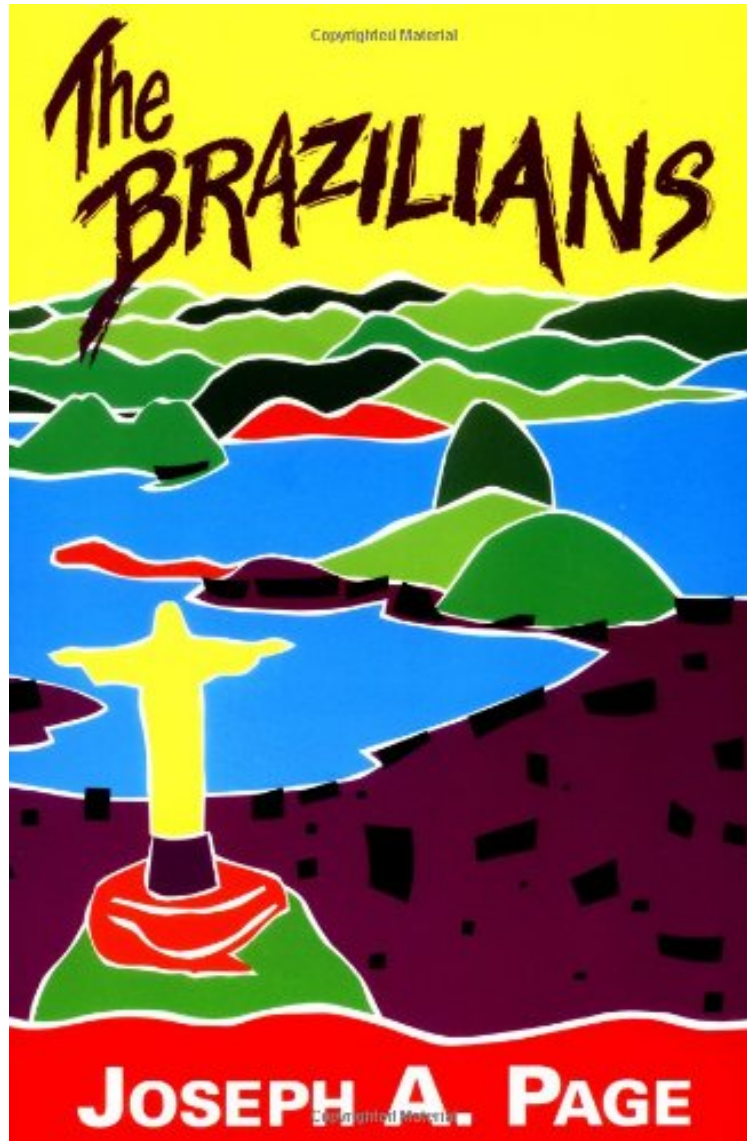


The Brazilians

Joseph A. Page

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A country warmly hospitable and surprisingly violent, physically beautiful, yet appallingly poorthese are the contrasts Joseph Page explores in *The Brazilians*, a monumental book on one of the most colorful and paradoxical places on earth.Once one of the strongest market economies in the world, Brazil now struggles to emerge from a deep economic and social crisis, the latest and deepest nose-dive in a giddy roller-coaster ride that Brazilians have experienced over the past three decades. Page examines Brazil in the context of this current crisis and the events leading up to it. In so doing, he reveals the unique character of the Brazilian people and how this national character has brought the country to where it is todayteetering on the verge of joining the First World, or plunging into unprecedented environmental calamity and social upheaval. Not since Luigi Barzini's *The Italians* has a society been so deeply and accurately portrayed.

From Publishers WeeklyVast in area, rich in resources and uniquely integrated in racial composition, here is Brazil in all its beauty, contradictions, promises and disappointments. Page (Peron), whose love affair with the country spans 30 years, probes deep into the layers of Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, African and Indian heritage that make Brazil so alluring and paradoxical. Idealistic and pragmatic, exuberant and passive, its people have survived colonialism, slavery, dictatorships and populism and now struggle toward a viable capitalism in a society characterized by extremes of wealth and poverty. The successful synergism of many races-"miscegenation has been a common and accepted practice"-exists side by side with real discrimination. In this magnetizing study, Page also explores the meld of Catholicism and Pentecostalism, of native Indian healers and modern medicine, of African rhythms and Western music. He discusses the environmental and investment scenes as well as the addiction to soccer and to the telenovelas of the powerful Globus media empire, which so engross the population that the realities of life often seem to merge with their plots and characters. In its depth, scope and accessibility, this is an important work. Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc.From BooklistIt's not surprising that it would take 500-plus pages to define the Brazilians, and Page's definition is as remarkably cogent--given its length--as it is complete, compelling, and insightful. The spotlight in his "search for Brazilianness" illuminates all corners of this vast hemispheric neighbor of ours, achieving a many-angled perspective by drawing from events and traits in Brazilian history, politics, economics, natural history, and culture. His workable, wonderfully presented description of the Brazilian national character incorporates the impact of Portuguese, African, and indigenous Indian influences, the disproportion of wealth in the modern Brazilian state, the abundance of natural resources being squandered by ecological mindlessness, the easy coexistence of Roman Catholicism and African-based religions, and the peculiar personal psychology that leaves Brazilians at once charming and violent. No book substitutes for real experience, but this book runs a close second in terms of affording an understanding of Brazil. Brad HooperAbout the AuthorJoseph A. Page, a professor of law at the Georgetown University Law Center, is the author of *Pern*, which was translated into Spanish and became a South American bestseller. He also wrote *The Revolution That Never Was* and *Bitter Wages*.