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Brazil: The Troubled Rise of a Global Power by Michael Reid

Chapter 12: Global Ambitions and Frustrations

Trying to assert itself as a global power, Brazil somewhat proved itself when it made an agreement with Iran's president. It concerned the provocative nuclear program of the country. Although Iran decided on continuing creating uranium, Brazil still stepped in, making executive decisions in designing policy. The UN Security Council held a vote on whether or not harsher economic sanction would be placed on Iran for incompliance with world standards regarding their nuclear program. Brazil voted against which revealed more country independence, as it never went against popular choice before (Reid, 240). So it is asserting itself as a power, but where? Reid questions whether it is after western or southern power.

Since the beginning of the New Republic the foreign policy of Brazil had come a long way. It has placed huge importance on creating alliances with other countries that were also rising powers. This mainly included Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The country also wanted to assert its diplomatic presence on a bigger scale in an attempt to have a more permanent seat in world councils (Reid, 243). Although much of it remained the same for a long time, there was also a good amount that had been changed (Reid, 244).

In 1992 Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay came together to sign the Treaty of Asuncion which created Mercosul, which translates to the Common Market of the South. The merging of the countries' cooperation had a goal in aiding them to take part more efficiently in the global economy (Reid, 245). This was done by finally tearing down the walls that have separated the neighbors for too long. Their joining proved effective, placing Mercosul's members on the business map of the world. However, it ran into trouble with stability in

macroeconomics, especially because Brazil brought in seventy percent of the GDP of Mercosul. Lula, with an attempt to revive it, included Venezuela and Bolivia (Reid, 248). In 2008 the Community of Latin American and Caribbean Nations (CELAC) was born after the countries exclusively met, which was organized by Brazil. With this, Brazil proved itself as the leading power and basically dumped its ties in the Organization of American States (OAS) (Reid, 248). In 2006 Lula stated “Brazil doesn’t want to lead anything but be the partner of all countries” (Reid, 251).

George W. Bush and Lula got along well (Reid, 257). Brazil and the United States needed each other. The country relationship had never been better than with this presidential friendship. They did not become allies and did not form any agreements, but remained friends, especially since lots of South America rejected Bush. The United States, regardless of mutual interests, cannot seem to make any agreements due to many disparities about business. Cooperation mainly failed due to each country’s main goal. The United States wanted trade and energy, while Brazil longed for recognition as a world power (Reid, 259). It was tough, since Brazil positioned as a “soft power.” They did not want to house nuclear weapons, rather, the country wanted to accomplish power through attraction. Brazil is sort of a palatable country to all, as it uses no force (Reid, 260). Maybe its lack of intervention, which is how the world powers tend to accomplish things, is why Brazil’s status remains middle-class.