



A Concise History of Brazil

Boris Fausto , Arthur Brakel (Translator)

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A Concise History of Brazil covers almost 500 years of Brazilian history, from the arrival of the Portuguese in the New World to the political events that defined the transition in recent years from an authoritarian to a democratic political regime. Brazilian territorial unity and national identity were forged throughout the nineteenth century, after the proclamation of independence in 1822, resulting in a nation with one common language and wide ethnic and racial variety. Remarkable in this respect, the country nevertheless faces problems of social and ethnic disparity as well as of preservation and adequate use of its natural resources. This book emphasizes topics that have deeply influenced the historical formation of Brazil and affected its existence to the present day, such as the destruction of Indian civilizations, slavery and massive immigration throughout the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century.

A Concise History of Brazil Details

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James Gaffney says

Não era tão concisa para mim! Mas foi interessante, sobretudo os secções sobre o quadro socioeconômico.

"No plano interno do Brasil, uma boa pergunta de um livro de História consiste em indagar até que ponto o passado histórico torna impossível, ou quase impossível, a superação de muitos dos males atuais. Uma resposta sintética consiste em dizer que, apesar de todos os fatores negativos do passado que ainda se refletem no presente - a escravidão, o clientelismo, a exclusão social das camadas mais pobres-, os obstáculos, sem dúvida difíceis, não são impossíveis de superar."

Decided to make use of this snow day to finally finish this book. The language - and level of detail about various political scandals - was often a challenge, but overall a great book that's given me a much better understanding of Brazil and its society.

Etel Sverdlov says

This book took a very political and economics focused approach to Brazil's history. Through its entirety, the text mainly focused on who was in power, what their economic objectives were, what the repercussions of the policy were on Brazil, and what was the general sentiment of the people concerning the situation. In other words, it was a bit dry. However, the writing style, though straightforward, helped to keep the book intriguing and readable. When I was done, I felt like I had missed out significantly on the social and cultural history of Brazil but had at least gained a superficial understanding of the country's timeline. I'm hoping to augment this book with a more culturally focused history text, but it was a good introduction (if not much else).

Sytse says

An amazing book! It is concise in the very essence; the information given in this book is good yet noted with as few words as necessary. I recommend it to anybody who wants to learn the basic Brazilian history (this book offers next to no in-depth on 90% of the topics). The usage of English is superb, but it forced me to re-read some sentences because of complex sentence structure and I had to pick up my dictionary more than once.

Lillian Shuff says

Really really disappointing. So hard to follow and frankly very boring.

Rob says

Historical accounts are often considered to be less time sensitive but Boris Fausto's story of Brazil, while as

good an introduction as you could hope for in almost every way, would really benefit from an update.

This is because the past two decades have been so monumental that they shed new light on earlier times. A new awareness of environmental concerns and the deforestation of the Amazon in particular, new controversies surrounding the plight of indigenous peoples and the startling economic growth of the Lula and Rousseff administrations lead us to take a new view of what went before.

Where the book excels is in its depiction of immigration (why has the trajectory of Brazilian history differed so greatly from that of the very similar United States?), slavery and the shocking fact that it wasn't abolished until 1888 and the competing interests of the various states along with uneven development. A must read but let's have a second edition.

Maria Fernanda Gonzalez says

This book is an absolute must read for everybody that wants to learn about Brazilian History. As the title says, it's a concise history of the country, and it does encompass it all. The good thing about it, though, is that it is a complete book without being incredibly long. Although it can (and should) be considered an academic book, *A Concise History* is not a boring reading at all. Some of my friends had told me previously that it was a bit tendentious, but I think the author described the different political tendencies that emerged in Brazil throughout its history with reasonably fairness. I just wished it was more up to date, because it ends with an analysis of the 90s, but I think that may be solved in future editions.

Guilherme says

Infelizmente, meu entendimento de história e o número de páginas lidas são inversamente proporcionais

Nestor says

Um excelente resumo da história do Brasil.

Abe says

A good narrative of Brazil's history, from the colonial to the modern periods.

Karl Reinhard says

An excellent history. By reading this book and remembering the details, one can really understand how different states and cities made up the mosaic of Brazil. Before extensive travel in Brazil, this is a must read.

Alastair Heffernan says

A dense and tedious walk through Brazilian history. Perhaps I hoped for too much, and maybe this is more appropriate for the professional historian, but detailing the historiography of the work, continually backing up general points with myriad statistics, and referencing future events before formally introducing them all come together to make this book totally inappropriate for the novice to Brazilian history.

I'm not sure whether there exists a better read for someone wanting an overview of the history with perhaps more of a focus on the characters of the history (even if this goes against modern historiographical sensibilities). Suffice it to say if, like me, you wanted to learn about Brazil within the confines of an entertaining read this is definitely not the book for you. Copious typing and grammatical errors (including words simply missing) throughout the book doesn't help endear this book to the reader either as they trudge through reams of statistics while struggling to understand key figures and movements in Brazilian history. Avoid unless you are a professional.

Petri Launiainen says

Having moved to Brazil I only had a vague idea of the history of this great place, based on the European view. This book, although at times it was somewhat tough to read, gave me a much better understanding of what this country is about, and how it has remained so homogeneous despite the vastness of the area.

If you have interest in the developments in South America in general, this is a good addition to your bookshelf.

Wilfredo Rodríguez says

Displays preset a formally different aspects of Brazil since its inception. Enter different views of several historians. It contains much information can sometimes be too much.

Moses says

When they say concise, they really mean concise. They cram half a millennium of history into 400 pages, mostly by cutting to the chase—it's almost all summary of events, and there are very few primary documents. The writing is also pretty bloodless, so even horrifying events like the Paraguayan War become snorefests.

With that said, it does an excellent job of providing a crash course to Brazil's history, so as someone who didn't know anything about Brazil's history, or really the history of any part of South America, it was fascinating.

A couple odd notes: this book, even the second edition, wasn't really edited properly, and the author ends up with somewhat strange word choice. Also, the new part of the second edition, the last chapter, seems to be an essay from somewhere else—it's translated by someone else, and it repeats a lot from the previous chapter. However, it's one of the best parts of the book, so I would strongly encourage you to get the second edition.

Marcio Rafael Maciel says

Uma pequena atualização para o Rio Branco. Vale por conta da minha formação, mas quem quiser um pouco mais de base, sugiro que procure o volume cheio.
