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Introduction

oriented by the case of a specific country, about the way that local, various fields. regional and global processes and contexts have been interweaving in can be said that it is not a book about Brazil, but of a set of reflections, not their focus on Brazil, but more properly the interest in the relations underway. The common thread of the various perspectives of analysis between Brazil and the world, based on the context of the Americas. It involved, which, therefore, unifies the different articles joined here, is ity of ways that social actors and analysts interpret the transformations also an internal perspective of observation that documents the pluraling to the processes of global integration. At the same time, there is side Brazil that seeks to understand how Brazilian society is respondand themes that it brings together. It is on one hand, a view from outded by a dual perspective and objective, a fact reflected by the authors scholars from Germany and different regions of the Americas, is guiseminar held in Berlin in December 2004 which brought together The book that the reader has in hand, the fruit of an interdisciplinary

In the political realm, the deep crises generated by the corruption scandal in the government of the Workers Party in 2005 triggered ambivalent reactions and sentiments among the analysts. Whatever the lesson that one can learn from it, the Brazilian crises has important consequences, to the degree to which it marks the expectations placed in the Latin American left, at a time in which governments have been elected in various countries on the sub-continent, which, like the Workers Party in Brazil, earned their principal electoral conquests from the defense of social justice and a solid base among the poorest sectors.

The new forms of insertion of Latin America and Brazil, in particular in the "post-national" world, are treated in historical perspective in the article by *Jorge Larrain*, revealing the connections between the history of (subordinated) integration of the countries of the region to modernity, the neoliberal cycle of the 1990's and the alternatives presented to these policies.