

grounds that ‘merging this new research and documentation into the chapters would lead to a wholly different book’ (p. xvii). He also mentions that he will incorporate these materials in the complementary book he plans to write of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century history of Brazil. In summary, Luiz Felipe de Alencastro’s *The Trade in the Living* is a tour de force that will extend his influence to the English-language scholarship on the Atlantic world.

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Perry Anderson, *Brazil Apart, 1964–2019*

(London and New York: Verso, 2019), pp. xv + 224, £16.99, hb

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Perry Anderson’s *Brazil Apart: 1964–2019* is a five-decade take on Brazil from a leading figure of the New Left. Its form – a collection of essays written at roughly five-yearly intervals, and published in the *London Review of Books*, presents Anderson’s core argument that the history of Brazil since 1964 can be seen as a parabola: a rising curve of democratisation that falls back under the rise of neo-liberalism and its unique manifestation in the contemporary rise of Brazil’s far Right. He argues that Brazil is a ‘case apart’ in the degree of its introversion and his analysis centres on Brazil’s presidentialism and the imbalances written into political life through its 1988 constitution. Anderson’s style is characteristically confident, full of elegant formulations and echoes of intimate conversations with the great and the good of the Brazilian Left, and often insightful analysis.

The book makes a valuable contribution to understandings of contemporary Brazil not least through its lucid précis of key Brazilian intellectuals’ analyses of their country. In particular, Anderson draws on the seminal – and conflicting – work of André Singer and Chico de Oliveira, both little read and translated in the Anglophone world. Anderson is an astute reader of both, and their arguments are placed in generous and elucidating context.

The essays are histories of the present. They identify trends and place them in the context of recent Brazilian history and politics. Their New Left lens comes through as Anderson lays out a series of conjunctural analyses of the formation and dissolution of political blocs across time. His Gramscianism is perhaps overdetermined by a view of individual intellectuals and politicians as conducting forces of political life. The essays are reprinted unedited, to reveal the shifting strands of Anderson’s thinking, while encouraging a teleological reading. Viewed from the standpoint of 2020, they can appear as a salutary warning of the ecocidal populism that prevails today. Following Anderson’s analyses through the 2000s, we see the longer durée of fake news and post-truth. We watch with dread as the Workers’ Party’s need to manage an unwieldy Brazilian congressional system becomes

mired in executive and legislative corruption which in turn becomes the cover for the resurgence of a militarist far Right.

Anderson positions himself as translating Brazil for the rest of the world, with all relevant sources at his fingertips. He tells us how Brazil is, was, and might be. Betraying his disciplinary background in international relations, he investigates whether Brazil is a 'major power' without recognising this as a normative and ungeographic category. He writes in the 1994 piece that 'richer and more orderly than Yeltsin's Federation, Brazil is within sight of achieving the rank of a major power, to which it never – despite much over-blown rhetoric – came near in the past' (p. 5). What it might mean to compare post-USSR Russia with 1990s Brazil at this level of abstraction – 'more orderly'? – is not explored. One of his key claims – reflected in the title – is that Brazil's 'national culture [...] remains, among its peers in the ranks of major powers, uniquely self-contained' (p. xii). This is unconvincing and homogenising: different parts of Brazil's 'national culture' are differentially self-contained. For instance, Afro-Brazilian musical and religious cultures are defined by trans-Atlantic circuits of reference and inspiration. Are they not part of Brazilian 'national culture'? Writing of a *major power's national culture* singularises what is multiple and flattens what is contoured. Of course, these pieces were written as journalism, but the framework of analysis is limiting.

Anderson's trademark self-confidence is also a flaw. What he presents as neutral and total is partial, and partial. What, for example, can the following mean? 'Internationally, the continent became news for the first time in the wake of the Cuban Revolution' (p. 2)? This is almost meaningless, but also misleading. He argues that in the 1950s and 60s 'guerrilla movements haunted Washington [but] Brazil was never in the forefront of this turbulence' (p. 2). In fact, as research by Andrew Kirkendall and others has shown, and as the writing of Brazilian intellectuals like Josué de Castro made clear at the time, in the run-up to the 1964 military coup the northeast of Brazil was at the forefront of mainstream US minds – from the *New York Times* to the CIA – as the source of the next Castroist revolution. An atmosphere of paranoia directly underpinned US support for the military coup which would shape Brazilian history for the next 30 years. And, with the revanchist far Right's reinterpretation of military dictatorship, right up to today.

His deft touch with individual biography makes the essays fluid, but his insider status can cloud the analysis. Fernando Henrique Cardoso, for instance, is clearly very clubbable: 'when he becomes president next year [he] he will arguably be the most intellectually sophisticated head of any state in the world' (p. 5). 'Strikingly good-looking, he combines a natural authority with an urbane charm whose flickering smile does not mask, but conveys inner reserve and strength of purpose [...] this cosmopolitan prince...' (p. 12). We are given to understand that Anderson moved in the same circles as Cardoso. This intellectual and aesthetic affinity explains how, in relation to Cardoso, the appointment of 'long-time friends' (p. 12) as advisors is greeted with nodding approval, while Fernando Collor's attempt 'to govern the country with a motley group of personal appointees' (p. 11) is sniffed at. Anderson, like everyone else on the Left, later fell out of love with Cardoso, and is scathing about his latter-day 'bromides in praise of globalization' (p. 124). Anderson's initial response to Lula is very different. In 2002 he pronounces that Lula has 'a streak of laziness' on page 46, but by page 48 credits his victory to Lula's 'tireless criss-crossing of the country, to its remotest corners'. The

second characterisation seems more likely than the former, but the issue is more the kinks in thought that allow the contradiction to arise.

Anderson's personal-yet-totalising style has a clear masculinist tendency. His characters of Brazil's political history and intellectual life are almost exclusively male. The extensive list of male intellectuals and artists from 2011 includes literary critics, novelists, sociologists and filmmakers. Yet it finds no space for any women, not even Marilena Chaui, one of the world's leading Spinoza experts and a high-profile founder and critic of the PT, the Workers' Party. Out of the 177 names in Anderson's index, I count five women. Of the roughly 125 people in footnoted academic references, I count 15 female scholars. While diverse political men get a mention in the text, there is no room for the agency of Gleisi Hoffmann, Dilma Rousseff's chief of staff between 2011 and 2014 and President of the PT since 2017, or on the Right for Janaina Paschoal, a leading lawyer in Rousseff's impeachment and a key supporter of Jair Bolsonaro's, who in 2018 was elected as a state representative with over 2 million votes, more than anyone ever before elected to the Brazilian Congress. The lack of attention to women should encourage us to re-read his analysis of Dilma Rousseff. It veers towards lazy misogyny. The long-standing militant, first female President and twice-elected Head of State has apparently 'never [...] possessed a trace of charisma' (p. 87) and has only 'technical capabilities' (p. 88). She is presented as merely a conduit of male agency, and her achievements purely derivative of Lula's: 'she was a woman, around whom it was much easier to wrap the warmth of [Lula's] own charisma than it would have been a man' (p. 88). And, in a contradictory portrait, 'Dilma, though highly controlled, is more explosive in character than Lula' (p. 89). Whatever we might think of Rousseff's political trajectory, with its marked neoliberal shift and errors of judgement, the level of Anderson's characterisation is disappointing.

Brazil Apart should be read as more fractional than it pretends to be. It is very readable and accomplished and is, in the best sense, journalistic. In spite of its aporias it is one potent account of how a complex country arrived (again) at a point of profound crisis.

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Kris Lane, *Potosí: The Silver City that Changed the World* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019), pp. xviii + 248, \$32.95; £26.00, hb

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Kris Lane's book, *Potosí: The Silver City that Changed the World*, was published in 2019 and presented in Sucre, Bolivia, during that year's July meeting of the