

Striving for Seriousness

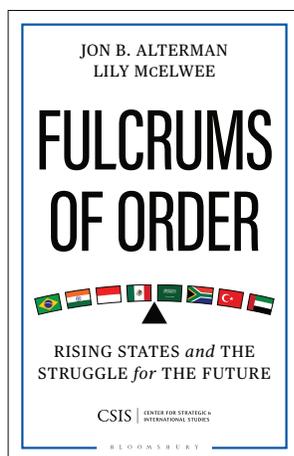
Brazil's Inclusion and Exclusion from the World Order



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OVERVIEW

Brazil wants recognition within the Western-led international order. Brazilians believe they helped create it but are now excluded from it.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- Brazil fought alongside the Allies in World War II, but was excluded from leading postwar institutions like the United Nations and the Bretton Woods system.
- DeGaulle's reputed remark, "Brazil is not a serious country," captures Brazilians' enduring insecurity about perceptions of the country's global role.

FOREIGN POLICY VISION

- A primary diplomatic goal is securing a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.
- Brazil's proposed Responsibility While Protecting (RWP) doctrine in 2011 was an effort to show Brazil could help shape global governance norms.

REGIONAL AND GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

- BRICS provides an important platform for the country to pursue greater global leadership.
- Its larger regional role is hampered by language and by trade patterns that often extend beyond the Western Hemisphere.

ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE

- Brazil aspires to move up the economic value chain despite ongoing reliance on commodities (e.g., soy, petroleum, and minerals).
- Structural challenges, known as custo Brasil ("the cost of doing business in Brazil"), stifle competitiveness.
- China is the top trade partner, but the United States is the principal security partner.

CURRENT CHALLENGES

- Brazil risks undermining its credibility if it is perceived as too accommodating to authoritarian partners.
- The country continues to struggle to demonstrate that it is a "serious country" capable of shaping, not merely reacting to, the world order.