



Politics in Latin America

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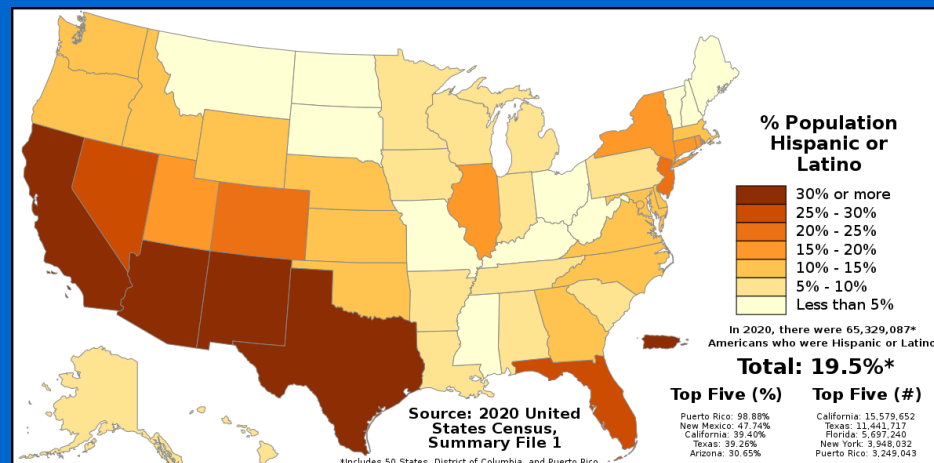
What is Latin America?

- North America: 1
- Central America: 7
- South America: 13
- Caribbean: 18



Why is Latin America Important?

- Geographic proximity – part of the Western Hemisphere
- Shared cultural, religious, and political traditions
- Increasing demographic impact due to migration
- Two largest trading partner nations in the Americas
- Rising security concerns due to political transformations occurring throughout the region



Facts about Latin America

- Over 650 million people (8.4% world pop.)
- Over 8 million sq.miles of land
- GDP of over 5 trillion dollars (7.2% world GDP)
- Main languages: Spanish and Portuguese
- Main religion: Roman Catholic (57%)
- Largest cities in millions: Sao Paulo (22.4); Mexico City (22); Buenas Aires (15.4); Rio de Janeiro (13.6); Bogota (11.3); Lima (11)

The Reality of Latin America

- Poverty
- Mal-distribution of wealth
- History of authoritarian governments
- Domination of wealth and political power by the few
- Exclusion of the majority until recently
- Corruption
- Rise of populist leaders
- Great potential – but problems to overcome



Colonial Powers in the America

- Spain
- Portugal
- Britain
- France
- Netherlands
- Denmark
- Russia
- Germany



The Oligarchy



The Church
The Government
The Military
Large Landowners



Colonial Society

Peninsulares
(Gachupines)



Criollos



Indígenas

Mestizos



Mulattos



Negros

Colonial Economy

- MERCANTILISM: Colonies exist to benefit the mother country
- Royal monopolies + Limited manufacturing + Export and trade-based economy = limited internal economic development
- Sale of public office: personal enrichment, a business opportunity. Charging for public services expected, corruption common
- Notions of public service mixed with motive of personal profit.

Consequence of Independence

- Fragmentation!
- Bolívar: “America is ungovernable. Those who serve the Revolution plough the sea. The only thing to do in America is to emigrate”
- Principal causes: the rise of the caudillos and the liberal/conservative split
- Hybrid political institutions – “right to rule in lieu of a king”



Emperor
Agustín de
Iturbide –
Mexico
1823-1824

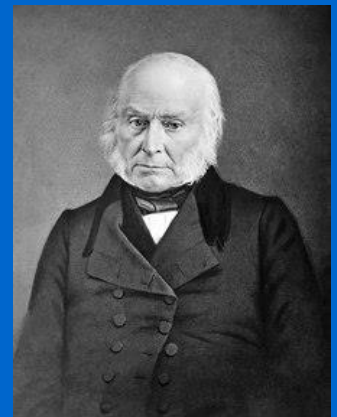
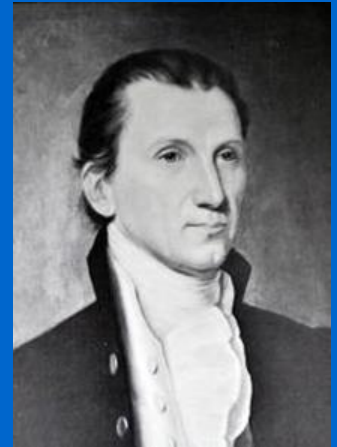
Rise of Caudillos 1800s/1900s

- Regional strongmen – Revolutionary Generals
 - O’Higgins – Chile
 - **Santa Ana – Mexico**
 - San Martín – Argentina
 - Stroessner – Paraguay
 - Vargas - Brazil



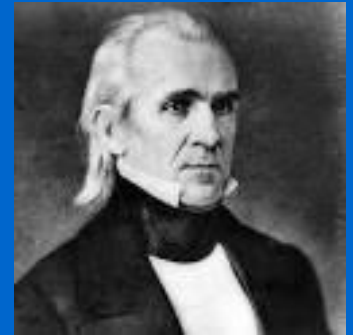
Monroe Doctrine 1823

- James Monroe's State of the Union Address
 - European powers were no longer to colonize or interfere with the affairs of the newly independent states of the Americas
 - The U.S. would not interfere with existing colonies or their dependencies in the Western Hemisphere.
 - However, any attempt by a European nation to oppress or control any nation in the western hemisphere would be seen as an act of aggression and the U.S. would intervene.
 - Did the U.S. have the means to enforce it?



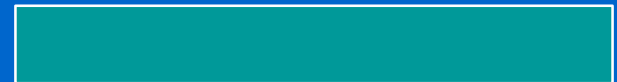
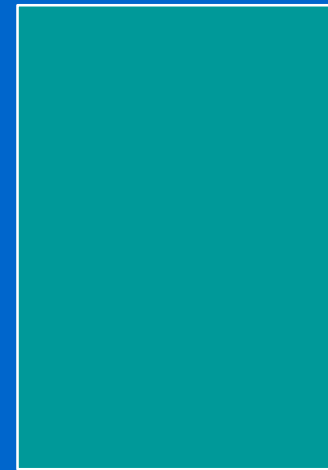
Transition of Empire

- 1824 – Congress of Panama
 - Bolívar’s Pan-American Confederation (w/o U.S.)
- 1846-1848 – Mexican -American War
- 1896 – The Calvo Clause
 - Right to freedom from intervention and absolute equality between foreigners and nationals
- 1898 - Spanish-American War
 - U.S. gains Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines
- 1901 – The Platt Amendment – Cuba status
- 1904 – The Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine
 - Gunboat diplomacy – “the big stick”



Mexican-American War

- 1846-1848
- *la intervención norteamericana*
 - “war of northern aggression”
- Loss of ½ of national territory
- Another foreign occupation
- Chapultepec Castle and the *niños heroes*
- First US president to “visit” Mexico?



Liberal-Conservative Split

- The context behind contemporary political developments in Latin America are related to:
 - *La Violencia* in Colombia (1948-1958)
 - Cold War legacies
 - Decades of civil warfare in 19th and 20th century
 - Church-State issues
 - Political fragmentation of Spanish America

Rise of Armed Groups



Colombia

- Assassination of Liberal leader Jorge Eliécer Gaitán
- Street Riots – 3,000-5,000 killed
- Beginning of Pan American Conference (OAS)
- Ushered in period called La Violencia (1948-1958) – over 200,000 killed
- US view – Communist-inspired
- Young Fidel's role?
- Rise of Leftist Groups



Bogotazo - 1948

Revolutionary Violence

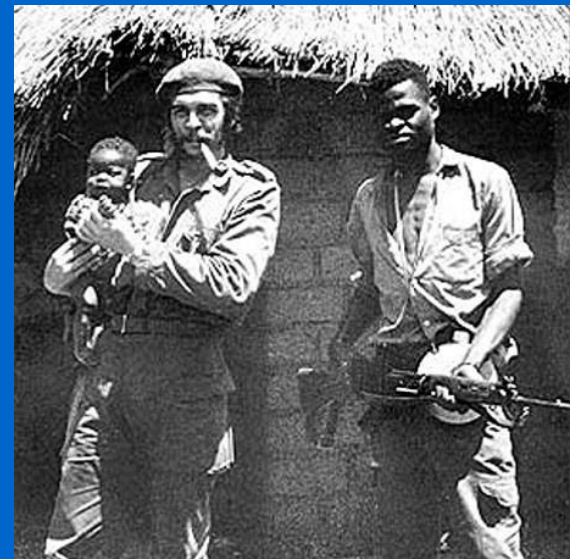
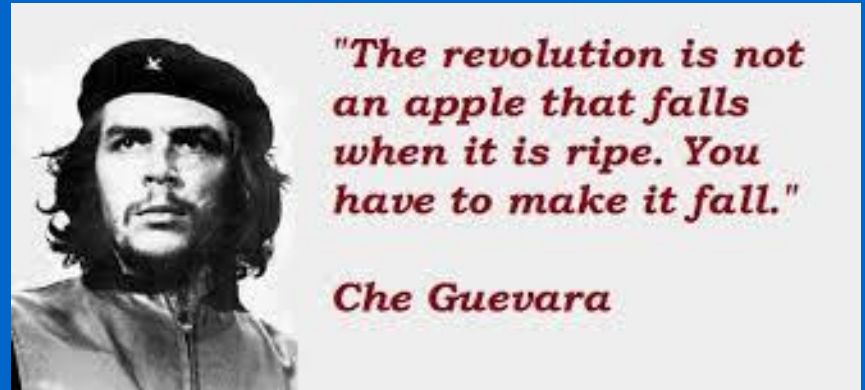


- Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – Popular Army (FARC-EP)
- April 19 Movement (M-19-Colombia)
- National Liberation Army (ELN - Colombia)
- Tupac Amaru (MRTA -Peru)
- Sendero Luminoso (SL-Peru)
- Tupamaros (Uruguay)
- Revolutionary Left (MIR-Chile)



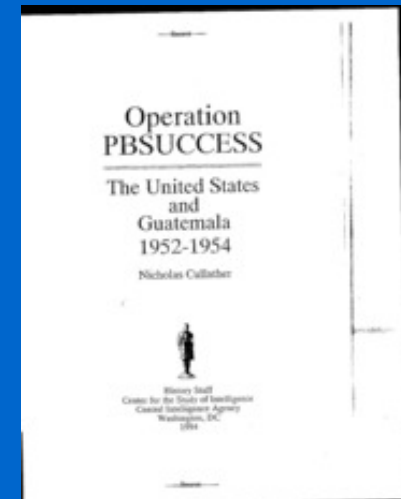
Revolutionary Movements

- Soviet COMINTERN
- Cuban intervention
 - Foco strategy
 - Africa and Latin America
 - Killed in Bolivia (1967)



The Cold War in Latin America

- Guatemala (1954)
 - United Fruit Company
 - John Foster and Alan Dulles
 - “Duck test” – AMB Patterson
 - Overthrow of Arbenz Govt
 - Role of CIA in supporting coup by COL Armas
 - Operation PB Success



The Cuban Revolution

- Overthrow of Batista (1959)
 - U.S. originally tried to coopt Castro
 - Change in Eisenhower strategy
 - Use tactics like Guatemala
- Bay of Pigs intervention (1961)
 - Planned by Eisenhower, approved by Kennedy
 - Operation Mongoose
 - CIA attempts to assassinate Castro
- Cuban Missile Crisis (1962)



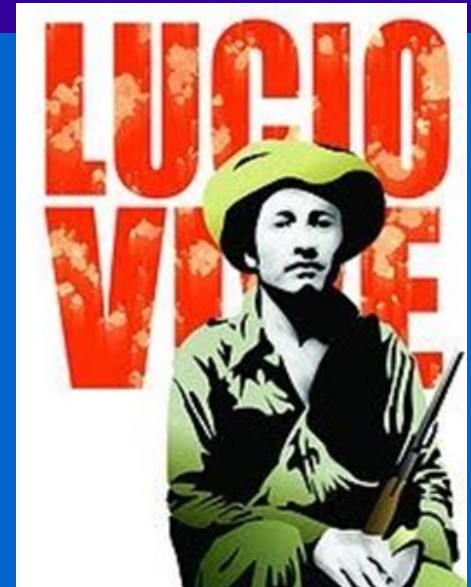
The Cold War in Latin America

- Dominican Republic (1965)
 - Assassination of Trujillo (1930-1961)
 - “our SOB?”
 - Operation Power Pack
 - US military intervention



Insurgency in Mexico

- 1910-1920s - Mexican Revolution – rise of revolutionary heroes (Villa, Zapata, etc.)
- 1960s – *El Pacto* with Fidel
- 1970s – Lucio Cabañas Army of the Poor in Guerrero
- 1994 – Zapatista Uprising in Chiapas
- 2014 – Zapatismo vive



Peru's Leftist Coup

- Revolutionary Military Regime (1968-1980)
 - General Velasco (1968-1975)
 - General Morales Bermúdez (1975-1980)
- Pro-Soviet/Pro-Cuban Regime
 - Enacted social programs
 - Military transformation



Chile (1973)

- Overthrow of democratically-elected president Salvador Allende by military coup
- US viewed as complicit in fomenting the coup by CIA-led operations
- Pinochet conducts a purge of the opposition to his regime (disappeared)
 - Remains in power until 1990



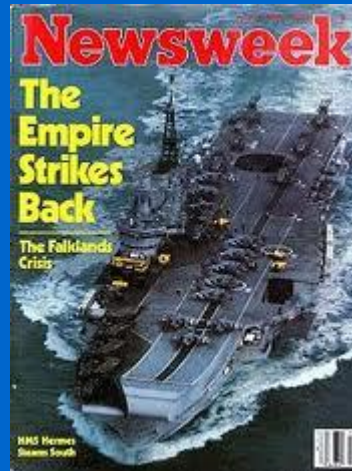
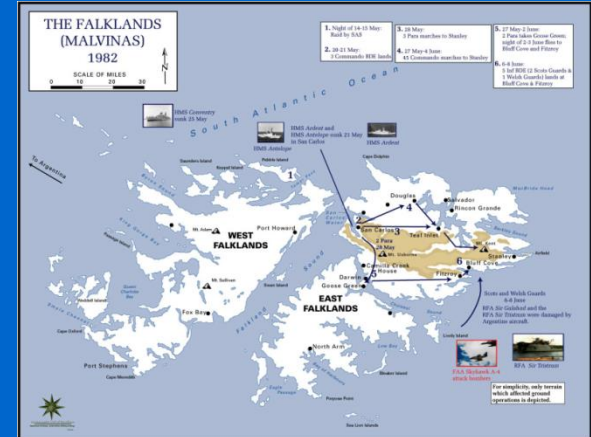
Central American Wars

- Stopping the “Red Spread”
- Focus of U.S. foreign policy throughout much of the 1980s
- Fall of Nicaragua to FSLN in 1979
- FMLN in El Salvador
- URNG in Guatemala
- Proxy war in Nicaragua
- Iran-Contra



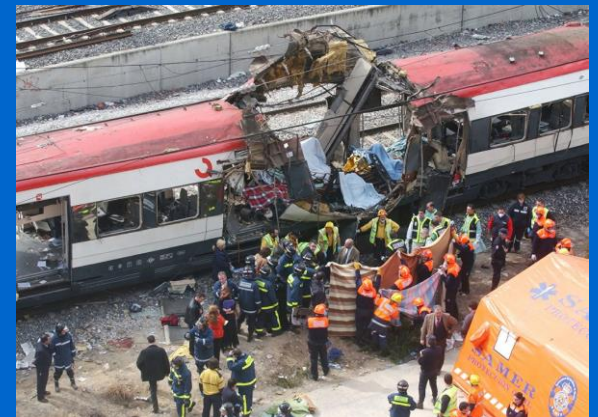
Falklands/Malvinas War

- UK vs Argentina 1983
- Historical territorial dispute
- Argentine military regime
- US “neutrality”
- Argentina invoked Monroe Doctrine
- Argentine defeat
- Disgraced military



Post Cold War and 9/11

- Persian Gulf War Reaction from Mexico
- Mexico and Chile in UN Security Council
 - Vote against U.S. invasion of Iraq
- Coalition of the Willing - 2001-2013
 - El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, Dominican Republic, Colombia
 - “Latin American Brigade” under Spain
- Change in U.S. policy in Colombia
 - “Narcoterrorism” – new threat
 - Counterdrug and counterterrorism



NORTHCOM Reaction



“It looks like the United States is shitting on Mexico”

-- Mexican academic



2012 Senate Foreign Relations Committee Hearings on Terrorist Attacks Globally

Changing Hemisphere Relations

- US “pivot” away from Latin America
- Rise of “Pink Tide” – Chavez influence
- Benign neglect under Bush
- Confusion and embarrassment under Obama
 - Mexico Crisis 2009
 - Honduras Coup 2009
 - 6th Summit of the Americas 2012
 - Hillary cuts loose in Cartagena
 - Prostitutes and security details



Another “Lost” Decade

- End of Washington Consensus
- Rise of Leftist-populist leaders – “bad boys” of LATAM
- Increased Anti-Americanism
- Growing Chinese influence region
- Increased Iranian/Hezbollah presence
- Soaring criminal and drug trafficking activity



1958

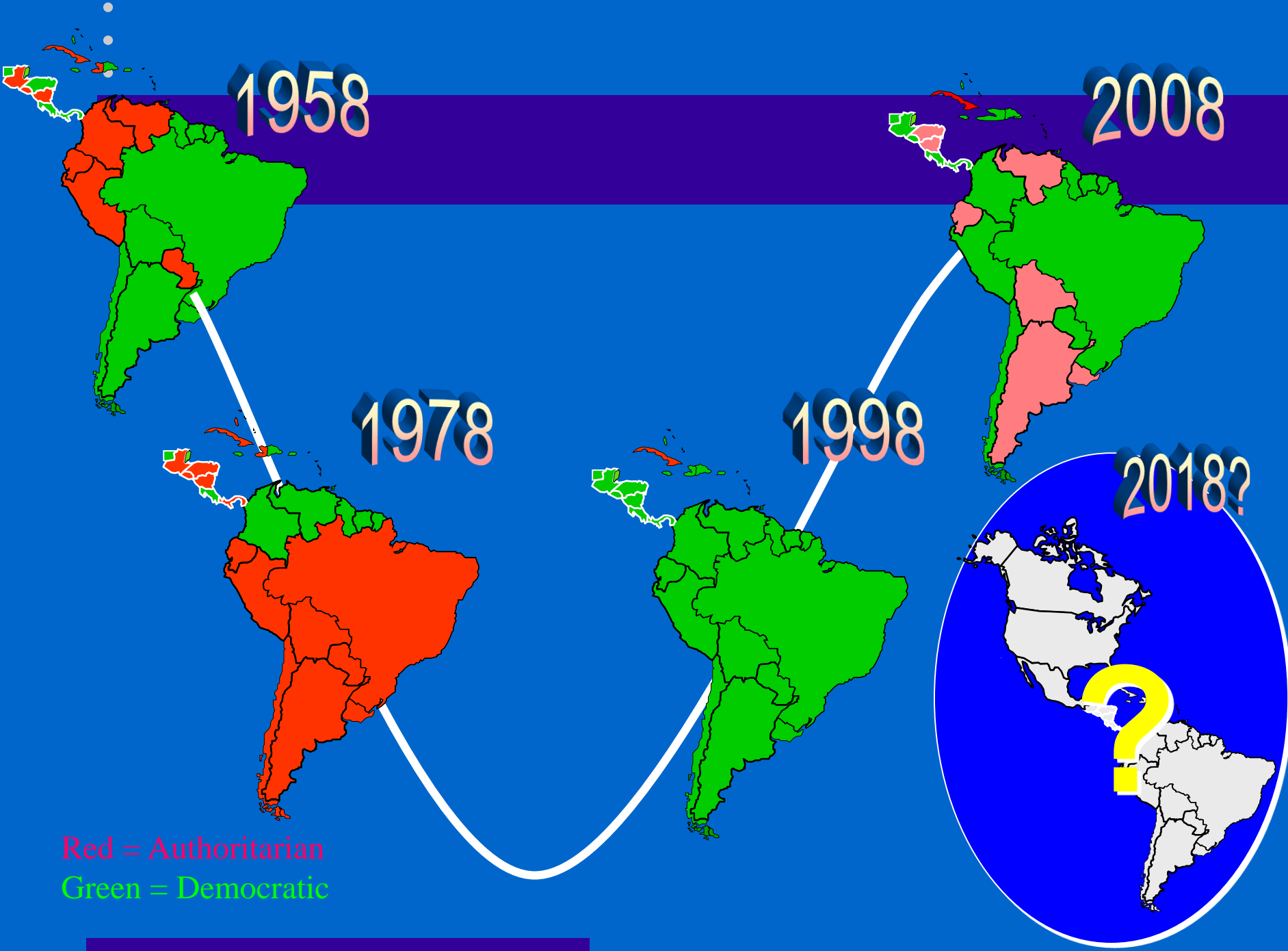
2008

1978

1998

2018?

Red = Authoritarian
Green = Democratic





Jorge Casteñada-
 "Politics in Latin
 America," *Great
 Decisions 2023*

New “Old” Leftist Leaders

- Andrés Manuel López Obrador (Mexico)
- Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (Brazil)
- Daniel Ortega (Nicaragua)
- Gustavo Petro (Colombia)



New Leftist Leaders

- Xiomara Castro (Honduras)
- Nayib Bukele (El Salvador)
- Gabriel Boric (Chile)
- Dina Boluarte (Peru)



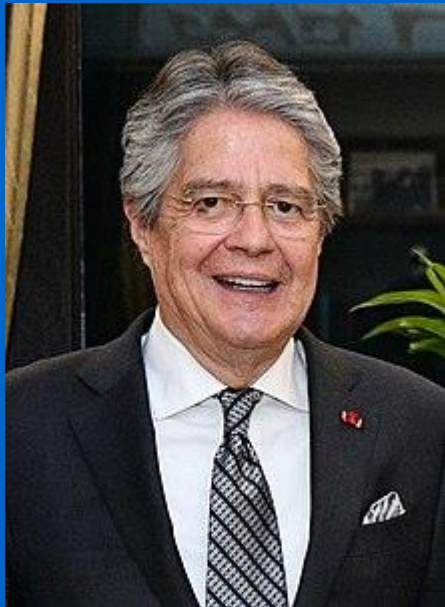
Legacy Leftist Leaders

- Miguel Díaz-Canel (Cuba)
- Nicolas Maduro (Venezuela)
- Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (Argentina)



Right-Leaning Leaders

- Guillermo Lasso (Ecuador)
- Alejandro Giammattei (Guatemala)
- Rodrigo Chaves Robles (Costa Rica)
- Mario Abdo Benítez (Paraguay)



US Foreign Policy Challenges

- Cuba's political transition
- Colombia's peace process
- Venezuela's humanitarian crisis
- Haiti's implosion and violence
- Peru's political crisis
- Central America's crime and drug trafficking
- Growing Chinese influence in region
- Rising nationalism and identity politics



Conclusion

- Region remains important to U.S., despite a lack of attention by political leadership
- Migration is an “intermestic” issue
- Insecurity and violence likely to grow
- U.S. must avoid alienating leftist regimes based on old stereotypes, but promote democracy and human rights



Sources of Information on Latin America

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- Latin American Studies Association (<http://lasa.international.pitt.edu/>)
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- Miami Herald (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/nation-world/world/world/americas/>)
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- U.S. Department of State (<http://www.state.gov/p/wha/>)
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