

BOOK REVIEW

**Brazil's Emerging Role in Global Governance:
Health, Food Security and Bioenergy*****by Flávia Donadelli**

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(Fraundorfer, Markus. *Brazil's Emerging Role in Global Governance: Health, Food Security and Bioenergy*. Londres: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015)

Ever-expanding global interdependences associated with an increasingly dynamic international order makes the continuous updating of our understanding of the structures and processes of global governance a mandatory task. Emerging sources of authority, such as private regulatory mechanisms, and the emerging power of traditional sources of authority, such as developing states, place the debate advanced by Markus Fraundorfer in *Brazil's Emerging Role in Global Governance, Health, Food Security and Bioenergy* in the epicenter of any contemporary well-informed analysis of international relations. Investigating the way in which Brazil has influenced the mechanisms of global governance since the beginning of the twenty-first century, Fraundorfer provides a comprehensive account of the central role played by the country in three different sectors: health, food security and bioenergy. The central argument of the book is that Brazil now occupies a new position in an international context traditionally dominated by developed powers. Unveiling the intricate processes through which this increasing influence is built is the book's central goal. The idea that "Brazil's exercise of power and its subsequent ability to shape the structures and processes in global governance" (pp. 04) was developed on the basis of the country's activities in these three sectors is the departing assumption.

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In terms of methodological and theoretical contributions, one of the most remarkable innovations accomplished by the author refers to the analysis of three different 'interfaces' of power; namely discursive power, decision-making/bargaining power and resource-transfer power (Chapter 02). The debate arising from the analysis of these three dimensions as being socially co-constitutive bridges together notions of hard power from neorealist traditions (focused on capabilities and resources), ideas of soft power from the neo-liberal school (stressing legitimacy and reputation) and social power, which departs from a constructivist framework and stresses the importance of discursive activities (pp. 16-19). Little doubts remain that the book adopts a bold and innovative theoretical approach that has much to contribute toward the approximation of traditionally independent theoretical accounts. A more explicit reflection about the challenges involved in the epistemological and methodological reconciliation of these distinct theoretical traditions was, however, slightly missed and would certainly be a valuable addition to the book.

Based on this innovative and comprehensive theoretical framework, the core of Fraundorfer's book consists of three empirical chapters, each one entirely dedicated to one of the three sectors. The first empirical chapter (Chapter 03) focuses on the Brazilian global fight against HIV/AIDS, epitomized by the well-known 2001 Brazilian victory in the World Trade Organization (WTO) trade dispute on drug patent rights against the US. What is particularly enlightening about this chapter is how much discursive, institutional and resource-transfer work in the area of global health has accompanied and reinforced this seminal victory. The emergence of a rights-based HIV/AIDS narrative and the self-positioning of Brazil as an international defender of people living with HIV/AIDS (a 'hero' according to the narrative framework adopted by the author) are crucial elements underpinning Brazilian triumph in the WTO. The chapter also demonstrates that Brazilian success in influencing the content of the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health, WHO medicines strategy, and an United Nations Human Rights Council resolution on the matter of access to medicines, associated to the transfer of knowledge and generic drugs to other developing countries, assured an undeniable leadership role for Brazil in the area.

The second empirical chapter (Chapter 04) refers to Brazil's global fight against hunger and poverty. It emphasizes the importance of Brazil's Zero Hunger strategy in placing the country in the spotlight of the global system of food security. The chapter describes Lula's narrative on global hunger according to which the issue is solvable through political will and innovative financial mechanisms. This strong narrative associated with decisive Brazilian influence on the reform of the Food and Agricultural Organization's Committee on World Food Security, and to the remarkable positioning of Brazil among the largest food donors and sharers of experience in the world in the area of food security, places the country amongst the most important and powerful international references in this sector. Similarly to the previous one, this chapter points to an undeniably successful strategy of the Brazilian government to gain international visibility and leverage through the internationalization of very symbolic and morally-charged national political efforts. The importance of the coherence and continuity between national and international policies is, therefore, a crucial message emerging from the analysis of these chapters.

The third empirical chapter (Chapter 05) delves into an analysis of Brazil's role in the global governance of bioenergy. Its main focus is on the production and use of sugarcane-based ethanol. The chapter starts by providing a detailed account on the evolution of the production and use of ethanol in Brazil. Subsequently, the discursive attempts of Lula to make this sector an epitome of Brazil's fight against poverty and climate change is presented, as well as the several criticisms and debates that they engendered. The organizational aspect is illustrated by the efforts of the country in developing global sustainability standards for the production of ethanol, and the resource-transfer element is emphasized through the description of the country's efforts in disseminating technical knowledge about the production of ethanol to suitable countries. Although the chapter follows a similar structure as the previous two, it stands out as the most unique of the three cases. Its subject matter, although undeniably linked to the role of Brazil in global governance, partially lacks the heavy symbolic and moral connotations characteristic of the other two cases. Despite the well-remarked-upon discursive efforts undertaken by President Lula in order to turn the area into an epitome of the Brazilian fight against poverty and climate change, the intuition arising from the analysis is that this sector ends up as predominantly associated with commercial and economic goals. Perhaps

the reduced success of the government in providing similar symbolic or moral elements to the international negotiations of this sector has resulted in a case that is not so easily comparable to the previous two. The selection of topics in global environmental governance in which Brazil has historically played a crucial leadership role, in which international governmental organizations and negotiations are better solidified, and which also count with strong moral and symbolic elements (such as biodiversity) could perhaps have provided opportunities for a more coherent composition of cases. It cannot be denied, on the other hand, that the choice to investigate a relatively new environmental global governance area in which the private sector has a relatively larger role in comparison to the other two cases allows for the observation of elements and nuances which would not have been easily touched upon had it been a more analogous case.

The richness of detail and the crucial insights resulting from the above-described chapters are the most solid qualities of this book. The large contribution it makes towards a better understanding of the processes through which power is built in the international realm is undeniably impactful and the assessment about the importance of these three specific sectors is very enlightening. There is, however, one final aspect of the book that should be critically assessed in order to stimulate debate. Although this work is predominantly located in the field of international relations, and although the crucial role of national institutions in each of the three sectors is duly emphasized, perhaps the insights brought about by Putnam's (1988) two-level game theory could have played a larger role. The predominantly sectorial focus associated to the "horizontal global-global" (PUTNAM, pp. 17) analytical perspective (which intentionally departs from and focuses more strongly on international debates and negotiations), somehow prevented the author from directly assessing how much influence and explanatory power Lula's foreign policy strategy might have had for the developments analyzed. The clear Brazilian intent to pursue an 'active and affirmative diplomacy' during Lula's government as well as the symbolic use of internal social projects and the investment in South-South cooperation as a statement in favor of the principle of the "democratization of the international relations" (VISENTINI, 2014, p. 85) emanated directly from national political priorities and could have figured more prominently

as explanatory factors in the book. Similarly, although a comparison between Lula and Dilma's visions in foreign policies is briefly mentioned on page 146, a more extensive analysis of the differences between both heads of State's foreign strategies could have further illuminated the extent to which internal political decisions and dynamics might have influenced the sectorial developments analyzed.

To conclude, this book is a remarkable and inspiring contribution to the debate on Brazil's emerging role in Global Governance, as well as a rich and detailed account on the discursive, organizational, and resource-based processes underscoring the country's new position in the international arena. The three sectors analyzed are crucially important for their symbolic and strategic roles in global development. The self-positioning of Brazil as a leader in these three areas points, moreover, to the latent possibilities of emerging nations to occupy fundamental, but often overlooked, roles in the international arena. The few critical reflections raised by this review should not, therefore, overshadow the main message that this is a notable and crucial contribution to the literature, both in terms of theoretical innovation and empirical richness. This work stands out, therefore, as a mandatory reading for researchers and practitioners involved in global governance.

References

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