Book Reviews

Amy Erica Smith, *Religion and Brazilian Democracy: Mobilizing the People of God*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2019. Figures, tables, appendixes, bibliography, index, 222 pp.; hardcover $99.99, ebook $80.

Religion and Brazilian Democracy brilliantly brings a wide range of research methods to bear on the changing roles of religion in politics, with an emphasis on the rising prominence of Evangelical and Pentecostal Christians and Brazil's "culture wars." Mobilizing people to combat reproductive health rights and LGBTQ rights is now a ommon political strategy globally. But in contrast to the United States, the country most closely associated with the term *culture wars*, Brazil's multiparty system means that the binary politics and "dualistic religious doctrines" (145) of culture wars do not map neatly onto two major parties. Thus, instead of political parties or party leadership, Smith focuses on the role of clergy, through data collected from the decade preceding the 2018 election. A reflective afterward discusses the implications of Jair Bolsonaro's 2018 election as president in relation to the book's findings.

Although it addresses many more subquestions systematically throughout, the book is driven by two major questions: how have religious elites (clergy), congregants, and politicians constructed the culture wars in Brazil? and what are the consequences for Brazilian democracy? The focus on clergy as a driver of the culture wars—rather than partisan elites or transnational influences—puts a needed spotlight on the political roles of nonpoliticians and the formative influence of local figures. The Vatican, transnational Evangelical Christian organizations, and the "anti-gender" movement are all powerful transnational forces, but Smith recognizes and examines the agency, attitudes, and advocacy of congregational leaders and citizens within Brazil, an important contribution. Still, I would assign this book along with research on the transnational culture wars, such as Sanders et al. (2021), which includes a case study of Brazil, or Marcus-Delgado (2019), which includes a chapter on "Outside Forces at Work." In addition to revealing the role of transnational advocacy, these works' statements about the lives at stake and the human rights of women and LGBTQ people provide a counterpoint to Smith's more dispassionate assessment of attitudes toward these rights and lives.

In answering her questions, Smith draws on a wide variety of methods. Surveys, survey experiments, focus groups, and interviews shed light on what clergy believe and want and how that may impact what they say (or what they say they say), and how that, in turn, impacts congregations (what they hear, or what they say they hear, and what they say they think). Smith recognizes that congregants' attitudes are

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shaped by both selection (which congregations they choose to join) and socialization (112). Aside from an opening vignette about Judith Butler being burned in effigy in São Paulo (3) and a passing reference to literature arguing that women "are more sensitive to socialization" and thus researchers need to "control for gender" (110), there is little discussion of women or gender in regard to the participants, findings, or implications. This is surprising, since the issues that emerge in the book as most prominent in Brazil's culture wars are abortion and LGBTQ rights.

The focus group and interview data help bring the survey data and survey experiments to life in discussions of findings. Particularly effective are the series of "scenes" near the beginning of several chapters, recounted from field notes, including quotations from clergy and members of a wide range of Christian congregations. A strength of the book is the consideration of its detailed findings in relation to big, politically salient questions; namely, the impact of the culture wars on Brazil's democracy.

The verdict is mixed. Clergy in Brazil are generally supportive of democratic institutions and participation, and active congregants are more likely to engage in political participation, such as contacting their representatives and signing petitions. Smith concludes that on the one hand, religious politics "enhances democratic representation and stabilizes democracy by giving religious leaders a stake in the system" (4). On the other hand, however, clergy can undermine support for democratic norms, specifically tolerance of and support for the civil rights of "outgroups," including atheists and LGBTQ people (145). This confluence of rising democratic participation and falling democratic norms may be characteristic of culture wars more generally and may help explain the recent rise of right-wing populists, including Bolsonaro.

Smith clearly explains the research methods—impressive in their variety, scope, and quality—in the text as well as in 2 tables, 28 figures, detailed appendixes, and a linked data repository. She provides political and contextual details about Brazil throughout, making the book highly readable and informative for nonspecialists in Brazil or in survey research. Thus, the text would be a valuable assigned reading in a graduate seminar or advanced undergraduate class in Latin American studies, political science, religious studies, or international affairs. I was drawn in by Smith's thoughtful definition and comparative application of the term *culture wars* and explanations of the differences and similarities between Evangelical Christianity and Pentecostalism (and neo-Pentecostalism, and Pentecostalized Catholicism!)

Brazil's electoral and party systems—including how people actually vote and who votes—were not a major focus, but Smith's clear explanation and consideration of these were particularly thought-provoking. Brazilians can vote for candidates or parties in an open-list PR system; most vote for candidates, but their votes are aggregated to determine the list order and number of seats each party gets (157, see also 166). This system, which encourages individual candidates to appeal personally to voters while resulting in large numbers of parties in office, seems to contribute to the "pulverization" of Evangelical endorsements (7).

Building on this study's implicit comparison to the United States (partisan versus nonpartisan culture wars), I would love to see Smith compare Brazil with cul-

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ture war politics in European countries with both PR voting and anti-gender movements. Also, Brazilian youth can vote at 16 and are required to vote at 18 (87); they have more liberal views on abortion and LGBT rights and are more likely to leave denominations and become religious "nones" (nonaffiliated or nonreligious but spiritual) (70). How is the youth vote (so low in the United States) impacting the culture wars in Brazil?

In addition to more discussion of age and of non-Christian religions, the book would benefit from more discussion of race, which, in the context of Brazilian society and politics, is particularly complicated, defying straightforward or stable categorization (Janusz 2021). The low numbers of people in Brazil's African-influenced religious traditions of Candomblé and Umbanda, religious syncretism, and unstable racial categories make it hard to draw survey-based conclusions about adherents of these religions (a minority) or the Afro-Brazilians (a majority). However, Smith's rich focus group and interview data could be further mined for details about the experiences and ideas of people of color.

Perhaps due to the complexity and fluidity of race in Brazil, the book is largely silent about the race of the clergy, congregations, and politicians discussed and the racial makeup of the different denominations and religions. But it contains fascinating details related to race, such as the widespread syncretism between Candomblé or Umbanda and Catholicism (14) and the disconnect between the attitudes of lay Evangelicals and those of Evangelical clergy and politicians toward race-based affirmative action, along with the observation that "lay Evangelicals are slightly darker-skinned than other citizens" (154). That the book makes me want to hear more about various groups and issues raised is more of a testament to its richness than a critique of shortcomings.

The conclusion compares and contrasts the role of Evangelical Christians in Brazilian politics with those in other Latin American countries, including Chile, Colombia, and Costa Rica. This chapter is a treasure trove of questions for future research that would make excellent dissertation projects. In addition to questions pertinent to Latin America's culture wars, even broader questions that remain to be answered include "*why* are religious groups so readily motivated by these particular issues?" (LGBTQ rights and abortion) and "how do religious groups come to perceive and frame threats either from the state or other religious groups?" (166–67).

Religion and Brazilian Democracy explicates the importance of the clergy at what might be a key political juncture. Looking ahead, to what extent will local clergy continue to be political middlemen in a period of rising populist leaders, with their appeals directly to the masses, and in an era when the most important intermediaries may be social media companies and influencers, including celebrity religious speakers and leaders (some of whom make cameos in this book)? These and other puzzles will keep scholars busy for years, but Smith's book will be the essential volume guiding this future work on the culture wars in Brazil and Latin America.

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Matthew M. Taylor, *Decadent Developmentalism: The Political Economy of Democratic Brazil*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020. Figures, tables, illustrations, abbreviations, notes, bibliography, index, 365 pp.; hardcover $73.47, ebook $64.

During much of the past decade, Brazil weathered its most severe economic recession, its largest corruption scandal, and the worst increase in violence since democratization in 1985. These multiple crises facilitated the election in 2018 of the extreme right-wing populist Jair Bolsonaro. Bolsonaro's rise was preceded by the stunning collapse of the Dilma Rousseff presidency via impeachment, bringing an end to what was just over a decade of national leadership by Lula da Silva's and Dilma's Workers Party. Turns of fortune in Brazilian democracy have been many since 1985, but what is most striking about these critical junctures is that they have not led to transformative reforms or even significant shifts from politics as usual. The central tenet of Matthew Taylor's *Decadent Developmentalism* is that the politics and political economy of Brazil are guided strongly by mutually reinforcing institutional and behavioral equilibria that at best make change incremental and at worst reinforce inertia.

Focusing on Brazil's "developmental state," Taylor identifies five major institutional complementarities, each of which he explores in great detail over several chapters, highlighting the ways that institutional and behavioral logics overlap and reinforce a kind of "low-level equilibrium" over long periods. The first two of these dimensions—the macro- and microeconomics of the "developmental hierarchical market economy"—encompass the standard criteria for judging any developmental state. On this score, Brazil's developmental state has been growth-constraining: not very good at improving total factor productivity, maximizing human capital, or fostering market-leading innovation. But this is not a story of institutional weakness, since the Brazilian developmental state scores highly on its capacity for engineering economic outcomes, and economic technocrats enjoy high levels of autonomy in

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