Once deemed a “dysfunctional” democracy with a “feckless” set of political institutions and a “drunk” economy, today’s Brazil has undergone a complete reversal of fortune. Now in its third decade of democracy, the economy is blossoming and large-scale development projects are underway, including the exploitation of massive, off-shore oil reserves, a nationwide effort to modernize infrastructure, and preparations for the hosting of the 2014 World Cup and the 2016 Olympics. Inequality and poverty are reducing and even Brazil’s political institutions are more governable and are producing a higher-quality democracy than most observers once thought possible.

Alfred P. Montero’s timely and wide-ranging book explores Brazil’s amazing “turnaround” - from improvements to the working of its political institutions and judiciary, to the renewal of economic growth, the advent of innovative social policy, and the emergence of a new foreign policy agenda. Unpacking both overly optimistic as well as pessimistic views of Brazilian politics and development, Montero offers illuminating insights into the country’s transformation and its increasing significance on the international stage.
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