party fragmentation and the opportunity represented by the crisis that weakened the political Left led to the rise of a populist Right from the fringes of the system that is indifferent to the rules of the democratic game.

Samuels and Zucco (2019), writing about ideology and partisanship, discuss the intricate relationship between party sentiments in Brazil and the PT's role as the lodestone for such preferences. This is yet another chapter that brings institutional debates together with those on political behavior – so often treated as mutually exclusive. By presenting a range of data on party and anti-party behavior in Brazil, the chapter addresses, if not explicitly, the dynamics of electoral behavior in the country and the different nuances that move the gears of Brazilian political culture. In one way or another the conclusion of the chapter points to the polarizing centrality of the PT as a fundamental actor in the structuring of electoral preferences. Antithetical feelings towards the party lead to the establishment of loyalties – whether they are partisan and overlap with PT-ism or anti-partisan and overlap with anti-PT-ism. After all, it is hard to imagine someone being 'anti' something that barely exists (as in anti-PMDB-ism or anti-PTB-ism) as is the case with such political parties that have made no efforts to establish relations with voters or put down roots in society.

The second section of the second part of the book brings together articles dealing with one of the most traditional research agendas of Brazilian political science, namely executive-legislative relations, and agendas that are in the process of gaining importance in the discipline: participatory institutions, the influence of the judiciary, and the relationship between political appointees, parties and the bureaucracy.

Amorim Neto (2019), in Chapter 16, performs an extensive literature review of this research agenda. To summarize contributions in this area, the author uses Goertz' (2006) concept formation framework. The majority coalition cabinet concept presents five dimensions: 01. the existence of more than one party in the cabinet; 02. the

distribution on the basis of certain criteria of patronage and ‘pork’ among coalition parties; 03. the strategic use by the president of his/her legislative powers to set the legislative agenda and coordinate allies; 04. the strategic use of control of the agenda by party leaders to expedite the passage of government initiatives; and 05. a shared public policy agenda among coalition partners. Studies on Brazil that examine these different dimensions have been able to move away from macropolitical views to debate individual presidential strategies.

This multi-dimensional approach to the concept comes close to the toolbox idea (RAILE, PEREIRA and POWER, 2011) that Pereira and Bertholini (2019) draw on in chapter 17. The authors argue that the game between the president and potential allies can produce exchange gains. Presidents assume they have to deal with an exogenous balance of forces (elections) and need to form a coalition to govern. Decisions about the number of partners in the coalition, the degree of ideological disparity between them and the required level of power and resource sharing create coalitions with varying management costs. It is up to the president to manage his or her coalition with the tools available.

The chapters on executive-legislative relations demonstrate how different approaches have built dynamic visions and are capable of dealing with contextual variations. The recent crisis that led to the Dilma Rousseff administration’s loss of legislative support and subsequent impeachment and removal can be explained by variation in party numbers, the ideological distance of coalition parties from the PT and the extent to which coalition resources were concentrated in that party. It remains to be explained how recent presidents of the Chamber of Deputies, such as Eduardo Cunha and Rodrigo Maia, have been able to build and maintain majority support in such a way as to be able to compete with the governing coalition.

Chapter 18 (Participatory Institutions: The Production of Institutional Success and Efficiency), by Leonardo Avritzer (2019), addresses Brazil’s participatory institutions and their development. Since the 1988 Constitution, Participatory Councils and Budgets have functioned successfully. Since 2003, and with the encouragement of the Federal Government, National Conferences have seen expansion in their quantity and themes. For Avritzer (2019), 2013 marks the end of the pact between the left-wing government and the center grouping in Congress that allowed for the expansion of participatory institutions. The chapter does not indicate whether we should expect of

these participatory institutions to weather the storm of successive conservative governments or whether their existence should be considered a mere government policy.

Da Ros and Ingram (2019), in Chapter 19, address the growing literature on the Brazilian judiciary. Their analysis follows four main lines: empowerment, activation, behavior and impact. The article manages to demonstrate how the literature on the subject has reached maturity and has made analytical gains. Studies focusing on the Federal Supreme Court discuss its accrual of powers by means of incremental reforms and ad hoc decisions and its openness to the actions from various actors in society and self-activation by State agencies. These show that there are divergences in the debate about its behavior; and that its decisions can have considerable impact on public policy and political equilibrium in general. A new wave of studies may delve into topics that appear relevant according to the political news cycle, such as the formation of coalitions between groups within the judiciary, the study of support networks for Supreme court judges, and the modeling of bargains between the branches of government.

Praça and Lopez (2019) present Chapter 20 (Political appointments, political parties, and bureaucracy). The authors, through quantitative data and interviews, indicate that the selection of political appointees occurs by means of four non-exclusive mechanisms: informal networks, political parties, regional politics and competence. Those responsible for recruiting such staff face the dilemma of choosing between politically loyal actors or actors with technical expertise. Party appointments play a smaller role than traditional expectations that these positions would mostly be aimed at satisfying patronage demands would dictate and each area of public policy presents its own mix of appointment mechanisms. This variation indicates the existence of variously insulated bureaucratic spaces within the State.

As noted by Barry Ames (2019), the third part of the Handbook deals with what might be called the 'dependent variable' of Brazilian politics (AMES, 2019, p. 07). Its eight chapters deal specifically with recent public policy and economic policy outcomes.

In the first of these chapters (Chapter 21), Frances Hagopian (2019) discusses the causes of the recent decline in income inequality in Brazil, which begins in the mid-1990s and extended over the next two decades. Through dialog with rival explanations,

Hagopian (2019) argues that the process has been triggered and sustained by two main factors: the dynamics of the labor market – notably the fall in the inequality of the wage structure and the sharp appreciation of the minimum wage as well as and programmatic redistribution policies – including focused social policies (the Bolsa Família program, for example), but also institutional changes that have expanded access to broader services and social opportunities. While making his point, the author points to the boundaries involved in rival explanations, such as those that explain the fall in income inequality rates due to ideological (rise to power of a center-left party) and exogenous (commodity boom) factors.

In Chapter 22, Kathryn Hochstetler (2019) seeks to delineate the problems of and institutions involved in Brazilian environmental policy, based on a detailed analysis of two of its main aspects. The first of these is environmental licensing, which lies on the borderline between conservation and development, and, according to the author, offers a rare opportunity for ordinary citizens to influence economic projects. The second aspect is also situated on frontier terrain, but this time the intersection involves deforestation, energy and climate – three of the most relevant national climate issues. Additionally, the chapter suggests that the study of environmental issues can produce important developments in areas as disparate as economics (e.g., the dependence on exports of natural resources) and parties and elections (e.g., the emergence of electoral strongholds willing to support candidates and parties committed to environmental causes).

Chapter 23, by Guilherme Casarões (2019), is dedicated to Brazilian foreign policy and offers the reader a panoramic view of the historical evolution of research in the area. The first part of the article concerns the creation of field studies and involves two distinct movements: the first one ('from the outside in') comprises the period from the late 1960s to the early 1980s and is characterized by the high incidence of studies undertaken in the United States. The second movement ('from the inside out'), comprises the 1990s and 2000s, when under- and postgraduate courses in International Relations (IR) were expanded and consolidated. The second part of the article concerns the historical evolution of foreign policy studies, which, according to the author, can be organized into four waves that accompany the growth of IR as a discipline. The first of these waves is characterized as a 'descriptive-normative phase', in which scholars and practitioners were engaged in debating 'the best policy'.

The second wave concerns a more scientific approach and involves works from the realist school, which goes on to become the mainstream of the discipline. The third concerns studies on bureaucracy and foreign policy. The fourth, and last, wave covers studies dedicated to investigating relations between foreign policy and non-state actors, in the context of increased democratic participation and interdependence between the external and internal scenarios.

In Chapter 24, Peter Kingstone and Luiz Felipe Kling (2019) look at macroeconomic stability versus industrialization as a way of considering the macro- and micro-economic balance in the Brazilian economy. They start in the 1930s and show how the balance tilted towards industrialization throughout most of the twentieth century, a scenario reversed only from the mid-1990s, with the urge to contain hyperinflation. The debate has reemerged in the early years of the 21st century and has been intensified by the argument that the inflation targeting regime – characterized primarily by overvalued interest and exchange rates – represents the narrow end of growing deindustrialization process that will affect the whole country. Despite the longevity and intensity of this debate, one of the conclusions of the chapter is that Brazilian scholars and decision-makers have not yet come to an agreement on the causes of inflation, nor on the most appropriate policies to address it. In this sense, the inflation-targeting regime would seem to be a suboptimal response to the problem, as while it does control inflation, it depresses demand and impairs competitiveness.

Chapter 25 by Mansueto Almeida, Renato Lima-de-Oliveira and Ben Ross Schneider (2019), deals with the resurgence of industrial policies as instruments for promoting development. The authors analyze each of the three industrial policy programs implemented between 2004 and 2015, as well as the relations between the State and business. The article shows that while the initially intended objective was an innovation-centric policy capable of spreading technical progress and technological development, the policies that were in fact implemented (especially from 2008) were more pragmatic and defensive, encouraging all sectors – notably those already competitive and specialized in products with low technological content. The authors explain this finding by reference to the enormous challenge of legitimizing the use of industrial policies in a diversified economy, with consolidated sectors, and in a

democratic context. Such policies received broad business support precisely “for not making choices” (ALMEIDA, LIMA-DE-OLIVEIRA, and SCHNEIDER, 2019, p. 464).

In the next chapter, Matthew L. Layton (2019) analyzes the ‘Bolsa Família’ Program (PBF) from three different perspectives: historical, popular and electoral. To this end, the author takes a look at the historical trajectory of social welfare policies in Brazil since the First Republic, summarizes aspects considered fundamental to the PBF implementation process and uses a national survey to measure popular perceptions and the electoral impacts of the program. This combination of analytical perspectives found the following: the PBF emerged within a specific historical context – that is, in the wake of transformations in the balance of power provided by the democratic transition (debates about citizenship, extension of suffrage, etc); although the PBF has broad popular support, there are important sectors of society (non-beneficiaries) that reproduce pejorative stereotypes about the profile of beneficiaries (indolence, licentiousness, etc); finally, there is a reasonable degree of convergence among scholars about the impact of the BFP on the electoral preferences of its beneficiaries.

The PBF is also analyzed in Chapter 27 by Natasha Borges Sugiyama (2019), whose analytical perspective is somewhat different: her overall objective is to analyze the impacts of the PBF in terms of the social inclusion and human development of its beneficiaries. This, according to the author, is due to the fact that, in spite of redemocratization, a number of structural and historical obstacles to social inclusion and human development remain in place: the social welfare system remained corporatist and primarily benefits formally employed private sector workers and civil servants to the detriment of the majority of the population who are informal and excluded workers. The overall conclusion is that a set of institutional innovations made since 2004 (notably since the advent of the Ministry of Social Development) have allowed the PBF to move ‘towards’ inclusion and human development.

Finally, in Chapter 28, Juliana Martins and Anthony Pereira (2019) discuss the politics of human rights. More specifically, the authors seek to explain a paradox that emerges when considering the issue from a historical perspective: in the last 50 years Brazil has experienced enormous advances in the direction of rights that seek to guarantee human dignity (in the wake of dictatorial regime that ran from 1964 to 1985), but has also observed the steady growth of violence, including violence practiced by the

State against its own citizens. The general argument of the text is that the human rights situation in Brazil suffers from cross-cutting pressures. On the one hand, national legislation has made advances – with the State making commitments in international agreements, the creation of a Secretariat of Human Rights and the involvement of social movements committed to the cause. On the other hand, widespread social violence and fear have contributed to growing support for attempts to tackle the problem by means of more violence by security forces.

As we stated at the beginning of this review, the work contains chapters that are more similar to the format of a handbook as well as others that are more empirical and applied and make contributions in respect of specific points of Brazilian politics. Although there is no thematic progression between articles, the ‘Routledge Handbook of Brazilian Politics’ makes essential reading for those interested in keeping up with trends in Political Science as it tries to explain how Brazil has dealt with the ups and downs of democracy over recent decades.

Translated by Robinson Fraser

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