Brazil in Perspective
An Orientation Guide

Technology Integration Division
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Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center
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CHAPTER 1: GEOGRAPHY

Introduction

Brazil is the largest country in Latin America and the fifth-largest nation in the world.¹ Occupying the northeast portion of the South American continent, its area of 8.5 million sq km (3.3 million sq mi) surpasses that of the continental United States and makes up about half of the South American landmass.² At its widest east-to-west point, Brazil stretches 4,320 km (2,684 mi). From north to south, its 4,395 km (2,731 mi) of land crosses both the Equator and the Tropic of Capricorn.³⁴

Brazil is home to the world’s densest river network. With eight hydrologic basins, Brazil has most of the world’s largest rainforest (the Amazon), wetland (the Pantanal), and the world’s greatest biological diversity, including human populations that have remained isolated since prehistoric times.⁵

Brazil also is one of the world’s largest economies and democracies.⁶ It is home to 200 million people, of whom 87% live in urban areas.⁷ Approximately 70% of the population lives on the eastern seaboard, along 7,491km (4,654 mi) of Atlantic shoreline.⁸ The remaining 30% live in the more sparsely populated interior to the west, where Brazil shares borders with every South American country except Chile and Ecuador: Argentina, (1,261 km, 783 mi); Bolivia (3,423 km, 2,127 mi); Colombia (1,644 km, 1,021 mi); French Guiana (730 km, 452 mi); Guyana (1,606 km, 998 mi); Paraguay (1,365 km, 848 mi); Peru (2,995 km, 1,861 mi); Suriname (593 km, 368 mi); Uruguay (1,068 km, 663 mi); and Venezuela (2,200 km, 1,367 mi).⁹

In 1500, Portuguese explorers claimed the land that soon became known as Terra do Brazil, after the brazilwood tree.¹⁰ The Atlantic coast attracted Portuguese and French traders who were met

by indigenous tribes curious and eager to trade. The recent discovery of offshore oil reserves may have serious environmental costs along with economic benefits, as mining and logging activity in the interior once did. The U.S. oil company Chevron accepted responsibility for a 2011 oil spill off the coast of Rio de Janeiro. The Atlantic rainforest has been severely deforested for agriculture, which has made many species disappear from the area.

Geographic Regions and Features

Guiana Highlands

The Guiana Highlands rise just north of the Equator, straddling Brazil and its northern neighbors (Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana). Forest-covered, mineral-rich mountains are home to rugged waterfalls and rivers. Brazil’s highest peaks are here. Pico da Neblina rises 3,014 m (9,888 ft) at the Venezuelan border in the Serra do Imeri range, and flat-topped Monte Roraimá ascends 2,772 m (9,094 ft) at the border of Brazil, Guyana, and Venezuela in the Serra da Pacaraima range. The Serra Tumucumaque range, which separates Brazil from Suriname and French Guiana, is a fabled location of the mythical El Dorado, city of gold, which drew Europeans to the New World.

Many tributaries of the Amazon River flow south from the Guiana Highlands. The sparse regional population includes indigenous peoples such as the Yanomami, whose traditional homeland extends into southern Venezuela. The highlands are a site of conflict between

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indigenous peoples, miners, and loggers who want to exploit mineral and timber resources.24, 25, 26

Amazon Basin

Amazonia, the world’s largest river basin, covers more than 6 million sq km (2.3 million sq mi), from the Peruvian Andes in western South America—where the waters of the Amazon originate—to the river’s mouth on the coast of northern Brazil.27 Two-thirds of the basin lie within Brazilian borders and account for 40% of Brazil’s total area.28, 29 Forested, seasonally flooded plains (várzeas) lie along the rivers’ branches in central Amazonia. Firm earth (terra firme) forests characterize the regions that remain untouched by flooding rivers.30, 31 The tropical region is home to one-tenth of the world’s known species.32

More than 30 million people now live in the Brazilian Amazon, most in urban areas such as Manaus and Belém. But in remote areas live a few hundred thousand indigenous peoples, some of whom have remained isolated since prehistoric times.33, 34, 35 Managing the preservation and development of Amazonia is a major challenge (and sometimes lethal) for local residents, the Brazilian government, and third-party actors ranging from environmental activists to multinational corporations.36, 37

Pantanal

The largest freshwater wetland in the world, the Pantanal floodplain extends throughout southwestern Brazil into eastern Bolivia and northern Paraguay. Fed by the Paraguay River and its tributaries, the Pantanal floods during the rainy season, leaving most of the region submerged. The terrain ranges from flooded grasslands and marshes to patches of wooded savanna. Despite private ownership of much of the land, the floodplain remains intact because of limited development. Among the region’s inhabitants are cattle ranchers, who traditionally herd their livestock to higher elevations during the flood season. The expansion of farming and ranching, and an increased use of pesticides, could substantially alter the region in the future.

Brazilian Highlands

The Brazilian highlands cover more than half the country, encompassing most of central, eastern, and southern Brazil. The terrain consists of rolling, upland savanna; rocky, scrub-covered plateau; and numerous mountain ranges intersected by river valleys. The ranges have average elevations of 1,000 to 2,100 m (3,280 to 7,000 ft); major mountain ranges include the Serra do Mar along the southeastern Atlantic coast and the mineral-rich Serra do Espinhaço that runs north–south through the eastern states of Bahia and Minas Gerais. Brazilians call the interior of this region—specifically the area around the capital, Brasilia—the Planalto Central, or Central Plateau.

A type of scrub and thorn forest, known as caatinga, characterizes the northeast. The sertão, meaning “wilderness” or “hinterland,” is the backcountry of this region. The interior consists of grassland known as cerrado scattered with shrub and forest. Cerrado covers the west-central Mato Grosso Plateau, where many inhabitants raise livestock. In the past, rich Atlantic forests (Mata Atlântica) covered eastern and southeastern Brazil. Logging, agriculture, and urbanization

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43 Map of Brazil (Shaded Relief), Perry-Castaneda Library Map Collection, University of Texas, Austin, 11 June 2009, http://lib.utexas.edu/maps/americas/brazil_re94.pdf
in recent decades have reduced the forest to 5% of its original size, and international organizations are scrambling to save the remaining forest.48, 49

Coastal Lowlands

The eastern seaboard, featuring intermittent coastal lowlands, was the historic gateway for the colonizers of Brazil. Tropical beaches scattered with dunes and lagoons characterize the region. Offshore coral reefs and islands occur in some areas.50 Several of Brazil’s major cities sprawl throughout coastal plains and up the hillsides of surrounding ranges.51 The port of Santos, the largest in South America and the nation’s busiest, is located in São Paulo State on the southeastern coast.52 Other deep harbors are Rio de Janeiro’s Guanabara Bay and All Saints Bay at Salvador.

Climate

Brazil’s climate demonstrates significant regional variations. Because most of the country lies south of the Equator, summer occurs from December through March and winter from June through September. Northern Brazil, including the Guiana Highlands and much of the Amazon Basin, has an equatorial climate characterized by hot, humid weather with little seasonal variation. Annual rainfall in Amazonia is around 200 cm (79 in), although some areas may receive as much as 300 cm (118 in). Temperatures average more than 25ºC (77ºF), with highs usually not surpassing 35ºC (95ºF).53, 54

Conditions vary markedly across the Brazilian Highlands. Northeastern Brazil, namely the sertão, is the country’s hottest and driest area. Annual rainfall in this drought-prone region ranges from 38–76 cm (15–30 in). Summer temperatures average around 29ºC (84ºF), but highs of 38ºC (100ºF) are not uncommon. Summer is the rainy season in the west central interior of the

highlands, which receives around 150 cm (59 in) or more of annual precipitation. The Pantanal floods during this time from the abundant rainfall. Temperatures in the highlands are typically moderate year-round, with averages ranging from 20°C (68°F) in winter to around 25°C (77°F) in summer.\textsuperscript{55}

Portions of the coastal lowlands and immediate highland interior are subject to moist oceanic air currents and receive rainfall year-round. Temperatures are generally warm and moderated by ocean breezes, but highs of 38°C (100°F) can occur in places such as Rio de Janeiro. Southern Brazil (comprising the states of Paraná, Santa Catarina, and Rio Grande do Sul) has a subtropical climate. Hot summers and cool winters with occasional frosts and rare snowfall at higher elevations characterize this climate. Though winter is its wettest season, this region receives precipitation year-round.\textsuperscript{56}

**Bodies of Water**

Although Brazil has no natural lakes, its rivers hold 14% of the world’s freshwater resources, with immense capacity for irrigation and hydroelectric power. Yet millions of Brazilians remain without access to drinkable water because of poor development and distribution.\textsuperscript{57, 58, 59}

The Amazon River system is the most extensive in the world. The Amazon originates in the Peruvian Andes and runs eastward 6,400 km (3,976 mi) to its mouth on the Atlantic coast of northern Brazil.\textsuperscript{60} Numerous tributaries of considerable size and length feed the river. From its mouth, small ships can navigate the Amazon to its upper course in eastern Peru; large ships can travel upstream to the city of Manaus in central Amazonia.\textsuperscript{61}

The Paraguay and Paraná rivers form the second-largest river system in Brazil. Both rivers originate in the Brazilian Highlands and form the drainage system for southwestern Brazil. The Paraguay River runs southward through the Pantanal, where it floods seasonally. The

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\textsuperscript{57} V.V. Sugunan, “Chapter 6: Brazil,” in *Fisheries Management of Small Water Bodies in Seven Countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America*, FAO Fisheries Circular no. 933 FIRI/C933, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, November 1997, [http://www.fao.org/docrep/w7560e/W7560E06.htm](http://www.fao.org/docrep/w7560e/W7560E06.htm)


Paraguay River also forms a portion of the Brazilian-Paraguayan border. Dammed in multiple places, most notably at Itaipú on the Brazilian-Paraguayan border, the Paraná has one of the world’s largest hydroelectric facilities, which generates a significant portion of Brazil’s energy supply. Just south of Itaipú, the spectacular Iguazu Falls mark the Brazil-Argentina border, and the Iguazu and Paraná rivers demarcate the tri-border point of Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay.

The Tocantins-Araguaia river system originates in the Brazilian Highlands and runs northward, ultimately emptying into the Pará River near the Amazon delta. Tucuruí is a large hydroelectric dam on the river. The area’s endangered grasslands (cerrado) are home to 11 indigenous peoples, one-third of the country’s biodiversity, and possibly 5% of the world’s flora and fauna.

The longest river wholly within Brazil, the São Francisco River flows north through eastern Brazil, where it is an important source of water for the sertão. Riverboats suited for navigating shallow waters travel between Pirapora in the state of Minas Gerais and Juazeiro in the state of Bahia, while larger, maritime vessels may only operate on the waters below the Paulo Afonso Falls. The falls produce hydroelectric energy for northeastern Brazil.

**Major Cities**

Most of Brazil’s major cities are on the eastern seaboard, reflecting the historical concentration of population along the Atlantic coast. Interior cities include the mining center and 19th-

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century planned city of Belo Horizonte, the colonial Amazonian outpost of Manaus, and the nation’s modern capital, Brasília.

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<td>São Paulo</td>
<td>11,125,243</td>
<td>19,683,975</td>
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<td>Rio de Janeiro</td>
<td>6,323,037</td>
<td>11,872,164</td>
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<td>Salvador</td>
<td>2,675,875</td>
<td>3,458,571</td>
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<td>Brasília (capital)</td>
<td>2,476,249</td>
<td>3,717,728</td>
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<td>Fortaleza</td>
<td>2,447,409</td>
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<td>Belo Horizonte</td>
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**Brasilia**

Construction began in 1956 for the planned capital city of Brasilia. Located in the upland savanna of the Central Plateau, the relatively young city was built as part of an effort to expand development from the eastern seaboard into the central interior. The Distrito Federal, the administrative division surrounding the capital, also is a product of this plan. Brasilia officially became the capital in 1960, replacing the former capital, Rio de Janeiro.\(^{74}\)

Known for its meticulously designed layout, Brasilia includes two wing-like residential districts branching off an axis lined with government buildings and other public facilities.\(^{75}\) Apartment buildings known as *superquadras* (superblocks) make up the residential districts.\(^{76}\) Created by well-known architect Oscar Niemeyer and city planner Lúcio Costa, the city is now a UNESCO World Heritage site.\(^{77}\)

Several unplanned satellite cities established themselves on the outskirts of Brasilia.\(^{78}\) Compared to other Brazilian cities, the inner city is relatively safe, spacious, and free of traffic. Yet poverty, crime, and sprawl mark the satellite cities.\(^{79}\)


\(^{76}\) Darlene Joy Sadlier, “Chapter 5: Modernist Brazil,” in *Brazil Imagined: 1500 to the Present* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 199.


São Paulo

São Paulo, in southeastern Brazil, lies in an upland basin just inland from the coast and the port city of Santos. It is the largest city in Brazil, the largest city in Latin America, and one of the largest cities in the world. The city’s expansive development began with the enhancement of the Brazilian coffee trade in the late 19th century. Thereafter, São Paulo grew rapidly as the center of Brazilian industrialization. Today, it remains the country’s major industrial and financial hub. São Paulo’s high density and fast, work-driven pace is reflected in the vast expanse of high-rise buildings. About one-third of the population of São Paulo live in favelas, or shantytowns. Locals call the city Sampa; its residents are Paulistanos. The diverse population includes Portuguese, Italians, Africans, Arabs, Japanese, and Jews. Crime is a major problem, and robberies and home invasions affect São Paulans of all socioeconomic levels. Criminal gangs are responsible for much of the city’s crime. They target the wealthy—or those they perceive as wealthy—for kidnapping. They also target lower-income residences for rapid robbery invasions. Criminal gangs can target entire apartment buildings for robberies.

Rio de Janeiro

Located on the southeastern coast 350 km (217 mi) northeast of São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro was the capital of both colonial Brazil (1763–1889) and independent Brazil (1889–1960). The city extends throughout the coastal lowlands and up the hillsides of the partly forested coastal mountains that encircle and divide it. Mount Corcovado (Morro do Corcovado), at 704 m (2,310 ft), is the site of the city’s famous statue of Jesus Christ, which stands 30 m (98 ft), not including its base. On the coastal plain, the city’s central district (Centro) abuts the western beach-lined shore of Guanabara Bay, a natural deepwater harbor for one of Brazil’s major ports. Rio is best known as the center of Brazilian

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80 “São Paulo,” Sunday Times (UK), 2012, http://bcg.thetimes.co.uk/South_America/Brazil/Sao_Paulo
culture and tourism, especially for the festival of Carnaval. About one-fifth of its residents live in shantytowns. These slums have limited or no municipal services and are often under the practical control of local drug gangs.

Salvador

Located on the northeastern coast, Salvador lies on a peninsula separating the Atlantic Ocean from All Saints Bay. The city is one of Brazil’s oldest. Its location, alongside a natural deepwater harbor, played a vital role in its development, and it remains a major port. Portuguese settlers founded the city in 1549 as the colony’s first capital. As a shipping center for regional sugarcane exports, Salvador became the Portuguese empire’s second-greatest city, behind only Lisbon, the capital of Portugal. During the peak of the slave trade, Salvador sent out more slave ships than its European counterparts.

Today, the majority of the city’s residents are either partly or primarily of African descent. The city is a vibrant center of Afro-Brazilian culture and a well-preserved artifact of Portuguese colonial history. Salvador’s city center has two parts: a lower city (cidade baixa), which includes the port, and an upper city (cidade alta), which sits atop an adjacent bluff and includes local and regional government offices.

Manaus

Although smaller than many of Brazil’s major coastal cities, the river port Manaus is significant as the major commercial and transportation hub of Amazonia. The city sits on the north bank of the many channels (igarapés) of the Rio Negro River near its confluence with the Amazon. As a former center for the regional rubber trade, Manaus retains a substantial industrial sector. Its equatorial climate is hot and especially humid; malaria is a common sickness in the region. In addition to receiving large seafaring ships traveling upstream from the coast, Manaus hosts an international airport.

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Environmental Concerns

Brazil passed its first conservation law against the destruction and burning of forests in 1797; the country established its first national park at Itatiaia in 1937. In 1992, Rio de Janeiro hosted the United Nations’ Conference on Environment and Development, popularly known as the Earth Summit, which produced legally binding conventions on climate change and biological diversity. But the specifics of how to achieve and monitor biodiversity, poverty reduction, and food security remain to be established. Brazil’s environment faces many threats: deforestation, pollution, overfishing, illegal wildlife trade, overpopulation, and encroaching development. The people of Brazil also face international (and internal) criticism when they do not succeed in protecting their unique environmental assets.

Destruction of the Rainforest

Brazil is caretaker to one-third of the world’s rainforests (including the bulk of the Amazon). Although European colonization began to accelerate damage to Brazilian rainforests centuries ago, the past 40 years have been particularly destructive. Deforestation has many causes: droughts and wildfires, “slash-and-burn” subsistence farming, industrialized agriculture, cattle ranching, logging, mining, and road and dam building. Many Brazilians, including government officials, have an immediate economic incentive to exploit rainforest resources, despite long-term, widespread negative consequences. To curb rainforest destruction, Brazil has put large amounts of endangered land under federal protection and increased the number of environmental-protection staff. The establishment of reserves for indigenous peoples has been particularly contentious.

Inside the protected areas, the rate of deforestation and number of fires have fallen.\textsuperscript{110} Outside these areas, the Atlantic forests (\textit{Mata Atlantica}) have all but disappeared, and more than 25\% of the Brazilian Amazon is predicted to be destroyed by 2020.\textsuperscript{111, 112}

\textit{Pollution}

Brazil suffers from various forms of pollution. Mining, oil extraction, and industrial manufacturing pollute soils and rivers, which eventually degrade the water supply for most of the population.\textsuperscript{113} Dams that impede the flow of fresh water to the ocean eventually lead to inland saltwater encroachment.\textsuperscript{114} Offshore oil spills threaten Brazil’s marine resources several times a year. Besides the 2011 oil spill and subsequent suit for damages that forced Chevron to close a major offshore site in March 2012, the Brazilian national oil company Petrobrás reported a nearby seep in April 2012.\textsuperscript{115, 116}

Smog is another serious problem in urban areas because of automobiles and industry.\textsuperscript{117} Although the use of biofuel-based ethanol is promising for improving air quality in cities throughout Brazil, pollution (caused by the loss of rainforest used for cultivating biofuels) and other practices offset any reduction in air pollution that the use of biofuels may provide.\textsuperscript{118, 119} Finally, poor waste management pollutes the environment, especially in smaller cities that have fewer resources for infrastructure development.\textsuperscript{120}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{110} Rhett A. Butler, “Brazil,” in \textit{A Place Out of Time: Tropical Rainforests and the Perils They Face}, Mongabay.com, 5 February 2006, http://www.mongabay.com/home.htm;
\item \textsuperscript{115} “Brazil Navy Investigates New Oil Spill off Coast,” Reuters, 17 May 2012, http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/17/us-brazil-oil-spill-idUSBRE84G0VC20120517
\item \textsuperscript{118} C-C. Tsao et al., “Increased Estimates of Air-Pollution Emissions from Brazilian Sugar Cane Ethanol (Letter),” \textit{Nature Climate Change} 2 (2012), 53–57, http://www.nature.com/nclimate/journal/v2/n1/full/nclimate1325.html
\item \textsuperscript{119} D. M. Lapola et al., “Indirect Land-use Changes can Overcome Carbon Savings from Biofuels in Brazil,” \textit{PNAS} 8 February 2010, http://www.pnas.org/content/early/2010/02/02/0907318107.abstract
\end{itemize}
Illegal Wildlife Trade

Brazil’s tremendous biodiversity makes it a hotbed of illegal wildlife trade, which harms the animals taken and the populations that remain. In 2001, a Brazilian NGO estimated that 38 million animals are taken from the nation’s wild lands annually, some for meat or traditional medicine but most for trade as exotic pets within the country and abroad. After drugs and arms, wildlife trafficking is the third-largest illegal trade activity in the world, earning Brazilian smugglers about USD 1.25 billion per year. Brazil is trying to strengthen its legislation against major offenders and is participating in information-sharing projects to reduce international fraud and illegal trade.

Natural Hazards

Given its large geography and varied climates, Brazil is subject to floods and droughts. Flooding and its effects are the most deadly natural hazards, particularly in urban areas. In 2011, mudslides in the mountains near Rio de Janeiro killed more than 700, the nation’s worst natural disaster on record. More recently, the droughts of 2005 and 2010 dropped the Amazon River to its lowest levels in decades and completely dried up some of its tributaries. In southern Brazil, frosts are an agricultural hazard, sometimes reducing coffee bean production by 30–50%. The government is working to establish a

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national disaster early-warning system and struggling to move funding for disaster prevention to at-risk locations.\textsuperscript{131, 132}

Brazil’s public health agencies face a challenging array of endemic diseases and toxic animals and plants. Neglected diseases include leprosy, dengue and other tropical fevers, and parasitic diseases.\textsuperscript{133, 134, 135} Chagas disease, a parasitic infection named for the Brazilian doctor and researcher who first described it in 1909, kills 5,000 Brazilians each year.\textsuperscript{136} It cost the Brazilian economy an estimated USD 5.6 million annually in work absenteeism until its transmission (via the “kissing bug”) was effectively interrupted in 2006.\textsuperscript{137}

Brazilian scorpions also have adapted to urban life and are stimulated and spread by pesticides—37,000 stings and 50 deaths were reported in 2005.\textsuperscript{138, 139} Poisonous plants kill an estimated 1 million head of cattle each year.\textsuperscript{140} In tropical soils, during runoffs into rivers, concentrates of naturally occurring mercury enter the food chain and contaminate carnivorous fish. As a result, villagers were advised to change their eating habits and substitute herbivorous fish.\textsuperscript{141}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{131} Planetary Skin Institute, “Brazil Natural Disaster Early Warning System,” 2012, \url{http://www.planetaryskin.org/rd-programs/disasters/brazil-early-warning-system}
  \item \textsuperscript{133} Al Ko et al., “Urban Epidemic of Severe Leptospirosis in Brazil,” \textit{Lancet} 354, no. 9181 (4 September 1999): 820–25, \url{http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sites/entrez?db=pubmed&cmd=Search&doptcmdl=Citation&defaultField=Title%20ord&term=Ko%5Bauthor%5D%20AND%20Urban%20epidemic%20AND%20Leptospirosis%20AND%20Brazil%20Salvador%20Study%20Group}
  \item \textsuperscript{134} World Health Organization, “Control of Neglected Tropical Diseases: Diseases in Brazil,” 2012, \url{http://www.who.int/neglected_diseases/countries/bra/en/index.html}
  \item \textsuperscript{135} John P. Ehrenberg and Steven K. Ault, “Neglected Diseases of Neglected Populations: Thinking to Reshape the Determinants of Health in Latin American and the Caribbean,” \textit{BMC Public Health} 5, no. 119 (2005), \url{http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2458/5/119/}
  \item \textsuperscript{136} Paulo Gadelba, “Brazil: Tackling a Complex Disease,” DNDI Newsletter, April 2010, \url{http://www.dndi.org/newsletters/n19/3_1.php}
  \item \textsuperscript{137} World Health Organization, “Working to Overcome the Global Impact of Neglected Tropical Diseases” (Geneva: World Health Organization, 2010), 16, \url{http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2010/9789241564090_eng.pdf}
  \item \textsuperscript{141} Kelly Haggart, “ Mercury Research Bears Fruit in Amazon,” \textit{Women and Environments International Magazine} 76–77 (2008), reproduced by International Development Research Center (Canada), \url{http://www.docstoc.com/docs/41212164/Mercury-Research-Bears-Fruit-in-the-Amazon}
Chapter 1 Assessment

1. Brazil occupies about half of South America.
   **True**
   Brazil is the largest country in Latin America and the fifth-largest nation in the world. Occupying about half of the South American landmass, Brazil is bigger than the United States.

2. Most of Brazil is wet, tropical lowlands.
   **False**
   The Brazilian Highlands cover more than half the country, encompassing most of central, eastern, and southern Brazil. The terrain consists of rolling savannas, rocky plateaus, and numerous mountain ranges intersected by river valleys.

3. The city of Rio de Janeiro has the largest population in the Southern Hemisphere.
   **False**
   Although Rio de Janeiro is Brazil’s cultural capital, São Paulo is twice the size of Rio. São Paulo has a metropolitan population of about 20 million. It is the largest city in Brazil, the largest city in Latin America, and one of the world’s largest cities.

4. Brazil’s summer months begin in December.
   **True**
   Because most of Brazil lies south of the Equator, seasons in Brazil occur at opposite times of the year from the Northern Hemisphere. Summer occurs from December through March and winter occurs from June through September.

5. Brazil shares its western borders with Chile and Ecuador.
   **False**
   To the west, Brazil borders nearly every country in South America (except Chile and Ecuador): Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, French Guiana, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, and Venezuela.
CHAPTER 2: HISTORY

Introduction

Ten thousand years before Portuguese colonizers arrived and claimed Brazil in 1500, indigenous peoples lived throughout South America. The 300-year rule of the Portuguese crown that followed devastated the native peoples of Brazil—killing as much as half the population during the 16th century—before landowners turned to African slaves for labor. Contemporary Brazil features the largest African population of any country in the world outside Africa.

Throughout much of Brazil’s history, economic boom-and-bust cycles in sugar, gold, diamonds, coffee, and rubber brought about income inequalities and violent competition for resources. Brazil claimed independence from Europe during the 1800s, first as an empire and later as a republic.

As a “regime born of coup de’etat [sic] that maintained itself by force,” the government of Brazil has been historically characterized by civilian and military dictatorial rule, the accumulation of large amounts of foreign debt from borrowing money to expand industry and infrastructure, and occasional economic gains. Several of the country’s presidents have resigned before completing their terms in office, and those suspected of communist leanings have been removed via military coups. One elected civilian president died before taking office. Another

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144 Márcio M. Valença, “Patron-Client Relations and Politics in Brazil: An Historical Overview” (Research Papers in Environmental and Spatial Analysis, Department of Geography, London School of Economics, 1999), http://www2.lse.ac.uk/geographyAndEnvironment/research/Researchpapers/rp58.pdf
committed suicide after resigning under pressure of being forcibly removed via military coup during his second term in office.\textsuperscript{155, 156}

At times, political opposition has been effectively outlawed in Brazil, and dissidents have been subject to arrest, detention, torture, and execution.\textsuperscript{157} Freedom of the press and other civil liberties also have been severely curtailed. Repression peaked during military dictatorial rule in the early 1970s.\textsuperscript{158}

Since the country’s return to democratic government in the mid-1980s, Brazil has adopted a new constitution that allows for the direct election of the president by popular vote. The nation’s first female president took office in 2011.\textsuperscript{159, 160}

Today, Brazil is a rising world power and one of the United States’ biggest trading partners and newest supplier of oil and natural gas.\textsuperscript{161, 162}

**Pre-Colonial History**

Archaeological evidence indicates that humans had settled the Brazilian region by at least 9000 B.C.E. Many traces of these peoples suggest that they lived in semi-sedentary groups that were well adapted to their local surroundings (not unlike their presumed contemporary descendants, the Ticuna, Yanomami, and Guarani).\textsuperscript{163} Composed of several hundred or more tribes, these indigenous peoples migrated throughout the region, subsisting as hunters and gatherers or small-scale farmers and

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### The Early Colonial Era

Portuguese explorers landed on the Brazilian coast in 1500. Led by Pedro Álvares Cabral, the landing party erected a cross made from a local tree, said a mass, and named the spot Vera Cruz (True Cross). Curious Tupinambá Amerindians came to watch the proceedings and exchanged gifts with the sailors. Portugal claimed the land under an established treaty with Spain, the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494), which divided the recently discovered New World between the two Catholic colonial powers. For the first decades, a few Portuguese made their living from the export of brazilin, a red dye of the brazilwood tree.\footnote{Teresa A. Meade, “Chapter 1: Land and People Before and After Portuguese Exploration (Prehistory to 1530)” in A Brief History of Brazil (New York: Facts on File, 2003), 12–17.}

French, Spanish, and English traders soon established relations with the local peoples, ignoring the Portuguese crown’s claim to have the sole right to the brazilwood trade.\footnote{S.W. Miller, An Environmental History of Latin America (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 95–96.} \footnote{Chris Allan, “Brazilwood: A Brief History,” University of Minnesota, James Ford Bell Library, 2010, https://www.lib.umn.edu/bell/tradeproducts/brazilwood} In an effort to stave off competition, the Portuguese initiated a campaign to colonize the region in the 1530s. King João III instituted a hereditary captaincy system in which nobles willing to develop (and defend) their respective territories in the name of Portugal received land grants.\footnote{Thomas E. Skidmore, “Chapter 1: Birth and Growth of Colonial Brazil: 1500–1750,” in Brazil: Five Centuries of Change (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 10.} After it proved mostly a failure, the king abolished the captaincy system and established direct administrative control over most of the coastal region. Tomé de Sousa, the colony’s first governor-general, arrived in 1549 and established the city of Salvador, which remained the colonial capital until 1763.\footnote{Frank D. McCann, “Chapter 1: Historical Setting,” in Brazil: A Country Study, 5th ed., ed. Rex A. Hudson (Washington, DC: GPO for the Library of Congress, 1998), 17, http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/brtoc.html}
Jesuit missionaries arrived with Sousa and established missionary villages (aldeias) to convert indigenous peoples to Christianity.\textsuperscript{174} Although the Jesuits regularly placed themselves between the Indians and Portuguese landholders seeking slave labor, the missionary villages removed the Indians from their traditional support systems. The missionary villages also were breeding grounds for European diseases that decimated indigenous populations throughout the Americas.\textsuperscript{175} (Brazil’s indigenous population had fallen to about 150,000 by the early 20th century.)\textsuperscript{176}

Colonial Expansion and Slavery

From the 1530s to the mid-1600s, sugarcane was the primary commodity fueling the colonial economy. The large-scale development of sugarcane plantations depended on slave labor. After failing to enslave the indigenous people, the Portuguese came to rely on imported African slaves.\textsuperscript{177} More than 3 million Africans were brought to Brazil to grow sugarcane, coffee, and rubber, as well as mine gold and diamonds, until slavery was abolished during the 19th century.\textsuperscript{178, 179}

Indians who resisted enslavement became the target of bandeirantes, slave-hunters who explored deep into the Brazilian interior. Mostly based out of São Paulo, these frontiersmen sought their living outside the sugar economy. Unable to afford the cost of importing European brides, they took native women as companions and found themselves attacking settlements of escaped slaves on behalf of the Portuguese monarchy.\textsuperscript{180, 181}

The slave-hunters discovered gold in the late 1600s and diamonds early the next century, setting off a rush of mining development in the southeastern Brazilian highlands from Minas Gerais (general mines) to Mato Grosso (great woods). In 1763, officials moved the colonial capital south from Salvador to Rio de Janeiro, a port nearer to the mines.\textsuperscript{182} Several Portuguese-Spanish

\textsuperscript{181} Alida C. Metcalf, “Chapter 2: Town, Kingdom, and Wilderness,” in Family and Frontier in Colonial Brazil: Santana de Parnaíba, 1580–1822 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), 47.
treaties in the mid-to-late 18th century solidified Portugal’s claims to the colony’s massive territory, which settlers, missionaries, and slave hunters expanded over the years.183

**Independence**

In the late 18th century, as the mining economy declined, Brazilian independence movements increased.184 In 1807, Napoleon Bonaparte’s invasion of Portugal compelled the Portuguese monarchy to flee to safety in Brazil. In 1815, Prince Regent Dom João VI declared the establishment of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil, and the Algarves, effectively upgrading Brazil’s status from a colony to a kingdom.185

Dom João ascended to the throne as João VI after his mother’s death in 1816. He returned to Portugal in 1821 amid a domestic crisis, leaving his son, Dom Pedro, in control of Brazil. When the Portuguese government tried to return Brazil to the status of a dependent colony, the defiant Dom Pedro declared an independent Brazilian government on 7 September 1822 and adopted the title of Emperor on 1 December of that year. After relatively minor conflict, the Portuguese recognized Brazil’s sovereignty in 1825.186,187

**The Brazilian Empire and Republic**

Widespread social upheaval and territorial conflict during the first few decades of the 19th century gave way to prosperity and progress, including the development of railways and other infrastructure, coffee cultivation, and full emancipation of Brazil’s slaves by 1888. But the abolition of slavery, along with heavy casualties during the Paraguayan War (1864–1870), contributed to growing dissatisfaction with the monarchy, which was overthrown in a military coup on 15 November 1889.188,189,190,191

The leaders of the coup founded a constitutional republic on 24

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185 Boris Fausto, A Concise History of Brazil (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 68.
February 1891. Prudente de Morais, a civilian president, assumed office in 1894.\textsuperscript{192} He was the first of several successive Brazilian leaders who arose from the prosperous and politically powerful Paulista Party.\textsuperscript{193} Wealthy, landowning elites in the southeast wielded power in this era by fixing elections and making political appointments.\textsuperscript{194, 195}

Although the 1891 constitution gave the national military permanent status, it also gave the states the right to their own armed forces.\textsuperscript{196, 197} Between 1894 and 1930, the São Paulo state’s troops, whose training was outsourced to a French military mission, outnumbered in-state federal forces 10 to 1.\textsuperscript{198} At the same time, immigrants flooded Brazil and many replaced slaves as cheap labor for the booming coffee industry.\textsuperscript{199}

The late 19th and early 20th centuries also saw the rubber industry emerge in Amazonia.\textsuperscript{200} In the hope of securing a monopoly in the supply of latex, Henry Ford tried to export industrialized agriculture and American small-town life to an area along the Amazon River that became known as Fordlandia.\textsuperscript{201} Although he imported the best German machinery, prefabricated buildings, and hundreds of employees from Detroit, his dream of “creating the biggest rubber plantation in the world” ultimately failed, primarily because “there was a huge clash of cultures between mechanized America, Ford’s utopian ideals, and the way the indigenous people lived.”\textsuperscript{202, 203}

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\item 198 Thomas E. Skidmore, “Chapter 5: World War I, the Great Depression and Dictatorship,” in Brazil: Five Centuries of Change (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 106.
\item 199 Regis St. Louis et al., “History,” in Lonely Planet: Brazil, 8th ed. (Footscray, Victoria, Australia: Lonely Planet Publications, 2010), 47–49.
\item 200 Regis St. Louis et al., “History,” in Lonely Planet: Brazil, 8th ed. (Footscray, Victoria, Australia: Lonely Planet Publications, 2010), 47–49.
\end{itemize}
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The power and influence of coffee growers diminished when the global economic crisis of 1929–1930 led to a drastic decline in coffee prices, the revolution of 1930, and the expansion of central government.204, 205, 206

The Vargas Era (1930–1954)

Getúlio Vargas, a former governor of the southern state of Rio Grande do Sol, initially used military support to forcibly seize power in 1937.207 While in office, he centralized the government, instituted electoral reforms, and created a large public economic sector geared toward industrialization. In 1937, Vargas formed the Estado Nôvo (New State), in which he effectively assumed dictatorial powers over the expansive central government.208 Vargas distributed government jobs and instituted labor reforms, including a minimum wage that allowed him to maintain popular support as a champion of the working class.209

Following Vargas’ resignation in October 1945 under threat of a military coup, General Eurico Gaspar Dutra was elected president in December 1945, while Vargas took elected office in the senate. Five years later, Vargas was reelected president, although economic woes, civil unrest, and corruption plagued his final term in office.210, 211

When the presidential guard was proved complicit in hired killings in August 1954, army officers again forced Vargas to resign. He committed suicide soon afterward.212, 213

209 Márcio M. Valença, “Patron-Client Relations and Politics in Brazil: An Historical Overview” (Research Papers in Environmental and Spatial Analysis, Department of Geography, London School of Economics, 1999), 14–17, http://www2.lse.ac.uk/geographyAndEnvironment/research/Researchpapers/rd58.pdf
The Republic After Vargas (1954–1964)

Elected in 1955, Juscelino Kubitschek de Oliveira promoted a policy of intensive government-funded development in Brazilian industry and infrastructure. He oversaw the introduction of auto manufacturing in 1956.\textsuperscript{214} Kubitschek’s policies produced large gains in the gross domestic product (GDP), but the government incurred massive debt, adding to the already substantial debt left by Vargas. Export revenues only partially defrayed the costs of building heavy industries from scratch.\textsuperscript{215}

Kubitschek’s successor, schoolteacher-turned-politician Jânio Quadros, assumed office in January 1961. Quadros served fewer than 7 months before suddenly resigning, and power passed to Vice President João Goulart.\textsuperscript{216} Some perceived Goulart as a communist sympathizer as the nation faced political conflict and continued economic decline. By March 1964, the annual rate of inflation was more than 90%.\textsuperscript{217} Goulart was removed from power in 1964 by a military coup.\textsuperscript{218}

Military Rule (1964–1985)

Brazil’s military regime, which started out by implementing economic reforms and removing leftist and subversive political elements, grew increasingly repressive.\textsuperscript{219} Led by a series of military commanders, the regime consolidated power and outlawed political opposition. Military officers chaired all universities, and student groups were closely watched. The government curtailed freedom of the press and other civil liberties, subjecting dissidents to arrest, detention, torture, and execution.\textsuperscript{220} Many intellectuals and artists went into exile.\textsuperscript{221} Repression peaked under the presidential rule of General Emílio Garrastazu Médici between 1969 and 1974.\textsuperscript{222} Médici also oversaw a

\begin{itemize}
  \item Teresa A. Meade, “Chapter 8: From Military Dictatorship to Democracy,” in \textit{A Brief History of Brazil} (New York: Facts on File, 2003), 171–73.
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period of economic growth referred to as the “Brazilian miracle.” From 1968–1974, the economy grew quickly, foreign investment increased, and the Trans-Amazonian Highway and other major infrastructural projects were initiated.223

General Ernesto Geisel (1974–1979) and General João Figueiredo (1979–1985) incrementally reinstated civil liberties. The abertura, or “opening” of the political system to democratic reforms, characterized Figueiredo’s rule. But the country’s economic problems—inflation, foreign debt, falling productivity, unemployment, and poverty—inspired wide-ranging opposition.224

In 1979, Luis Inácio Lula da Silva (Lula), formerly president of the Metal Workers’ Union, started the Partido dos Trabalhadores (Workers’ Party, or PT). In 1980, the PT led strikes in the industrial sector and won higher wages, safer working conditions, paid sick and vacation leave, and a more democratic union structure. In rural areas, people seized unused private land, and foreign Roman Catholic priests were expelled for political activism on land reform.225 In 1984, demonstrators throughout Brazil called for direct elections, foreshadowing an end to the military dictatorship. In 1985, Brazil’s electoral college elected opposition candidate Tancredo Neves. Had he not died of a perforated ulcer prior to assuming office, Neves would have been the first president since 1964 to come to power independent of military support.226, 227

Democracy and Reform

Fernando Affonso Collor de Mello briefly served as president from 1990 to 1992 but was impeached for corruption and drug use.228 The vice-president appointed Fernando Cardoso as finance minister, who implemented a plan that reduced the rate of inflation from nearly 1000% in 1994 to almost zero in 1998.229,230 This success, and being slightly more conservative than Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva allowed him to win the presidency in 1994, and again in 1998.231,232

Although a new constitution was passed in 1988 that restored civil liberties, economic troubles intensified amidst the continuing trends of privatizing Brazil’s state-owned companies and using high interest rates and wage freezes to contain inflation.²³³, ²³⁴

Economic reform continued during the administration of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2002–2010), a member of the Workers’ Party and popularly known as the country’s first working-class president. According to estimates, millions of Brazilians rose out of poverty under his administration.²³⁵ Despite charges of corruption against his party, President Lula retained popular support, leaving office in 2010 with approval ratings of more than 80%.²³⁶, ²³⁷ He is eligible to run again in 2014 and, despite a bout with throat cancer, has said he will do so if his successor, Dilma Rousseff, chooses not to seek a second term.²³⁸, ²³⁹ In April 2013, corruption charges against Lula resurfaced as prosecutors investigated his possible involvement in a scheme to pay political supporters.²⁴⁰

Recent Events

Dilma Rousseff, President Lula’s former chief of staff and hand-picked successor, assumed the office of president in January 2011 following elections in October 2010.²⁴¹ The first woman to be elected president in Brazil, Rousseff has been active in left-wing politics since her teenage years, when she joined an underground resistance movement that opposed military dictatorial control of Brazil. Although she has denied involvement in armed resistance, she was jailed for 3 years in the early 1970s and reportedly tortured.²⁴²

In 2011, President Rousseff announced the creation of a 7-member commission to investigate human rights abuses in Brazil between 1946 and 1988, particularly focusing on the period 1964–


²³⁹ Reuters, “Brazil’s Ex-president Lula Says He May Run Again,” 1 June 2012, [http://uk.reuters.com/article/2012/06/01/uk-brazil-lula-future-idUKBRE85005N20120601](http://uk.reuters.com/article/2012/06/01/uk-brazil-lula-future-idUKBRE85005N20120601)


1985, when as many as 500 people might have been killed or disappeared and thousands were reportedly tortured or detained. But because of an amnesty law passed in 1979, military officials accused of torture and left-wing guerrillas accused of violence cannot be prosecuted.\textsuperscript{243, 244, 245, 246}

Following a 2011 visit by U.S. President Barack Obama to Brazil, President Rousseff met privately with her American counterpart at the White House in April 2012 to discuss a range of diplomatic and economic concerns, including the increasing production of Brazilian oil and natural gas for export to the United States.\textsuperscript{247} During her term in office, President Rousseff has borrowed heavily from the United States and Europe to help jump start the Brazilian economy.\textsuperscript{248, 249}

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\item BBC News, “Brazil Truth Commission Begins Rights Abuse Inquiries,” 16 May 2012, \url{http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-18087390}
\item BBC News, “Brazil Creates Truth Commission to Probe Rights Abuses,” 27 October 2011, \url{http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-15473622}
\end{itemize}
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Chapter 2 Assessment

1. The lives of native Brazilians improved during Portugal’s 300-year rule of Brazil.
   **False**
   Portuguese colonization devastated the native peoples of Brazil—killing as much as half the population during the 16th century. The population, estimated at 2–6 million when the Portuguese arrived in 1500, had been reduced to 150,000 by the early 20th century.

2. In the early 1800s, the Portuguese monarchy sought safety in Brazil.
   **True**
   In 1807, Napoleon Bonaparte’s invasion of Portugal compelled the Portuguese monarchy to flee to safety in Brazil, which in 1815 became the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil, and the Algarves, effectively upgrading Brazil’s status from a colony to a kingdom.

3. The Republic of Brazil peacefully gained its independence through diplomatic efforts and monetary payments to the Portuguese monarchy.
   **False**
   After a military coup overthrew the Portuguese monarchy in 1889, the leaders of the coup founded a constitutional republic in 1891. Although civilian, the first few presidents of Brazil were prosperous and politically powerful landowning elites of the Paulista Party.

4. In the 1930s, Getúlio Vargas created a strong central government in Brazil that he ruled with dictatorial powers.
   **True**
   Getúlio Vargas initially used military support to forcibly seize power in 1937. While in office, he centralized the government and effectively assumed dictatorial powers over the state, until he was twice forced out of office by the military and then committed suicide.

5. The military government of Brazil (1964–1985) outlawed political opposition.
   **True**
   Beginning by implementing economic reforms and removing leftists and subversive political elements, Brazil’s military regime grew increasingly repressive and outlawed political opposition—subjecting dissidents to arrest, detention, torture, and execution.
CHAPTER 3: ECONOMY

Introduction

Brazil has the largest economy in South America and is one of an elite group of emerging economies known as BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) that are considered key to continued global economic growth.\(^{250}\) Once the largest debtor nation in the developing world, Brazil became a net external creditor in 2008.\(^{251}\) Trade and investments are growing with regional neighbors, other BRICs, and Lusophone (Portuguese-speaking) countries in Africa and Asia.\(^{252, 253}\)

The country’s natural resources are immense in quantity and variety: water, land, plants, animals, and minerals. Brazil’s recent economic performance rests on strong international demand for these resources, from soybeans to oil. When global demand falls, the Brazilian economy is vulnerable.\(^{254, 255}\) The cost of doing business in Brazil is high in terms of time, effort, and money, and is often blamed for the continuing vigor of the informal sector.\(^{256}\)

In the 2000s, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (Lula) and his leftist Workers’ Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores) developed social welfare programs to reduce Brazil’s chasm of income inequality. At the same time, the government continued macroeconomic policies to control inflation by raising central bank interest rates and reducing government spending (even below levels recommended by the International Monetary Fund).\(^{257}\)

The United States, one of Brazil’s biggest trading partners, has invested heavily in South America’s largest nation, announcing in September 2012 plans to loan Brazil’s Petrobrás oil


\(^{251}\) Kevin Casas-Zamora, “Brazil: Poster Boy of Globalization Charts Own Course,” Yale Global Online, 9 April 2010, [http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/brazil-charts-own-course](http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/brazil-charts-own-course)


company USD 10 billion to develop offshore hydrocarbon reserves.\textsuperscript{258, 259} With the recent
discovery of offshore oil, Brazil has become one of the United States’ newest suppliers of oil and
natural gas.\textsuperscript{260}

Agriculture

Brazil is named after its first international agricultural export—
the red dye extracted from brazilwood—and agricultural
production has fundamentally shaped its society and economy
ever since. Sugar products accounted for nearly 6\% of total
export value in 2011.\textsuperscript{261} Brazil is the world’s largest producer of
sugarcane, coffee, and oranges, and a leader in cattle, poultry,
soybeans, tobacco, bananas, corn, pineapple, pepper, and brazil
nuts and cashews.\textsuperscript{262} The Amazon Basin is a major source of
timber. The agricultural sector is responsible for about 6\% of Brazil’s Gross Domestic Product
(GDP). Related agribusiness—most famously biofuel production—greatly contributes to the
country’s immense industrial output.\textsuperscript{263, 264} Approximately 20\% of the Brazilian labor force
works in agriculture.\textsuperscript{265}

In 2008, family agriculture accounted for 30\% of the farming area and 38\% of output, and
employed more than 14 million people.\textsuperscript{266} But because agribusiness has the capital to make
large-scale investments, land ownership is concentrated in a few wealthy hands.\textsuperscript{267} Land reform
activists moved the government to counter this trend by giving farm plots to 1 million
families.\textsuperscript{268, 269}

\textsuperscript{258} Latin American Herald Tribune, “U.S. Government to Loan Brazil’s Petrobras $10 Billion,” 2009,
http://www.laht.com/article.asp?ArticleId=340859&CATEGORYID=10718
\textsuperscript{259} Central Intelligence Agency, “Brazil: Economy,” in The World Factbook, 11 September 2012,
\textsuperscript{261} UN Comtrade, United Nations Commodity Trade Statistics Database, “Comtrade Explorer: Snapshot,” 2010,
\textsuperscript{262} U.S. Commercial Service, Chapter 4: Leading Sectors for U.S. Export and Investment in “Doing Business in
http://www.buyusainfo.net/docs/x_5067387.pdf
\textsuperscript{263} Central Intelligence Agency, “Brazil: Economy,” in The World Factbook, 11 September 2012,
\textsuperscript{264} Foreign Agricultural Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, “The Amazon: Brazil’s Final Soybean Frontier,”
\textsuperscript{265} Central Intelligence Agency, “Brazil: Economy,” in The World Factbook, 11 September 2012,
\textsuperscript{266} USAID, “Country Profile: Property Rights and Resource Governance: Brazil,” May 2011, 4,
http://usaidlandtenure.net/sites/default/files/country-profiles/full-reports/USAID_Land_Tenure_Brazil_Profile.pdf
\textsuperscript{267} Fabiana Frayssinet, “Brazil: Agribusiness Driving Land Concentration,” Inter Press Service News Agency, 5
\textsuperscript{268} USAID, “Country Profile: Property Rights and Resource Governance: Brazil,” May 2011, 4,
http://usaidlandtenure.net/sites/default/files/country-profiles/full-reports/USAID_Land_Tenure_Brazil_Profile.pdf
\textsuperscript{269} Gary Duffy, “Changing Times for Brazil’s Landless,” BBC News, 23 January 2009,
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7845611.stm
Sugarcane and Ethanol

Brazil has the largest sugarcane-based ethanol fuel industry in the world.²⁷⁰ Planting and harvesting remain largely unmechanized on large plantations.²⁷¹ Plantations offer mainly low-wage jobs to migrant laborers, who take up residence in field-side dormitories.²⁷² Thus, a significant social footprint is created by the cultivation of a crop intended to reduce mankind’s carbon footprint.²⁷³ Legislation (ZAE Cana) banned the expansion of sugarcane plantations into the Amazon rainforest in 2009, and regulated palm oil in 2010, but Brasilia has not yet set agro-ecological zones for other land uses (including the cultivation of soybeans for biofuel).²⁷⁴ A poor sugarcane crop contributed to a Brazilian ethanol shortage in 2011, forcing the country to import ethanol from the United States.²⁷⁵

Coffee

Coffee ranks just behind oil as the world’s most traded commodity.²⁷⁶ By 1850, Brazil accounted for half of global coffee production.²⁷⁷ When the international price of coffee tumbled during the Great Depression, the Brazilian government bought huge stocks of beans and destroyed them.²⁷⁸ During the Cold War, the world coffee trade used quotas to control prices.²⁷⁹ To the free world, stable prices were a means of preventing farmers in the coffee belt from turning to communism. Brazil, as the largest producer, received the largest quota.²⁸⁰ After the Cold War, agreement on quotas collapsed.²⁸¹ Brazilian roasters have lobbied their government to lift

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²⁸⁰ Lovell S. Jarvis, “How Brazil Transferred Billions to Foreign Coffee Importers: The International Coffee Agreement, Rent Seeking and Export Tax Rebates” (Working Paper No. 03-002, Department of Agricultural and
restrictions on coffee imports, so they can compete in the international market of mixed beans and coffee blends. Brazilian growers do not want other beans imported, which could drive down the price of their domestic product.282

*Cattle Ranching*

Brazil’s military government offered subsidies for cattle ranching in the Amazon to create an export industry that could help pay down the country’s debt. Ranching grew dramatically in the 1990s. Beef exports from 1997 to 2003 rose from 232,000 to approximately 1.2 million metric tons.283, 284 Brazil’s Ministry of Agriculture now estimates that the gross value of meat and milk production is BRL 67 billion (USD 33 billion).285 Ranches are created by extracting marketable timber and burning the remaining trees. The ashes are sold to make vegetable oil, and the land is planted with grass to provide pasture for cattle. Eventually, meat and milk earn ranchers USD 1.5 billion annually, and leather is a secondary source of income. When the grass ceases to grow because of desertification, more trees are cleared for pasture, and the process is repeated.286 Cattle ranching is now the primary cause of deforestation in the Amazon region.287, 288

*Industry*

Industry employs about 14% of Brazil’s workers and accounts for more than one-quarter of GDP (27.5% in 2011).289 Many of Brazil’s modern industrial giants began under state-led programs initiated by President Getúlio Vargas in 1930. The government encouraged import substitution: the development of domestic industries to produce goods that could compete with and replace imports. The growth of consumer-goods manufacturing (e.g., textiles and foods) was followed by the

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282 Mario Osava, “Brazil: Green Beans to Go, Roast Coffee Grounded,” Inter Press Service News Agency, 11 November 2009,
283 Mark London and Brian Kelly, “Till the Cows Come Home,” American Prospect, 10 August 2007,
285 Ministry of Agriculture, Brazil, “Cattle and Buffaloes,” n.d.,
286 Massachusetts Institute of Technology, “Project Amazonia: Threats: Agriculture and Cattle Ranching,” n.d.,
288 BBC News, “Brazil Country Profile,” 14 August 2012,
But the cost of establishing and protecting domestic industries often put the government in debt. In pursuit of capital investments (as well as knowledge and technology transfer), the state relinquished partial or total control of many industries in recent decades, including mining, aircraft manufacturing, and power generation, as well as chemical, fertilizer, and steel production. Petrobrás, the oil conglomerate, was established by a stroke of the presidential pen in 1953. The majority of stock in the company is still government-owned.

Brazil’s immense natural resources fuel its industrial sectors. Gold and diamonds started the industries of mineral extraction and processing. Today Brazil is a leading supplier of mineral products worldwide—including aluminum, bauxite, graphite, manganese, copper, gold, iron ore, and precious gems. Oil drives numerous industries—refining, shipbuilding, construction, petrochemicals, and fertilizers. Concentrated in the southeast and south, the Brazilian manufacturing sector uses mineral and agricultural resources from steel to soy to produce automobiles, aircraft, machinery, textiles, consumer goods (especially shoes), and processed food.

**Energy**

In 2012, Brazil was the largest energy consumer in Latin America and the ninth-largest in the world. Oil (including ethanol) meets nearly 40% of annual demand, followed by hydroelectricity (29%), other renewable sources (mostly biomass) (21%), natural gas (7%), coal (3%), and nuclear (1%). Although Brazil currently imports oil, natural gas, and electricity, its long-term goal is energy self-sufficiency. After the United States and Canada, it is the hemisphere’s largest producer of liquid fuels and electricity.

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Oil

Brazil is one of the most oil-rich nations in the world, with proved reserves in 2012 totaling 14 billion barrels.298, 299 Most of this oil lies deep off the southeast coast. Recent discoveries of deposits 18,000 feet below the ocean’s surface pose technical challenges, and the political problem of sharing future revenues nationwide. The country’s oil production has risen consistently in the past few years, and Brazil is now a net exporter of oil. Chevron, Shell, BP, and Sinopec are among multinationals in Brazil, while Petrobrás has a footprint in dozens of countries around the world.300, 301

Natural Gas

Brazil has offshore and onshore natural gas reserves. Production capacity has been slow to develop. A pipeline completed in 2010 connected northern and southern markets, giving flexibility to adjust to changing regional demands. Brazil receives most of its natural gas imports from Bolivia via pipeline but also operates offshore floating regasification and storage units to import liquefied natural gas from as far away as Qatar.302

Electricity

Brazil has located most hydroelectric dams to date in the south and southeast, where levels of energy consumption are the highest.303 But energy production from these dams is unpredictable: below-average rainfall caused energy shortages in 2000 and 2001.304

Nuclear

Brazil claims more than 300 million metric tons of uranium reserves.305 It currently depends on Canada and Europe to process uranium into fuel for the operation of its two nuclear power plants. Construction of a third plant began in 1986, stalled, and restarted in 2010. In early 2011, Brazil was reportedly considering the export of nuclear fuel to China, South Korea, and

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France.³⁰⁶ After the Fukushima disaster in 2011, Brazilians expressed strong objections to new nuclear power construction, and cancelled plans for additional plants.³⁰⁷, ³⁰⁸

Brazil’s 1987 Goiana nuclear accident resulted from poverty-driven theft and ignorance, when men scavenging a shutdown medical facility brought home and broke open a small container, sharing “glow-in-the-dark” pellets that turned out to be fatally radioactive.³⁰⁹, ³¹⁰

**Trade**

Brazil has experimented with both protectionist and free-market trade policies. The Brazilian economy has experienced several boom-and-bust cycles because of fluctuations in world demand for a succession of major exports: sugar, gold, diamonds, coffee, rubber, and oil. From the 1930s, the policy of import substitution set tariffs to keep out foreign products and assure domestic producers of a captive customer base. At the same time, the Brazilian government subsidized producers to make the products affordable to buyers, causing the government to go into debt.³¹¹ Brazil has enjoyed a global trade surplus since 2000.³¹² Its top two trade partners, the United States and China, make economic interdependence an international security issue. Its third-largest trade partner, Argentina, is a co-member of regional trade agreements and a competitor for regional business.³¹³

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Transportation

Brazilian transportation networks first developed to move natural resources or crops to market. Ships and ports have connected Brazil to the world system since colonial times, and 21st-century shipbuilding is closely tied to offshore oil.\(^{314}\) The rail system was built in the 19th century to transport coffee beans to port and remains limited to the south and southeast.\(^{315}\)

Brazil was an early and eager adopter of air travel to overcome its challenging terrain and size.\(^{316}\) Exploitation of the interior became a motive for expansion of the road system. The shift of the capital to Brasilia in 1960 also started much new road construction, and the military government continued to upgrade the existing network, building extensive highways (including several in the Amazon) that connect major Brazilian cities.\(^{317}\) Rivers, the sole means of transportation in some areas, remain an underdeveloped mode of commercial transport.\(^{318}\)

Tourism

Brazil’s location in the Southern Hemisphere provides an off-season holiday site to tourists from the North. A big draw is the annual Rio Carnaval, a pre-Lenten festival on a far grander scale than New Orleans’ Mardi Gras. Nature tourism brings visitors intent on seeing the Amazon rainforest or the Iguaçu Falls. Brazil is in a unique position to promote heritage tourism for descendants of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. African traditions have been better preserved in Afro-Brazilian communities in Bahia State than elsewhere in the New World.\(^{319}\) Sports tourism is another industry driving the development of infrastructure, media, transportation, and safety plans at the venues that will host the 2014 World Cup of soccer and the 2016 Summer Olympics.\(^{320, 321}\)


\(^{316}\) Michael Reid, Forgotten Continent: The Battle for Latin America’s Soul (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 62.


\(^{320}\) Standard and Poor’s, “Brazil Gears Up for the Games (Special Report),” CreditWeek 32, no. 7 (25 July 2012).

\(^{321}\) Andrew Zimbalist, “Brazil’s Long To-Do List,” Americas Quarterly (Summer 2011), http://americasquarterly.org/zimbalist
Banking and Finance

The 1988 constitution restructured the current Central Bank of Brazil, which controls the currency supply along with credit interest rates under the authority of the country’s National Monetary Council. Other federal financial institutions include the Bank of Brazil, the country’s largest bank and a major lender to farmers and exporters of manufactured goods; the National Economic and Social Development Bank, which funnels government and international loans to large-scale development projects; the National Housing Bank, which finances home construction; and the Federal Savings Bank, which issues short-term loans to individuals. Some states also operate government banks. Privatization opened Brazilian banks to foreign investment in the 1990s.322

The stock market is a merger of the Brazilian Mercantile & Futures Exchange (BM&F) and the São Paulo Stock Exchange (Bovespa). The Bovespa is one of the largest exchanges in the world in market value, the second-largest in the Americas, and the leading exchange in Latin America.323 Commodity exchanges exist in Pôrto Alegre, Vitória, Recife, Santos, and São Paulo. Gold, silver, copper, sugar, cotton, cocoa, clove, tobacco, seashells, and paper backed by diamonds all have served as money in Brazil.324 Today’s currency, the real (BRL), appeared in 1994 as part of the economic reforms that ended three decades of hyperinflation.325 In September 2012, 1 USD equaled about 2 BRL.326

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324 Banco Central do Brasil, “Money in Brazil–From Discovery to The United Kingdom,” n.d., http://www.bcb.gov.br/?MONEYDISCOVERY
Standard of Living

Brazil has long had one of the highest levels of wealth inequality in the world. The standard of living varies by class and by region, with the northeast being the poorest. Regional inequities are especially apparent in health and education, including elevated rates of child mortality and illiteracy. The extreme poverty in some parts of the country lowers Brazil’s national numbers as well. In 2007, Brazil became part of the high human development group in the UN international Human Development Index (HDI), but it continues to rank below average among highly developed countries and among countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. When the HDI is adjusted for inequalities of health, education, and income, Brazil falls back to a medium ranking. The nation struggles to develop an education system that will produce workers with sufficient technical training, and faces high death rates from childbirth, transportation accidents, violence, and suicide.

In 2002, President Lula was elected on his promise to implement social reforms, and his government soon declared that citizens were entitled to a minimum standard of living. His signature social welfare program, Bolsa Família, is a cash-transfer program that serves almost 13 million people, providing a monthly stipend as long as children attend school. Other programs address hunger (Fome Zero), jobs and infrastructure (“Territories of Citizenship”), and health. These programs have significantly reduced poverty and raised more than 30 million Brazilians to middle-class status. The 1988 constitution introduced a national Unified Health

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337 Amy Stewart Nunn et al., “AIDS Treatment in Brazil: Impacts and Challenges,” Health Affairs 31, no. 9 (September 2012), http://content.healthaffairs.org/content/28/4/1103.full
System, which has become the sole health provider for more than 75% of the population. Wealthier Brazilians (and medical tourists) can afford private health coverage and treatment.  

Employment

Although workers in industry (14%) and agriculture (20%) produce the bulk of Brazil’s revenue-generating exports, most of the Brazilian labor force (66%) work in services. The services sector is Brazil’s largest formal economic sector, including commerce (trade and retail), transportation, hospitality, finance, communications, real estate, health, education and government services. Women have moved into the workplace in great numbers, from 17% employed outside the home in 1960 to 66% today. Real wages also have risen in recent years, with Brazil’s minimum wage currently three times that of Indonesia or Vietnam, two similar rapidly developing countries. Official unemployment also is at record lows (6% in 2011). Despite these economic improvements, public-sector workers struck for months in 2012.

Brazil’s informal economy has accounted for 50% of urban employment in recent years. Critics charge that the large size of Brazil’s informal economy poses an ethical, enforcement, and productivity problem for the nation. Many employers, employees, and self-employed entrepreneurs wish to avoid the regulations and taxes of the custo Brasil (cost of doing business) in the formal economy. Others have neither the training or the political connections to gain jobs, nor the capital or collateral to operate small businesses.

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347 Diana Farrell, “Tackling the Informal Economy,” Bloomberg Businessweek, 8 May 2006, [http://www.businessweek.com/globalbiz/content/may2006/gb20060508_633382.htm](http://www.businessweek.com/globalbiz/content/may2006/gb20060508_633382.htm)


Public vs. Private Sector

Given Brazil’s recent governmental commitment to social welfare, the public sector is large and costly. But Brazil’s public-sector debt has been declining for the past decade and is considered manageable. Consolidated financial statements reporting combined federal, state, and municipal public accounts were published for the first time in fiscal year 2010.

The privatization campaign launched in 1996 by the cash-strapped Brazilian government generated interest among multinationals able to supply cutting-edge technology and capital for expansion. Telecommunications (an emerging industry in the IT revolution) and transportation systems (roadways, high-speed rail, and air and sea ports) attracted foreign investors, as did banks and utilities. From the 1990s through 2009, USD 87.8 billion in revenue was received because of privatization. About half this amount came from foreign direct investment (FDI), with USD 14 billion from the United States. A record USD 67 billion in foreign direct investment was reported for 2011. According to the World Bank’s Worldwide Governance Indicators, Brazil has improved its rule of law and control of corruption in recent years, although assessments of government effectiveness and regulatory quality remain flat. Yet some analysts still consider Brazil to be a relatively closed economy.

Outlook

Similar to the United States, Brazil’s economic policies and actions echo across an entire continent. Brazil’s natural resources confer great potential riches but require technical expertise and careful management to yield sustainable income. Longstanding structural problems that concern analysts include weak infrastructure (poor roads, expensive energy), an education system inadequate to the needs of the job market, business red tape, inefficient government bureaucracy, and

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350 Deutsche Bank Research, “Brazil’s Public Sector Finances,” 7 November 2011, http://www.dbresearch.com/PROD/DBR_INTERNET_EN-PROD/PROD000000000280417/Brazil%E2%80%99s+public+sector+finances%3A+Everything+you+always+wanted+to+know+about+Brazil%E2%80%99s+public+debt+%28but+were+afraid+to+ask%29.PDF
high taxes. Additional economic challenges for Brazil include the rising expense of social welfare coupled with the high poverty rate, a dependence on commodity exports for government revenues, falling employment numbers, rising pension responsibilities, and growing consumer debt. These are large problems and challenges for Brazil, whose economic future and effect on the global economy remain uncertain.

Chapter 3 Assessment

1. Brazil has become attractive to foreign investors.
   **True**
   Since the mid-1990s, the government of Brazil has sought foreign investments from multinationals able to supply cutting-edge technology and capital for expansion. A record USD 67 billion in foreign direct investment was reported for 2011.

2. Brazil relies heavily on coal to meet its energy needs.
   **False**
   Oil (including ethanol) meets nearly 40% of annual demand, followed by hydroelectricity (29%), other renewable sources (mostly biomass) (21%), natural gas (7%), coal (3%), and nuclear (1%).

3. Most Brazilians work in agriculture.
   **False**
   Most of the Brazilian labor force (66%) work in the services sector. About 20% work in agriculture, and about 14% work in industry.

4. Brazil is one of the leading suppliers of mineral products worldwide.
   **True**
   Brazil’s immense natural resources fuel its industrial sectors. Gold and diamonds started the industries of mineral extraction and processing. Today Brazil is a leading supplier of minerals worldwide—including aluminum, bauxite, graphite, manganese, copper, gold, iron ore, and precious gems.

5. Brazil’s manufacturing sector produces automobiles, aircraft, machinery, textiles, consumer goods, and processed food.
   **True**
   Concentrated in the southeast and south, the Brazilian manufacturing sector uses mineral and agricultural resources from steel to soy to produce automobiles, aircraft, machinery, textiles, consumer goods (especially shoes), and processed food.
CHAPTER 4: SOCIETY

Introduction

The people of Brazil come from many places, speak many languages, preserve many diverse traditions, and embrace global culture. Brazil’s contemporary social stratification derives from the relations between conqueror and resistor, priest and sinner, master and slave, ruler and subject, landlord and peasant, and bureaucrat and citizen. A strong sense of national identity unites the diverse population around certain traditions and activities—most notably Carnaval and futebol (soccer). Local cultural traditions also foster regional variety, from indigenous customs of Amazonia to ethnic festivals of Italian, German, and Japanese communities in the south.361

In the 1920s, Brazilian author Paul Prado wrote of his home, “In a radiant land lives a sad people.”362 More recent observers have described Brazilians as both happy and melancholy.363, 364 Some outsiders experience the talking and touching of friendly Brazilians as too friendly.365, 366 Serious social problems—poverty, violence, corruption—are sometimes attributed to a Brazilian tendency to accept things as they are and bow to one’s fate.367, 368 Both cuisine and art forms reflect the nation’s oppressive past.369, 370, 371

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361 Anadella R. Romo, Brazil’s Living Museum: Race, Reform, and Tradition in Bahia (University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 129.
367 Fernando Henrique Cardoso, The Accidental President of Brazil: A Memoir, with Brian Winter (New York: Public Affairs/Perseus, 2006), 97.
Race and Ethnicity

Ethnic Background

Brazil’s racial and ethnic diversity reflects its history of colonialism and immigration. Amerindian, European, African, and Asian groups have mingled and married for hundreds of years, while maintaining hierarchies of economic, social, and political inequality.372

Brazil’s surviving indigenous peoples, sometimes known collectively as Amerindians, have a small presence throughout the country.373 In Brazil’s 2010 census, Amerindians declared themselves members of 305 ethnic groups speaking 274 languages and occupying 505 indigenous lands.374 A few groups remain isolated, but most maintain some form of contact with the larger Brazilian society.375

The populations of primarily European descent have Portuguese, Italian, Spanish, German, Dutch, and Polish ancestors.376 The Portuguese first settled the region in the early 16th century. Other European groups arrived during large-scale immigration that began in the late 19th century after the decline of the slave trade; they settled mainly in the southeast.377

Many Afro-Brazilians—descended from African slaves brought to work on sugar plantations during the colonial era—continue to practice African cultural traditions in Brazil. They are heavily concentrated in the northeast.378, 379

Additional immigrant groups include Middle Eastern and Asian communities.380 Brazil counts more citizens of Syrian extraction than Syria’s capital Damascus, and a larger population of Lebanese heritage than in all of Lebanon.381 Brazilian Japanese are concentrated in São Paulo and form the largest Japanese population outside Japan.382, 383 Chinese and Korean numbers also

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are growing; the 2010 census reported a 173% increase in Brazil’s Asian population during the past 10 years: from 761,000 to more than 2 million.384

Many Brazilians are of mixed European and African descent (mulatos), mixed European and Amerindian descent (caboclos or mamelucos), or mixed African and Amerindian descent (cafusos).385, 386 (The term “cabocлизация” signifies a reversal of fortune to subsistence in hard times.387, 388) Former president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (“Lula”), often described as Brazil’s first working-class president, is descended from mixed European and Amerindian ancestry (caboclos), a marked success for a mixed race person.389 The category of pardo (“brown”) historically designated European–Africans who rose to supervisory positions on plantations, and later moved to the cities where they learned trades and entered professions. Pardos have enjoyed opportunities for upward mobility denied to those of full African ancestry.390

386 Jon S. Vincent, Culture and Customs of Brazil (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2003), 21.
Racial Categories and Relations

Although Brazilians describe themselves with many terms, they are officially categorized by the government (e.g., for the census) as White (Branco), Brown (Pardo), Black (Preto), Yellow (Amarelo), and Indigenous (Indígena).391, 392, 393, 394 Brazilians are proud of their laws against racial discrimination and their tolerant cultural traditions, but open discussion of racial inequalities can be considered “un-Brazilian.”395

Race has been described as a continuum rather than a discrete category in Brazilian thinking.396 But in practice, Brazil’s “racial democracy” is discriminatory, if often in subtle or masked forms.397 The economic and political elite of Brazil is dominated by light-skinned people of European ancestry. Successful Brazilians are routinely described as branco, regardless of their ethnic or racial heritage.398 There are widespread, long-term correlations between dark skin and poor health, inadequate education, and low income.399, 400 Nevertheless, Brazil’s 2010 census reported that, for the first time since the census began in 1872, less than half the population identified themselves as white (47.7%, a 3% drop from the previous census in 2000). Mixed race and black populations increased (from 38.5% to 50.7%, and from 6.2% to 7.6%, respectively).401

Language

Nearly all Brazilians speak Portuguese, the country’s official language. It is one of the major forces unifying the nation’s diverse peoples. Portuguese settlers, whose new experiences required new vocabulary, had extensive contact with indigenous tribal languages and, later, those of enslaved Africans as well as Italian, German, and Japanese immigrants. In contrast to other New World colonial powers, Portugal banned institutions of higher learning, printing presses, and newspapers in its colony. By the time independent Brazil established its own Academy to oversee linguistic standards in the 1890s, Brazilian Portuguese had diverged from Continental Portuguese to form two distinct varieties of the language. Today, a Brazilian can follow a broadcast from Portugal, but Portuguese people may object to the “incorrect” language in a Brazilian soap opera or song lyric. In 1990, Portuguese-speaking (Lusophone) countries began to work toward a common spelling system for Portuguese that accords legitimacy to New and Old World orthographies. Brazil is scheduled to complete its transition to the common system in 2012.

Many Brazilians speak or understand Spanish, which is a Romance language like Portuguese and the predominant language of most adjoining countries. Some Brazilians speak and/or understand English. Among segments of Brazil’s historic immigrant community, many still speak Italian, German, and Japanese. Although many indigenous Amerindian groups retain their native languages, these groups are typically small in number and are at risk of extinction.

Religion

Although Brazil is overwhelmingly Christian, indigenous spiritual customs survive, and descendents of Brazil’s slaves and historic immigrant communities practice African religions, Buddhism, Judaism, and Islam.

Portuguese colonization and large waves of immigration from Spain, Italy, and Poland have made Roman Catholicism the...

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predominant religion in Brazil. With about 123 million followers, Brazil continues to have the largest Catholic population of any country (and about 65% of its population). Brazil has the fourth-largest Protestant population after the U.S., Nigeria, and China, and the second-largest Christian population after the U.S. Evangelical churches, particularly Pentecostal, have become increasingly influential. The drama of Pentecostal services, with speaking in tongues and miraculous healings, has been paralleled by the development of a Charismatic Catholic movement in Brazil.

Former slaves sometimes became Catholics, but they also retained elements of their native belief systems. They equated African gods with Catholic saints, creating an indigenous variant of Catholicism known as Candomblé. Religious and government persecution dogged Candomblé until the 1970s. Today, the official number of followers is small (0.3% of the 2010 population). Spiritism, a system of beliefs in spirits and their survival after death that Frenchman Allan Kardec advanced in the 19th century, has a larger official presence in Brazil, at 3.8 million followers in 2010.

Brazil’s clergy were instrumental in the development of liberation theology, a Latin American movement that demanded that the Roman Catholic Church take a social activist stance in support of the poor. The Vatican denounced the movement as Marxist; governments arrested some priests and others were killed. Recently, some observers pointed to President Lula da Silva’s advocacy of a “Zero Hunger” agenda after his election in 2002 as evidence that the Catholic Church has been successful in promoting the interests of the poor.

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Gender Issues

Despite religious heritage and contemporary attitudes favoring promiscuity, the relationship between men and women in Brazil was characterized by “horrific acts of conquering, kidnapping, and raping” during the colonial era and is plagued by problems of domestic violence and sex trafficking.421, 422

Brazilian society is traditionally patriarchal, meaning that men generally enjoy greater authority and freedom than women. The idea of machismo, a cultural construction of exaggerated masculinity, shapes gender relations in Brazil (and throughout Latin America).423, 424 Machismo implies a complementary femininity that is passive, submissive, and dependent. 425, 426 Men can demonstrate machismo through sexual promiscuity, while women emulate the Virgin Mary through chastity.427 Historically, death was the penalty for a woman caught in extramarital relations. Until 1991, Brazilian men were acquitted of murdering their adulterous wives on the grounds of “legitimate defense of honor.”428

In urban areas, progressive attitudes toward gender roles and sexuality are increasingly common, to the extent that a trio of a man and two women recently was granted government recognition as a civil union.429, 430

Feminine sensuality and beauty also are marketed to consumers, and many Brazilian women wear clothing that emphasizes their physical features.431 Because Brazilian men openly stare at

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and comment upon women as they pass in the street, Rio’s subway runs cars for women only.\textsuperscript{432} Despite religious and legal restrictions on birth control (including a ban on abortion), Brazilian women have taken control of their fertility, resulting in a drop in the national birth rate—1.9 in 2009—that is below replacement levels.\textsuperscript{433, 434, 435} Females also have closed the education gap and currently outnumber males in college.\textsuperscript{436} Yet unemployment among Brazilian women is greater than among men, and the average woman worker earns 71\% of her male counterpart’s salary.\textsuperscript{437}

Although Brazil tolerates homosexuality more than the rest of Latin America does, allegations of homosexuality are a serious attack upon Brazilian \textit{machismo}.\textsuperscript{438} Hundreds have been killed annually in Brazil in violence connected with their sexual orientation, prompting the government to increase efforts promoting tolerance.\textsuperscript{439, 440}

\textbf{Cuisine}

The hybrid cuisine of Brazil reflects the country’s multicultural heritage, with indigenous, Portuguese, African, Asian, and other European influences. The national dish in Brazil, \textit{feijoada}, is a pork, bean, and beef stew served with rice. The origins of \textit{feijoada} were leftover meat parts from the plantation master’s table that made their way into the meals of slaves during the colonial era.\textsuperscript{441}

The primary staple of indigenous peoples was manioc, a

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starchy food made from a type of tuber. One way of processing manioc yields farinha, a flour similar to coarse cornmeal, which is used as a basic ingredient. Indigenous fish and seafood, tropical fruits, and chilies (including the habañero) also figure prominently in Brazilian cuisine. Portuguese traders brought Asian spices, salt cod (bacalao), and fried shrimp. Brazilian barbecue, churrasco, comes from the country’s cattle-herding gauchos. African slaves incorporated foods familiar to them—including yams, okra, coconut milk, and beans—into dishes that became part of the dominant diet.

Brazil’s national cocktail, the caipirinha, also originates with the colonial-era popularity of cachaça, a spirit distilled from sugarcane juice. Exports of cachaça have grown rapidly since 1999, and Brazil is currently trying to establish a national monopoly for the alcohol and its name through the World Trade Organization. The other national drink, coffee, is most often served as cafezinho, a small cup of dark, sweet hospitality.

Arts

Brazil is rich in traditions of folk, popular, and “high” culture. Pre-Columbian cave paintings more than 25,000 years old are preserved at the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Serra da Capivara National Park. Oscar Niemayer’s architecture in the modern capital of Brasília became a UNESCO World Heritage Site only a few decades after the city’s construction began.

Brazil is perhaps best known for inventive music and dance. The samba, which evolved from African and Portuguese music in 19th-century Rio, has become the main soundtrack of the city’s annual Carnaval, a multiday extravaganza that precedes the self-denial of Lent. A combination of samba and jazz yielded the bossa nova, which made “The Girl from Ipanema” world famous in the 1960s. Later that decade, tropicalismo drew on musical styles from around the world to critique the rise of military rule. The pioneers of tropicalismo, Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil,

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were jailed in 1968 and exiled until 1972. Their music endured, and Gil served as Minister of Culture from 2003 to 2008.

**Capoeira**

The “fight of ballet dancers” or “dance of gladiators,” *capoeira* combines martial arts-type moves with acrobatics, set to music. According to Brazilian lore, *capoeira* is a transplanted successor to an African warrior dance found in Angola. Gesture and motion were important means of communication for slaves from tribes of different linguistic traditions. The universal language of music served to strengthen the bonds of solidarity, and *capoeira* came to embody resistance against the slave master. After slavery ended, *capoeira* was passed down as recreation. The basic *capoeira* position is known as *ginga*, in which the body sways in a circular fashion while the dancer steps forward and backward. In a competition, two dancers approach each other and, as the tempo of the music picks up, scissors kick toward one another with the feet as they stand on their arms, dodging each other’s blows. When it is over, the competitors shake hands and are replaced by a new pair.

**Sports**

Soccer, or *futebol*, is the national sport of Brazil. It began in Rio as a gentlemen’s amateur sport that excluded darker-skinned, working-class youths, who formed their own neighborhood and factory teams. In the 1930s, Brazilian President Getúlio Vargas promoted the game to build national solidarity and bridge Brazil’s ethnic and class divisions, although he permitted a ban on women’s soccer that was not lifted until 1979.

The Brazilian passion for the game leads many observers to

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describe it as more of a religion than a sport for Brazilians. Its national team, a seleção (the selection), is the only team in the world that has played in all 19 World Cup competitions, the sport’s highest level of international competition that is held every 4 years. Brazil also is the only team to win the tournament five times. In 2012, the Brazilian men’s soccer team advanced to the finals in the London Olympics but lost the gold medal to Mexico 2–1.

Males of all classes and backgrounds widely play soccer, and pretty women might earn USD 250 to 2,500 monthly on a professional team. The game’s limited equipment demands—a ball (or even a makeshift ball) and some open space—contribute to its ongoing popularity. Peladas, or pick-up games, are common, especially on Sundays. For spectators, national team games draw the attention of the entire nation. Work essentially halts while Brazilians gather to watch the game in homes, offices, bars, and other venues.

Other popular sports in Brazil include auto racing, skateboarding, and surfing. In 2009, Rio de Janeiro was awarded the 2016 Summer Olympic Games, a great source of national pride. Rio’s annual Carnaval celebration was presented as evidence that the city is logistically capable of hosting a mass event for people from all over the world. Like Japan in 1964, South Korea in 1988, and China in 2008, Brazil views the 2016 Games as a coming-out party signaling that the host has joined the ranks of the industrialized nations.

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Chapter 4 Assessment

1. Brazil has the largest Catholic population of any country.
   True
   Portuguese colonization and large waves of immigration from Spain, Italy, and Poland have made Roman Catholicism the predominant religion in Brazil. With some 123 million followers, Brazil continues to have the largest Catholic population of any country.

2. Soccer began in Brazil as a sport of the working class.
   False
   Soccer began in Rio as a gentleman’s amateur sport that excluded darker-skinned, working-class youths, who formed their own neighborhood and factory teams. In the 1930s, the government promoted the game to build national solidarity and bridge ethnic and class divisions.

3. Africans forced into slavery were unable to maintain their own cultural practices in Brazil.
   False
   Many Afro-Brazilians—descended from African slaves brought to work on sugar plantations during the colonial era—continue to practice African cultural traditions in Brazil.

4. The macho behavior of Brazilian males, which includes sexual promiscuity, gives Brazil one of the world’s highest birth rates.
   False
   Although birth control is restricted and the exaggerated masculinity known as machismo promotes male promiscuity and shapes gender relations in Brazil, the national birth rate has dropped below replacement levels.

5. In linguistic terms, Brazilian Portuguese and European Continental Portuguese have diverged into two distinct varieties of the language.
   True
   By the time independent Brazil established its own Academy to oversee linguistic standards in the 1890s, Brazilian Portuguese had diverged from Continental Portuguese to form two distinct varieties of the language.
CHAPTER 5: SECURITY

**Introduction**

Brazil’s size, wealth, and stability have made it South America’s leading power. It has the largest economy and military in the region, and the country currently is investing in military upgrades—including the development of drones to patrol its expansive borders, the third-longest in the world. President Dilma Rousseff has described Brazil’s security challenge as the maintenance of sovereignty over its large territory, long borders, and abundant natural resources.

While differing from its 10 neighbors in size and language, Brazil shares with them an Iberian colonial past and a 20th-century legacy of military dictatorships. In recent decades, Brazil has worked to strengthen regional cooperation through economic integration. In 1980 it became a founding member of the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI), and in 1991 it joined the Mercosur Customs Union of Southern Cone Nations (which since 2004 has been part of the Union of South American Nations, a regional body that aims to function similarly to the European Union). In late 2011, Brazil and 33 countries joined the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, a new group characterized by Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez as a direct challenge to the U.S.-backed Organization of American States.

To its economic advantage, Brazil faces fewer external threats than other BRICS (Russia, India, China, and South Africa). But the large South American nation faces internal problems.

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464 Yana Marull, “Brazil’s Defense Industry Booms,” AFP, 22 August 2012, [http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5geR560TRmRWxL217q5M5QkD76Hgg?docId=CNG.cfd6db87a5f8b49cf41593a81c8598.171](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5geR560TRmRWxL217q5M5QkD76Hgg?docId=CNG.cfd6db87a5f8b49cf41593a81c8598.171)


including domestic poverty and crime (particularly drug-related). The Amazon region poses a security threat because of the lack of governmental authority in border areas, where drug trafficking and illegal logging and mining operations flourish.474

Nongovernmental organizations that monitor the area are sometimes presumed to be acting in ways that undermine Brazil’s sovereignty.475 In 2008, the army chief for the Amazon warned that foreign aid workers could infiltrate Brazil through indigenous communities on the border.476 An unresolved issue among Brazil’s citizens is distrust of security forces in the aftermath of military rule. President Rousseff recently signed into law a truth commission intended to address the legacy of dictatorship.477, 478, 479, 480, 481

U.S.–Brazil Relations

In 1824, the United States became the first government to recognize Brazil’s 1822 declaration of independence (preceding even Portugal)482, 483. For more than a century, the U.S. dominated the development of an “inter-American system” of commercial, legal, and security concerns through mechanisms such as the Organization of American States.484, 485 Recently, the United States has recognized Brazil’s growing importance in continental, hemispheric, and world affairs through a series of Presidential Dialogues on global partnership, economic and financial issues, strategic energy, and defense cooperation.486, 487

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Top security issues for the two countries are transnational drugs, arms, and human trafficking, as well as nuclear nonproliferation and environmental protection. In 2010 the countries signed their first major defense cooperation agreement in decades. The 2012 Defense Cooperation Dialogue prioritized Brazilian wishes for military technology transfer and cyber-security assistance, particularly to strengthen the management of Brazil’s borders. The security agreement also reflected U.S. support for Brazil’s expanding participation in international humanitarian, disaster-response, and peacekeeping efforts, particularly in Africa.

The two countries also work together to advance multilateral security cooperation. 2011 examples include a counternarcotics program with Bolivia, training for the Dominican Republic Air Force, and a navy exercise with Chile. Also, Brazilian and U.S. defense contractors collaborate on a variety of systems and equipment. Brazil’s defense spending has risen steadily for the past decade, and U.S. manufacturers would like to increase their share of orders for arms and services.

Yet Brazil increasingly limits U.S. influence in regional affairs by working through South American organizations such as Mercosur and Unasur. Some observers see a developing rivalry between the two hemispheric powers. For example, Brazil has supported Iran’s right to develop nuclear power, presumably in line with Brazil’s own nuclear programs for energy plants and submarines.

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495 In Portuguese, these organizations are Mercosul and Unasul. Most English language publications use the Spanish language names of such Latin American groups.
Despite this political divergence, the United States continues to invest heavily in Brazil, announcing plans in September 2012 to loan Brazil’s Petrobrás oil company USD 10 billion to develop offshore hydrocarbon reserves.\footnote{502} Brazil is one of the United States top trading partners and newest suppliers of oil and natural gas.\footnote{504}

**Relations with Neighboring Countries**

**Argentina**

Argentina is Latin America’s third major power after Brazil and Mexico. Although Brazil and Argentina fought over territory during their early years of independence, Brazil’s military regime supported the Argentine war for the Falkland Islands during 1982–1983. Argentina’s loss in the war to Great Britain soon led to the return of Argentine civilian governance. Brazil’s civilian government continues to support Argentina’s claim, to the extent that British ships have been denied harbor in Brazilian ports.\footnote{505} \footnote{506}

Today, Brazil and Argentina cooperate on a range of issues, from nuclear containment to space rockets.\footnote{507} \footnote{508} Although trade disputes between the nations have been frequent as Mercosur rules evolve, Brazil remains Argentina’s largest export market while Argentina ranks third for Brazilian exports (behind the United States and China).\footnote{509} \footnote{510} The 1,261-km (783-mi) Argentine-Brazilian border runs between two tri-boundary points, with Paraguay to the north and Uruguay to the south. The four countries (and Bolivia upstream) periodically struggle over the shared water resources of the La Plata River basin.\footnote{511} The Argentina-Brazil-Paraguay “Tri-Border Area”


\footnote{502} *Latin American Herald Tribune*, “U.S. Government to Loan Brazil’s Petrobras $10 Billion,” 25 September 2012, \url{http://www.laht.com/article.asp?ArticleId=340859&CategoryId=10718}


\footnote{505} *Daily Express* (UK), “Falkland Ship Ban by Brazil,” 12 January 2011, \url{http://www.express.co.uk/posts/view/222613/Falkland-ship-ban-by-Brazil}

\footnote{506} Graciela Rodriguez-Ferrand, “Mercosur: Member Countries Block Entrance of Ships with Falkland Islands Flags,” 30 December 2011, \url{http://www.loc.gov/lawweb/servlet/lloc_news?disp3_1205402930_text}


\footnote{508} *USA Today*, “Brazil, Argentina Launch Space Rocket,” 16 December 2007, \url{http://www.usatoday.com/news/topstories/2007-12-16-369182213_x.htm}


\footnote{511} Aaron T. Wolf and Joshua T. Newton, “Case Study of Transboundary Dispute Resolution: The La Plata Basin,” Transboundary Freshwater Dispute Database, Program in Water Conflict Management and Transformation, Oregon State University, 2007, \url{http://www.transboundarywaters.orst.edu/research/case_studies/La_Plata_New.htm}
(TBA), which began as a free-trade development zone by Brazil and Paraguay, has become a center of drugs and arms smuggling, human trafficking, and money laundering—making the region a multinational security concern.\textsuperscript{512, 513}

**Paraguay**

Brazil’s last significant military conflict was with Paraguay in the 19th century over sea access.\textsuperscript{514} After independence from Spain in 1811, Paraguay lost the War of the Triple Alliance against Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay during 1864–1870.\textsuperscript{515} Strong-man presidents and military dictators ruled through much of the country’s independent history, culminating in the 35-year regime of Gen. Alfredo Stroessner. His overthrow in 1989 began an era of increasing democratic governance for Paraguay. Brazil granted asylum to Stroessner, where he remained until his death in 2006.\textsuperscript{516} Brazil later took in Paraguayan president Raul Cubas Grau, who was impeached on suspicion of involvement in the assassination of his vice president in 1999.\textsuperscript{517, 518}

In 2012, the Paraguayan legislature impeached the nation’s president, Fernando Lugo, and the vice president stepped in to govern until the next election scheduled for 2013.\textsuperscript{519, 520} In response, Brazil and other Latin American nations recalled their ambassadors to protest Lugo’s lack of time to mount a defense.\textsuperscript{521, 522} Regional groups Mercosur and Unasur suspended Paraguay’s membership until the 2013 elections but did not impose economic sanctions.\textsuperscript{523, 524}


\textsuperscript{513} Joshua T. Hoffman, “Tri-Border Area (TBA),” Ridgway Research, Matthew B. Ridgway Center for International Security Studies, University of Pittsburgh, 15 May 2012, [http://research.ridgway.pitt.edu/blog/2012/05/15/tri-border-area-tba/](http://research.ridgway.pitt.edu/blog/2012/05/15/tri-border-area-tba/)


Landlocked Paraguay depends on Brazil and other neighbors to buy much of its agricultural exports and to provide access to international transportation routes. With Brazil, Paraguay operates the 14,000-megawatt Itaipú Dam along the Paraná River. Paraguay is contractually obliged to sell any unused portion of its half of the dam’s energy to Brazil. The sales price of this energy creates periodic friction between the two countries.

Paraguay’s weak laws and borders cause it to endure the most negative effects among the TBA countries. Paraguay’s Ciudad del Este, the largest of the three TBA cities, houses many money-laundering banks and exchange houses. Paraguay also contributes to Brazil’s drug problems because it is a major marijuana supplier and Andean cocaine shipper.

Uruguay

Uruguay revolted against Spain in 1811 only to be annexed by Portuguese Brazil in 1821. After gaining freedom from Brazil with the help of Argentina, Uruguay became a fully independent nation through the 1828 Treaty of Montevideo. In the mid-20th century, the political violence of Marxist urban guerrillas triggered a period of military dictatorship that ended in 1985.

Uruguay, the “Switzerland of Latin America,” is an active member of all the major regional and global organizations as

well as international diplomatic efforts, yet two boundary disputes between Brazil and Uruguay remain unresolved.\(^{536,537,538}\) Uruguay’s strict banking secrecy laws sometimes enable illegal financial activities. Border controls along the Brazilian frontier are weak.\(^{539}\)

**Bolivia**

Bolivia is the namesake of the “Liberator of South America,” Simón Bolívar, who freed the country from Spanish rule in 1824.\(^{540}\) In its first 150 years of independence, the republic endured nearly 200 regime changes.\(^{541}\) Wars with Chile (1879–1883) and Paraguay (1932–1935) cost the nation ocean access. “Cocaine dictator” Gen. Luis García Meza eventually took refuge in Brazil after a 1981 coup but was extradited to Bolivia in 1995 after his 1993 conviction *in absentia* for the crimes of his regime.\(^{542,543,544}\) Evo Morales, an Aymara Indian and former coca growers union leader, is serving his second elected term through 2014 as Bolivia’s first indigenous president.\(^{545,546}\)

Brazil was Bolivia’s top trade partner in 2011. Brazil’s southern states depend on Bolivian natural gas, and Brazil’s Petrobrás is a major foreign natural gas company in Bolivia. Tensions over natural gas occasionally flare between the two countries.\(^{547,548}\) Cocaine is another flashpoint. Andean coca cultivation, a traditional adaptation to life at high altitudes, exploded in the 1980s, probably in response to economic crisis at home and demand for cocaine from the

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U.S. and Brazil.\textsuperscript{549} Cocaine production estimates continued to rise in the 2000s, ranking Bolivia third after Colombia and Peru.\textsuperscript{550} In 2012, Bolivia objected to Brazilian interference in drug control on Bolivian territory. Bolivian villagers have burned to death alleged Brazilian drug traffickers out of anger over their murderous activities.\textsuperscript{551, 552, 553}

Peru

Peru encompasses the geographic extremes of the Andes and the Amazon.\textsuperscript{554} In the 21st century, high-level government meetings and economic exchanges between Brazil and Peru have grown.\textsuperscript{555, 556, 557} As co-stewards of Amazonia, Brazil and Peru have experienced the mixed blessings of mining, international highways, and dam construction.\textsuperscript{558, 559, 560}

One of the continent’s most fearsome guerrilla insurgencies, the Shining Path (\textit{Sendero Luminoso}), emerged in Peru in 1980. The Maoist group soon took advantage of the surge in Andean coca production, and also “taxed” illegal Brazilian logging operations.\textsuperscript{561, 562} Peru is currently the world leader in cocaine production.

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\item Infosur Hoy, “Bolivian Mob Burns Suspected Brazilian Drug Traffickers Alive,” 16 August 2012, \url{http://infosurhoy.com/cocoon/saii/xhtml/en_GB/newsbriefs/saii/newsbriefs/2012/08/16/newsbrief-02}
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production. Unlike Bolivia, Peru has welcomed Brazilian help in cross-border eradication efforts.

Colombia

Colombia is Latin America’s third-most populated nation. East of the Andes that split the country, Colombia borders Brazil in a sparsely populated Amazonian region. In its early years of independence after 1810, Gran Colombia included Venezuela, Panama, and Ecuador. Upon independence, political conflict arose between the first president Simón Bolívar and his vice-president, leading to two civil wars. Recent decades have seen guerrilla destabilization that spills across borders.

Brazil has been a haven and safe release point for hostages of the Marxist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (or FARC, Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) and other groups. Colombia entered into the international drug trade as a coca processor and shipper in the 1980s. Its turn to coca cultivation further supplied Brazil with cocaine to meet growing demands of addicts. Brazil tried to moderate the objections of neighbors about the U.S. military presence in Colombia and has increased its cooperative antidrug efforts. Brazil has allowed mutual overflight privileges during drug trafficking operations.

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Venezuela

Venezuela, another country that emerged from the collapse of Gran Colombia, was ruled by military strongmen for about 100 years, followed by elected presidents since the late 1950s.\(^{577, 578, 579}\) In 2009, presidential term limits were abolished, paving the way for a longer rule by President Hugo Chavez.\(^{580, 581}\) Brazil has tried to moderate Chavez’s opposition to United States influence in Latin America, and Venezuela so far has remained silent about Brazil’s recent defense cooperation agreement with the United States.\(^{582, 583}\) In 2012, Brazil accepted Venezuela’s accession to full membership in Mercosur, made possible when dissenting member Paraguay was temporarily suspended from the group.\(^{584, 585}\)

The Guyanas

Brazil’s three northeastern neighbors—Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana—differ from their South American neighbors in cultural and linguistic heritage. English, Dutch, and French colonists settled the region, bringing slaves from Africa and indentured servants from Asia.\(^{586, 587, 588, 589}\) In 1966 Guyana became independent from Britain, and Dutch Guiana achieved

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independence as Suriname in 1975. French Guiana, a penal colony from 1852–1952, is now an administrative department of France.

Guyana has looked to Brazil for military training and material, which is contingent upon Guyana’s refusal to accept any form of military aid from Cuba. In 2009, a USD 5 million bridge financed by Brazil opened across the Takutu River and is “expected to facilitate tourism and trade between the two countries and give seaport access to the landlocked Brazilian state of Roraima.” A road to Suriname remains in negotiations.

The mineral-rich Guiana Highlands separate these lands from Brazil, and gold prospecting (usually illegal) by Brazilian garimpeiros is a problem. Suriname’s relationship with Brazil was tested in 2009, when clashes between Brazilian gold miners and locals in the Suriname town of Albina left 1 man dead and 25 injured. The Brazilian and French governments have attempted to control illegal mining but have been unsuccessful because of the lack of effective cooperation at the transborder level. To combat illegal gold mining, which authorities fear is funding guerrilla activities, Brazil has deployed about 8,700 soldiers along its borders with Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana.

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Ecuador and Chile

Ecuador and Chile lack borders with Brazil but share history, culture, and contemporary economic and political relations with South America and Latin America. Today, Ecuador and Chile are associate members of Mercosur and full members of Unasur. They participated in MINUSTAH, the UN’s Haiti operation under Brazilian command authorized through 15 October 2012. Ecuador and Brazil have announced plans to redevelop Haiti’s military to replace UN forces—a move that some fear will hurt democracy in Haiti because of the brutal history of the Haitian military before it was disbanded in 1994.

Ecuador, once part of Gran Colombia, became independent in 1930. Subsequent border disputes with Brazil, Colombia, and Peru reduced its colonial-era territory by more than 50%. In recent years, Brazil has provided economic and diplomatic support to ease Ecuador’s internal political troubles and to mediate border disputes.

Continued insurgent activities and organized narcotics operations of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) have penetrated Ecuador’s borders with Peru and Colombia. Thousands of Colombians have crossed into Ecuador to escape their country’s violence.

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In August 2012, FARC rebels in Colombia bombed an oil pipeline running from Ecuador to the port city of Tumaco, Colombia, after attacking the city’s electrical grid.\textsuperscript{617} Earlier in the year, Ecuador’s armed forces captured several FARC members on the international bridge over the San Miguel River between Ecuador and Colombia.\textsuperscript{618} Ecuador’s President Rafael Correa has been accused of accepting almost half a million dollars in campaign contributions from FARC.\textsuperscript{619}

Emerging from Spanish rule with its stratified colonial society largely intact, Chile has been more politically and economically stable than its neighbors—except for the 1973 coup described as “one of the bloodiest in 20th-century Latin America.”\textsuperscript{620, 621} Declassified NSA documents reveal that Brazil (and the United States) supported the 1973 overthrow of Chile’s President Salvador Allende.\textsuperscript{622} During the subsequent rule of Gen. Augustin Pinochet, Brazil supported a group of South American dictatorships that perpetrated “Operation Condor,” which comprised covert international activities to “coordinate intelligence” and “find and kill terrorists.”\textsuperscript{623, 624, 625} Chile has since “assumed regional and international leadership roles befitting its status as a stable, once-again democratic nation,” and maintains cordial relations with Brazil.\textsuperscript{626, 627}

Military

The armed forces have played an active role in Brazil’s politics and governance, from the overthrow of the monarchy in 1889 to the military dictatorship of 1964–1985. Currently, a civilian president holds the title of Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, subject to the authority of the legislature and the power of the three branch commanders. Total active forces—the largest in Latin America—number more than 390,000 personnel in the army (252,000), air force (77,000), and navy (63,000), spread across more than 50 military installations countrywide, as well as several international deployments. Military service is mandatory by age 21. Some 5–10% of each year’s eligible conscripts (1.7 million in 2010) and volunteers receive training, thus maintaining a “sizable” reserve force. Women have served in the armed forces since the 1980s. From the mid-20th century, Brazil’s military expenditures fell to among the lowest in the world but are now slated to rise from 1.5% to 2.3% of GDP, in line with the spending of other BRICS countries (Russia, India, China, South Africa). Brazil is in the midst of equipment upgrades begun in the early 2000s, including tanks, aircraft, and submarines.

In 2008, a new National Defense Strategy set goals for sufficient “monitoring, mobility, and presence” capacities, including a “strategic reserve” in the country’s center, and beginning plans for “space, cybernetic and nuclear sectors.” To implement the strategy, Brazil is reorganizing the armed forces (with a new Joint Command of Armed Forces and an expanded Ministry of Defense), restructuring the defense industry toward domestic self-sufficiency and international export of equipment, and considering elimination of the draft. The army has

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629 Jane’s, “Armed Forces (Brazil),” in Sentinel Security Assessment—South America, 19 June 2012.
631 Jane’s, “Armed Forces (Brazil),” in Sentinel Security Assessment—South America, 19 June 2012.
637 Jane’s, “Armed Forces, Brazil,” in Sentinel Security Assessment—South America, 19 June 2012.
participated in civic action programs (e.g., construction, education, healthcare,) at least since the 1930s, and the 2010 National Defense Law authorized all branches to protect borders and national resources against transnational crime.641, 642

Brazil’s uranium deposits and its nuclear-development program (reportedly dating to the 1930s) have made the nation nearly self-sufficient in the production of nuclear fuel.643, 644 Brazil has rejected nuclear weapons since the Tlatelolco Treaty made Latin America a nuclear weapons-free zone in 1969, but it also has resisted outside interference in its nuclear activities.645, 646 Plans for the nation’s first nuclear-powered submarine, to be built with French technical assistance, are moving ahead.647, 648

Internal Security Forces

Brazil’s 1988 Constitution puts public order and safety in the hands of an estimated 400,000 federal and state police.649, 650 Under the Ministry of Justice, 15,000 Federal Police investigate crime, protect national borders, and guard the president and other domestic and foreign political officials. Agents of the Federal Highway Police handle traffic and crime on interstate roadways.651 A National Public Security Force of 10,000, drawn from the military police forces of Brazil’s 26 states, assists the Federal Police and state governors with situations beyond local capabilities, including prison riots, world sports events, and illegal operations in federally protected territories.

642 Jane’s, “Armed Forces, Brazil,” in Sentinel Security Assessment—South America, 19 June 2012.
651 Departamento de Polícia Rodoviária Federal, Ministério da Justiça, “Conheça a PRF,” n.d., http://www.dprf.gov.br/PortalInternet/conhecaPRF.faces;jsessionid=9C0F408D87723901127EAE3A343305FB.node30187P00
Brazil in Perspective

(logging, mining, and poaching). Brasília’s district force turned to the Federal Police in 2012 for help to contain a rise in car thefts and “flash kidnappings,” in which victims were forced at gunpoint to withdraw funds from ATMs.

States have both civil (~100,000) and military (~350,000) police forces. Historically, these “governors’ armies” were powerful, independent organizations. The federal army began to absorb their power in the 1930s, and the state military police were part of the dictatorial apparatus during the era of military rule. Today these forces typically report to their state’s secretariat for public security, although the military police are also a national army reserve.

Civil police, like the federal police, are judicial forces that investigate crime (except military offenses) and provide evidence to prosecutors. State military police, also referred to as state militia, are uniformed, ranked soldiers and officers who receive training in policing procedures and urban warfare techniques. Oversight of dual civil and military state forces has proved difficult. Police brutality, vigilantism, and death-squad activities have been problematic for decades, particularly among the state military police.

All Brazilian police forces carry arms, and some analysts see a growing (re)militarization of police as they work with military units against criminals in urban and frontier settings. Low salaries led numerous federal and state police forces to stage work slowdowns and strikes in 2012. In Rio, armed paramilitary groups, made up mostly of off-duty law enforcement officers, have taken control of shantytowns from drug factions and engaged in similar practices of extortion and murder. In 2012, a UN Human Rights Working Group suggested that Brazil eliminate its military police, provoking a range of Brazilian responses.

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Crime is a widespread problem in Brazil. Brazil’s murder rate is four times that of the rate in the United States, and the most firearm-related deaths in the world occurred in Brazil in 2010. Efforts to combat crime in Brazil are complicated by mistrust between police forces and the public that stems from events of the 1964–1985 military era and recent events, such as the 2011 murder of Judge Patrícia Acioli, for which a state police officer later turned himself in. Recent efforts to curb violent crime include improved gun legislation, special police units, a firearms amnesty program, and a witness-protection program.

In terms of the country’s problem with illegal drugs, Brazil destroyed more than 1 million marijuana plants on 380 plantations in 2011, and the government is trying to limit coca cultivation in its Amazon region. The movement of Bolivian, Colombian, and Peruvian drugs through Brazil also underlies much of the weapons smuggling and money laundering in the country, particularly in the Tri-Border Area. In 2012, Brazil was declared the world’s...
greatest consumer of crack cocaine, a social scourge that alarmed even Rio drug lords, who reportedly decided to ban crack sales on their home turf.676

Some analysts consider the greatest threat to Brazil’s stability to be organized crime, particularly related to the cycle of illegal drug production, transportation, and consumption.677, 678 Gangs in major cities have considered working together to take their regional control national.679 Regional terrorist groups such as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) also have been working with Islamist terrorist organizations abroad. For example, FARC has been paying al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) to provide safe passage for drug shipments through North Africa.680, 681, 682 In addition to al-Qaeda, Hezbollah, Hamas, and other terrorist groups were alleged in 2011 to be fundraising, recruiting, and planning operations from bases in Brazil.683, 684

Corruption and Human Rights Violations

Corruption is endemic in Brazil. From Cardoso’s election through the military dictatorship, Brazil has had a history of corruption by public officials. But since 2004, the country has been making a concerted effort to reform its institutions. It opened a Transparency Portal that lists every dollar of public funds spent, including salaries.685 Brazil’s Office of the Federal Solicitor General attempted to recover $2.5 billion USD in corruption trials, of which $566 million was in the private accounts of former and current mayors.686 Brazil successfully recovered $390 million of public funds in 2010. But justice for corrupt official has moved at a glacial pace, with Fernando Collor, the president impeached for corruption, serving in senate, and others serving in congress.

Allegations of corruption made against the Worker’s Party surfaced in 2005, 2007, and the kickback scheme is being investigated for Lula’s involvement. Trials lie ahead.\(^{687,688}\)

Security forces, faced with well-armed gangs and individuals, continue to violate civilians’ rights.\(^{689}\) In 2009, Human Rights Watch reported that many of 11,000 people killed by police in Rio and São Paulo since 2003 were extrajudicial killings.\(^{690,691}\) Since 2008, \textit{favelas} in Rio have had special police to insure permanent security. But despite this, militias made up of police control territory, committing crimes with impunity.\(^{692}\) For example, only 2 convictions resulted from 7,800 complaints against Rio police from 2000–2009. In May 2011, five police officers were convicted of flash ATM robberies.\(^{693,694}\) Concerns have risen because human rights abuses are expected to increase with the Olympic Games being held in Rio in Brazil in 2016.

Trafficking in persons is rampant in Brazil. Brazilian authorities have evidence that foreign organized criminal networks (particularly from Russia and Spain) traffic Brazilians abroad, and two-way trafficking occurs between Brazil and neighboring countries such as Suriname, French Guiana, Venezuela, and Paraguay. Sex tourists seeking children frequent resorts at coastal areas in Brazil’s northeast.\(^{695}\)

The Tri-Border Area of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay has also been alleged to harbor fundraisers for international extremist organizations such as Hezbollah, al-Qaeda, and Hamas.\(^{696,697}\) In particular, Paraguay’s financial laws invite corrupt practices of money laundering. But the three countries deny terrorist activities within their borders.\(^{698,699}\)

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\(^{688}\) Brazil News.net, “Brazil Prosecutors to Investigate Ex-President Lula over Corruption Charges, 7 April 2013, \url{http://www.brazilinnews.net/index.php/sid/213663825/scat/24437442923341f1}

Land Distribution and Reform

Brazil is one of many Latin American countries that face the colonial legacy of land distribution inequalities. In 2012, a deadly land conflict contributed to the removal from office of Paraguay’s president. A 2009 analysis estimated that Brazil’s large landholders, who are one-tenth of all Brazilian landholders, owned 85% of the land. In 2011 USAID reported that 5 million families are landless in Brazil. In 1975, clerical activists in the Catholic and Lutheran churches formed the Pastoral Land Commission, which gave rise to the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST) in 1985. Known as the Landless Workers Movement in English, it has become the largest social movement in Latin America with an estimated membership of 1.5 million throughout Brazil. The MST organizes its followers to occupy unused tracts of land. The first occupation occurred in 1985 and generated a legal challenge from the absentee owner. The Brazilian Supreme Court ultimately ruled that it is not a crime to occupy unfarmed land.

In the Amazon Basin and other rural areas, land rivals drugs as the cause of violent crime. In addition to land ownership, experts say “the related issues of deforestation, logging, land grabbing, and the slave labor sometimes used by powerful landowners, are the key factors in making Brazil’s remote hinterlands such bloody places.” One Latin American newspaper estimated that land disputes had caused more than 1,200 murders since 1990.

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Water Security

Brazil has ample but poorly distributed freshwater resources. Water pollution is reducing the already limited reserves of the dry south. The economic and environmental costs of moving Amazonian waters elsewhere may prove to be prohibitive.\(^{710}\) Brazil also has an extensive but poorly guarded coastline, as well as thousands of miles of rivers. A national coast guard does not yet exist. Piracy is a problem in both the Atlantic and the Amazon.\(^{711, 712}\)

Looking Forward

Will Brazil become a 21st-century superpower? It has the natural resources and the population to move into global economic prominence. The B in BRICS is under international pressure to bail out other world economies. Although Brazil seeks a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, some Brazilians object to the economic costs of international leadership.\(^{713}\) The country is still struggling to improve the welfare of its citizens and protect its environment. Achieving sustainable national development will require political leadership as well.

Will Brazil’s leaders follow the path of recent working-class president Lula? Many Americans were uncomfortable with Lula’s relationships with Iran, Venezuela, and Cuba, and his criticisms of the Colombia–United States defense agreement.\(^{714}\) But the path of international engagement may be preferable to that of the Brazilian army officer who would isolate his country from NGO “infiltration.”\(^{715}\) Brazil’s continental dominance and nuclear capabilities make it a force to be reckoned with. Its internal civilian-military politics make its future as a security superpower difficult to predict.

Brazil’s leadership of the UN mission in Haiti “has been seen as a test of its ambition to play a greater role in regional security as it seeks a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.”\(^{716}\)

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Chapter 5 Assessment

1. Brazil has the largest military in South America.
   **True**
   Brazil’s size, wealth, and stability have made it South America’s leading power. It has the largest economy and military in the region, and currently is investing in military upgrades—including the development of drones to patrol its borders.

2. As part of the government’s plan to improve regional security, Brazil has been a leading advocate for economic integration in Latin America.
   **True**
   Since 1980, Brazil has been a founding member of the Latin American Integration Association (ALADI) and is now part of the Union of South American Nations, a regional body that aims to function similarly to the European Union.

3. Crime is one the most serious threats to Brazil’s internal security.
   **True**
   Brazil’s murder rate is four times that of the rate in the United States, and the most firearm-related deaths in the world occurred in Brazil in 2010. Other internal security threats include drug trafficking and illegal logging and mining in uncontrolled border areas.

4. Regional terrorist groups in Brazil have been working with Islamist terrorist organizations abroad.
   **True**
   The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) has been paying al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) to provide safe passage for drug shipments through North Africa. Hezbollah and Hamas are allegedly active in Brazil.

5. Government-backed abuses of power against the general public came to an end in Brazil when military rule gave way to civilian governance in 1985.
   **False**
   The armed forces have played an active role in Brazil’s politics and government, from the overthrow of the monarchy in 1889 to the military dictatorship of 1964–1985. Corrupt security officials continue to threaten the welfare and lives of Brazilians.
FINAL ASSESSMENT

1. Portuguese colonists established Brasília as the capital of Brazil in the 16th century.
   **True or False**
   Construction began in 1956 for the planned capital city of Brasília. Located in the upland savanna of the Central Plateau, the relatively young city was built as part of an effort to expand development from the eastern seaboard into the central interior.

2. The use of biofuels in Brazil has resulted in a net decrease in urban air pollution.
   **True or False**
   Although the use of biofuel-based ethanol is promising for improving air quality, pollution from the loss of rainforests used for cultivating biofuels and other practices offset any reduction in air pollution that the use of biofuels may provide.

3. The Amazon Basin is home to human populations that have remained isolated from contact with the rest of the world.
   **True or False**
   More than 30 million people now live in the Brazilian Amazon, most in urban areas. But in remote areas live a few hundred thousand indigenous peoples, some of whom have remained isolated since prehistoric times.

4. Brazil is prone to floods, but not droughts.
   **True or False**
   With its large geographic area and climatic variation, Brazil is subject to floods and droughts. Although flooding and its effects are the most deadly, droughts affect more Brazilians than any other natural hazard.

5. The Iguazu and Paraná rivers mark the tri-border point of Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay.
   **True or False**
   The Paraguay and Paraná rivers form the second-largest river system in Brazil. South of Itaipú, the Iguazu Falls mark the Brazil-Argentina border. The Iguazu and Paraná rivers demarcate the tri-border point of Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay.

6. In the 16th century, the Portuguese collaborated with local peoples to develop sugarcane plantations and to share labor and profits.
   **True or False**
   When the Portuguese failed to enslave enough indigenous labor, they imported African slaves to work their plantations and mines. As a result of these imported slaves, today Brazil has the largest African population of any country in the world outside of Africa.
7. Henry Ford was successful at developing a rubber plantation in the Amazon.

**True or False**
Ford’s dream of “creating the biggest rubber plantation in the world” ultimately failed, primarily because industrialization, indigenous life and Ford’s utopian vision did not mesh well.

8. Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva successfully developed and implemented social and economic policies emphasizing the reduction of poverty and hunger.

**True or False**
During the administration of Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva (2002–2010), millions of Brazilians rose out of poverty, according to estimates. Lula, a member of the Worker’s Party, is popularly known as the country’s first working-class president.

9. Brazil has never had a female president.

**True or False**
Dilma Rousseff, the first woman to be elected president in Brazil, assumed office in January 2011. As a member of an underground resistance movement as a teenager, she was jailed for 3 years in the early 1970s and reportedly tortured.

10. The alleged crimes of military officials accused of human rights violations and those of left-wing guerrillas accused of violence may never be prosecuted in Brazil.

**True or False**
In 2011, a 7-member commission was formed to investigate human rights abuses in Brazil between 1946 and 1988. But because of a 1979 amnesty law, military officials accused of torture and guerrillas accused of violence cannot be prosecuted.

11. Brazil is one of the United States’ newest suppliers of oil and natural gas.

**True or False**
With the recent discovery of offshore oil, Brazil has become one of the United States’ newest suppliers of oil and natural gas. The U.S. has invested heavily in Brazil, announcing in 2012 plans to loan Brazil’s Petrobrás oil company USD 10 billion to develop hydrocarbon reserves.

12. Brazil’s dependence on commodity exports has often led to economic suffering when world markets collapse.

**True or False**
The Brazilian economy has experienced several boom-and-bust cycles because of fluctuations in world demand for a succession of major exports: sugar, gold, diamonds, coffee, rubber, and oil. The government’s policy of subsidizing producers also has created government debt.

13. To celebrate Brazil’s long-awaited independence from Portugal, the Brazilian government introduced a new currency, the Brazilian real, in 1994.

**True or False**
Gold, silver, copper, sugar, cotton, cocoa, clove, tobacco, seashells, and paper backed by diamonds all have served as money in Brazil. Today’s currency, the real (BRL), appeared in 1994 as part of the economic reforms that ended three decades of hyperinflation.
14. Brazil’s size and terrain led to the early adoption of air travel.  
**True or False**  
Brazil was an early and eager adopter of air travel to overcome the country’s challenging terrain and size. The 2014 World Cup of soccer and the 2016 Summer Olympics are driving more development of airports and other transportation infrastructure.

15. Brazil is one of the most socialist countries in South America and prides itself on the equal distribution of wealth and resources throughout society.  
**True or False**  
Brazil has long had one of the highest levels of wealth inequality in the world. The standard of living varies by class and by region, with the northeast being the poorest. Regional inequities are especially apparent in health and education.

16. *Tropicalismo* is a Latin American movement that demanded the church take a social activist stance in support of the poor.  
**True or False**  
Influenced by musical styles from around the world, *tropicalismo* emerged in the 1960s to critique the rise of military rule in Brazil. Liberation Theology is a Latin American movement that demanded the church take a social activist stance in support of the poor.

17. Pentecostal churches are becoming increasingly popular in Brazil.  
**True or False**  
Evangelical churches, particularly Pentecostal, have become increasingly influential. The drama of Pentecostal services, with speaking in tongues and miraculous healings, has been paralleled by the development of a Charismatic Catholic movement in Brazil.

18. The national dish of Brazil is a starchy food made from a type of tuber, a primary staple of the country’s indigenous peoples.  
**True or False**  
The national dish in Brazil, *feijoada*, is a pork, bean, and beef stew served with rice. The origins of *feijoada* were leftover meat parts from the plantation master’s table that made their way into the meals of slaves during the colonial era.

19. *Capoeira* is a hybrid of dance and martial arts that developed among African slaves in Brazil.  
**True or False**  
*Capoeira* combines martial arts-type moves with acrobatics, set to music. Evolved from an Angolan warrior dance, *capoeira* united slaves in Brazil speaking different African languages and came to embody resistance against the slave master.
20. Some of Brazil’s ethnic minority populations rival the population sizes of their places of origin.

True or False
Brazil counts more citizens of Syrian extraction than Syria’s capital and a larger population of Lebanese heritage than in Lebanon. Brazilian Japanese form the largest Japanese population outside of Japan.


True or False
Although Brazil supported the Argentine war for the Falkland Islands during the 1980s, Brazil’s last significant military conflict was with Paraguay in the 19th century over sea access. Paraguay lost the war against Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay.

22. The Maoist Shining Path of Peru has profited from illegal logging operations in Brazil.

True or False
The Shining Path, a fearsome guerrilla insurgency that emerged in Peru in 1980, has “taxed” illegal Brazilian logging operations and profited from the surge in regional coca production. Peru is currently the world leader in cocaine production.

23. Brazil has not actively supported UN efforts regionally or internationally.

True or False
Brazil has led the UN’s MINUSTAH operations in Haiti and increasingly has participated in international humanitarian, disaster-response, and peacekeeping efforts, particularly in Africa.

24. Paramilitary groups are responsible for much of the street violence in the shantytowns of Rio.

True or False
In Rio, armed paramilitary groups, made up mostly of off-duty law enforcement officers, have taken control of shantytowns from drug factions. The paramilitary groups have engaged in similar practices of extortion and murder.

25. Although Brazil supports Iran’s nuclear ambitions, Brazil does not yet have a nuclear program.

True or False
Brazil’s uranium deposits and its nuclear-development program (reportedly dating to the 1930s) have made the nation nearly self-sufficient in the production of nuclear fuel. Its support of Iran’s right to develop nuclear power has been seen as challenging U.S. policy.
FURTHER READING AND RESOURCES

Articles and Papers


Films


