

TWILIGHT OF THE PINK TIDE?



South America's Political Orientation

Over the past several years, Latin America appears to have rejected the leftist populism that punctuated its political landscape. Brazil and Argentina, however, will probably swing back to the left by the end of the decade.

■ Countries with leftist or populist governments

2007



2016



The Turning Point?

- 1994 = era of American optimism
 - End of the Cold War and the Soviet Union (1991)
 - Passage of NAFTA
 - December = 34 nation-states start to negotiate the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas)



The Turning Point?

- Problems with the FTAA:
 - Environmental concerns
 - Labor dislocations
 - Food insecurity, availability of medicine
 - More power for foreign corporations



The Turning Point?

- 2005 = FTAA was supposed to be implemented, but . . .
 - Leftist governments in Latin America, with the support of Leftist organizations/activists mobilized against it
 - Monumental victory for the “pink tide”
- Why no longer-lasting mobilization?
 - Movement tied itself to political leaders/parties
 - No lasting international organization

Twilight of the Pink Tide?



- 2012-present = economic problems for Latin America
 - Chinese imports slowed
 - After 2014, decline in oil prices
- In Venezuela . . .
 - 2013 = Hugo Chávez died; Nicolás Maduro became President
 - Still embraces socialism, but with even more repression
 - Economy is falling apart



Twilight of the Pink Tide?



- In Bolivia . . .
 - Movement Toward Socialism helped elect Evo Morales in 2005
 - Very vocal critic of capitalism, but also very fiscally conservative
 - Middle class has grown, but the wealthy remain very wealthy
 - Shift in rhetoric from societal transformation to economic stability
- In Argentina . . .
 - 2015 = Mauricio Macri won the Presidency
 - Pro-business, pro-free market, anti-protectionist
 - Immediately begins huge austerity measures
 - 2019 = election of Alberto Fernández



Twilight of the Pink Tide?

- In Brazil . . .
 - August 2016 = impeachment of Dilma Rousseff
 - Michel Temer became President
 - Immediately began implementing austerity measures
 - 2018 = election of Jair Bolsonaro



Twilight of the Pink Tide?

- Why the decline of the Left?
 - Primarily focused on US imperialism
 - Only nationalized foreign businesses
 - Rich stayed very rich
 - Increasing reliance on China
 - Leftist movements often resulted in political tribalism



The Right Leans to Its Left?



- Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018)
 - Increased taxes for social programs
- Guatemala's President Jimmy Morales (2016-present)
 - More access to free medicine
- Mexico's Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI)
 - Loosened regulations, austere budget for 2017
 - Massive backlash, political unpopularity

