

POLI 332. Politics and Governments of Latin America

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Session 4. The Military and
Authoritarianism in 20th Century
Latin America

Plan of the lecture

1. Recap: Colonial period + 19th Century

2. Nationalist-Populist Regimes:

Cases: Brazil, Argentina, Mexico

1. Authoritarianism in Latin America:

- Stages
- Classification of military regimes

Recap: Colonial Period

- Spanish Colonialism: Mercantilist Institutions
 - Core: New Spain (Mexico), Peru, High Peru (Bolivia)
 - Periphery: Chile, Río de la Plata (Argentina-Uruguay)
- Effects:
 - Economic restrictions: low productivity and innovation, insecure property rights, low investment, communal lands are the bases of self-subsistence agriculture for lower classes
 - Entrenched inequalities in access to political and economic institutions
 - Hierarchical societies (ethno-racial distinctions)

Recap: 19th Century

- Wars of Independence are violent, decimating populations and destroying economic infrastructure
- Collapse of sovereignty leads to fragmentation of political authority; local and regional elites confront each other regarding the definition and program of the new states.
 - Weak institutions: poor public finances (debts, reliance on customs duties and commodities, inefficient taxation)
 - Civil conflict (federalists versus centralists; liberals vs. conservatives) weakens state institutions: bureaucracies, police forces, etc.
 - By the end of the 19th Century, only the Church and the Army have national presence
- Removal of trade restrictions leads to imbalances:
 - Capital scarcity
 - Enclave export-led development: poor infrastructural development
 - Rent-seeking

Nationalist-Populist Projects

- Antecedent conditions:
 - The emergence of new, urban-based middle classes
 - The professionalization of the army
 - Window of opportunity created by WWI and the 1929 Great Depression
- Common features:
 - Nationalism: The military as “protector of the motherland”
 - Populism: Corporatism and labour incorporation (e.g., expansion of suffrage, political organization of workers and peasants)
 - A greater role for the state in steering society.
 - Socially progressive laws related to inclusion of lower classes (e.g., agrarian reform, labour rights).
 - Economic model: Import Substitution Industrialization (more on Tuesday)

Brazil: Estado Novo

First Republic (1889-1930)

- Rule by *coronelismo* under the oligarchical republic
- Breakdown of the republican regime (October, 1930)
 - Succession problems in 1910, barracks revolts in 1920s
 - Urban professionals demand larger political voice and create the Democratic Party, while workers started organizing
 - 1929 crisis plummets coffee prices in international markets, badly hurting the economy.
 - A military coup puts Getúlio Vargas in power

Estado Novo (1930-1945)

- Constitution of 1933-34: Weakening of regional power-holders (*colonels*) and disintegration of *tenente* movement
- By 1934, two national movements compete for power: (1) Integralism (corporatist, rightist, with fascist affinities) and (2) *Alliança Libertadora Nacional* (ALN, a coalition of socialist, communists, and other leftist groups)
- In 1935, Vargas cracks down on ALN, declaring a state of emergency; in 1937, Vargas declared a new constitution and in 1938 disbanded the Integralists.
- WWII, flirting with both sides; Vargas negotiates with US support in exchange for development aid and massive investment in infrastructure
- State-led industrialization
- By 1943, in order to distance himself from Fascism, makes a turn towards populism and the left
- This generates tensions with the military and other anti-Vargas forces that demand his resignation

Second Republic (1946-1964)

- A new constitution in 1946
- Vargas remains active in politics, and is elected senator between 1945-1950
- In 1950 Vargas wins presidential elections; in 1951 creates PETROBRAS; negotiates loans from US government

- In 1952 Eisenhower backs down on those loans
- Inflation rises; controls on wages and business credits are unpopular
- Assassination of Lacerda (a journalist), and demands for Vargas's resignation from the military (1954)

- KUBITSCHEK (1956-1961; Brasília; target program of economic development; generates inflation and balance-of-payments crisis)
- QUADROS (extremely popular; resigns after 7 months)
- GOULART (populist, former minister of labour of Vargas; political polarization)
 - Attempt to impeach Goulart fails; military coup with US support ensues.

Argentina: Peronismo

The Turn of the 20th Century:

- “Generation of 1880” and rule by *acuerdo* (agreement)
- The Radicals appear as a new political force in the 1900s (excluded landowners and middle class)
- Radical leader Yrigoyen wins presidency in 1916
- Working classes begin to mobilize, initially allowed by Yrigoyen and then repressed.
- Period of democratic elections until military coup in 1930; the question is how to address class-conflict: **return to Conservative governments or build a corporatist state?**

Peronism and Perón

- In 1943 a military coup of disaffected officers topples the civilian government.
- Juan Domingo Perón wins elections and becomes the leader of the new regime in 1946.
 - Nationalist-populist regime, corporatist reorganization of the state, ISI-based growth
 - Mobilization of labour by the Peróns (Justicialist Party, PJ)
 - 1949, adverse trade conditions
 - By mid-1950s, Peronism develops a conflictive relationship with key actors: Church, military, middle and upper classes. Peronist supporters attack political enemies.
 - In 1955, the military forced Perón to resign and leave the country. Peron's party and unions are outlawed.

Perón in Exile

- In 1958, a Radical President, Arturo Frondizi is elected, largely by striking a deal with peronist supporters.
 - Stabilization policies to face balance-of-payments crisis; alienates peronistas, but improves the economy; calls for elections in 1962 and peronistas, who are allowed to run, win.
- 1963 military coup, a Radical president takes power (Arturo Illia). In 1965 congressional elections, Peronist party wins again a majority. Perón begins planning a return from exile.
- 1966 military coup

Mexico: PRI

The nationalist-populist regime under the PRI (1929-2000)

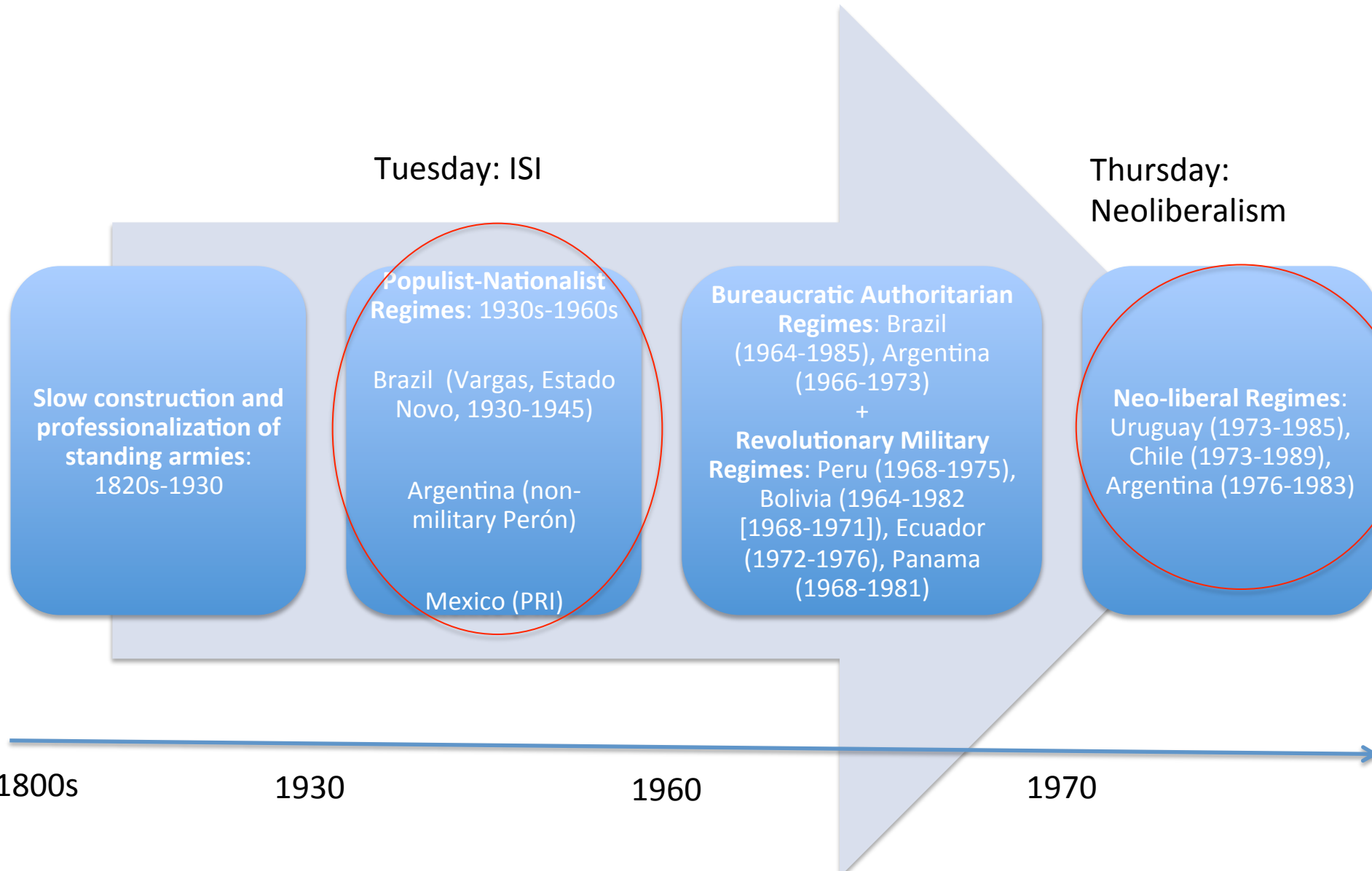
- A consequence of the Mexican Revolution
- The construction of a pragmatic party-state under the PNR-PRM-PRI (1929-2000)
- A corporatist structure to “institutionalize the revolution” and preempt conflicts within the “revolutionary family”; four pillars: military, peasants, workers, bureaucrats
- A pragmatic, non-ideological, nationalist state-building model
- The “Mexican Miracle” under ISI from 1940s-1970s

Break

Authoritarianism in Latin America

- The 20th Century in Latin America was characterized by the predominance of authoritarian governments.
- The military played a central role: sometimes taking power directly, sometimes imposing civilian leaders.
- These regimes were at times populist (seeking the support of the lower classes and building alliances with workers and peasants) and at times conservative (building alliances with landed and industrial interests).
- The kind of authoritarian regimes that would emerge at specific points in time would be associated with larger historical processes:
 - The Great Depression and labour incorporation (1930s)
 - The Cold War (1950s-1980s)
 - The global economic crises of the 1970s and 1980s

Stages of Authoritarianism in Latin America



Classification of Military Involvement in Politics

	“Leftist” (Populist)	“Rightist” (Oligarchical)
Recurrent involvement during the 20 th Century	Praetorian Militaries: Argentina, Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala	
Exceptional involvement during the 20 th Century	Revolutionary Military Regimes: Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia?, Panama	Neo-Liberal Military Regimes: Chile, Uruguay

Patrimonial Sultanistic Dictatorships: Haiti, Paraguay, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic

Non Military Authoritarian Regime: Mexico

Post- Civil War Democracies: Costa Rica, Colombia, Venezuela

Praetorian Militaries Regimes: Brazil, Argentina, El Salvador, Guatemala

- Brazil
 - 1930-1945, Estado Novo under Getulio Vargas
 - 1964-1985, Doctrine of National Security (bureaucratic-authoritarian regime)
- Argentina
 - Military interventions bookending Perón's government (1943-1946; 1955-1958).
 - 1946-1955, Peronism
 - 1966-1973, military rule under Onganía (bureaucratic-authoritarian regime)
 - 1976-1983, military junta under Videla (neo-liberal military regime)
- El Salvador & Guatemala, repeated military interventions, often financed by foreign capital (United Fruit Company) throughout the period. Both countries end facing bloody civil wars during the 1980s.

Counter-Revolutionary (Neo-Liberal) Regimes: Chile & Uruguay

- Chile, under Pinochet (1973-1989), neo-liberal military regime, high levels of coercion and persecution of dissidents, free trade and privatizations
- Uruguay, under the civic-military regime (1973-1985), neo-liberal military regime, high levels of coercion and persecution of dissidents, free trade and privatizations

Revolutionary Military Regimes: Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Panama

- Peru, (although previous military interventions existed) under Velasco (1968-1975)
- Bolivia, previous experience in 1952 with the MNR, between 1968 and 71 a short period of “leftist” policies by the military regime (although part of a longer period of military rule, from 1964-1985)
- Ecuador, under Rodríguez Lara, between 1972-1976
- Panama, under Torrijos, between 1972-1981

Patrimonial or Sultanistic Dictatorships: Cuba, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Paraguay

- Cuba, under Batista (1952-59)
- Dominican Republic, under Trujillo (1930-1961)
- Haiti, under François (1957-1971) & Jean-Claude Duvalier (1971-1986)
- Paraguay, under Stroessner (1954-1989)
- Nicaragua, under Anastasio Somoza Sr. (1936-56) & Anastasio Somoza Debayle Jr. (1956-1979)

Non-Military Authoritarian Regimes: Mexico

- Mexican Revolution 1910-1917
- The construction of a pragmatic party-state under the PNR-PRM-PRI (1929-2000)
- Corporatist structure; four pillars: military, peasants, workers, bureaucrats
- Period of ISI (1930s-1980s); neo-liberal opening (1982-2000)

Electoral Democracies: Costa Rica, Colombia, Venezuela

- Colombia after “La Violencia”, National Front (1958-1974) means joint rule by liberals and conservatives, but pushes other forces out of the formal political institutions.
- Venezuela after 10 years of military dictatorship, “Punto Fijo” agreement (1958) means that main parties (COPEI, AD, URD) will respect electoral results and share political offices.
- Costa Rica, after Civil War, abolition of the military and democratic transition.