

PSCI 116

Political Change in the Third World

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Today focused on three key themes that run through the different readings:

- ① Democracy
- ② Inequality
- ③ Corruption

Table 3.2. Brazilian Political Structure Since Independence, cont.

DEMOCRATIC REGIME (1946–1964)	Directly elected president; weak federation and powerful national legislature	Multiparty system with 13 parties; increasing polarization at end of period; PR electoral system	Frequent friction between military factions and civilian governments; threats of military intervention	Fairly high, increasing even in rural areas; population 45% urban in 1960	Military coup with substantial popular backing in middle strata ousts President Goulart
MILITARY REGIME (1964–1985)	Republican form; presidency <i>de facto</i> monopoly of the military; nominations ratified by Electoral College only up to 1985; federation severely weakened	Compulsory two-party system from 1965 on; partial return to pluralism in 1979, still barring Communist parties; PR electoral system	Unmistakable hegemony of military as institution, guaranteeing “technocratic” governments	Very high; population 67% urban in 1980	Very gradual, negotiated transition culminating in election of Tancredo Neves (civilian, oppositionist) through Electoral College
NEW REPUBLIC (1985–)	Direct election of president reestablished as constitutional principle; growing influence of states and legislature; Constitutional Congress, 1987	Multiparty system; no legal restrictions on Marxist parties; moderates (PMDB) control both chambers, early 1987; PR electoral system	Civilian control formally guaranteed; military influence remains strong	(Very high)	

Was the move to democratize sudden?

- Brazilian history can be told as a series of steps toward state formation or toward democracy
- Brazilian abertura (opening) through elections; not a result of sharp mass mobilization and was not precipitated by dramatic or external events
- Gradual accumulation of pressures was channeled through the electoral process
- Opposition was capable of extracting imp't concessions while at the same time organizing itself as a powerful electoral force
- Yes protests and demonstrations, but fairly peaceful given flexibility of rules, shows that this would be impossible w/o some level of institutional dev

Is a democratic transition the end goal?

- Brazil moved rapidly toward instituting democracy but failed to consolidate democracy by reducing socioeconomic inequality
- Strategy of industrial growth rather than income redistribution
- Brazil = mixed success, partial democracy overall
- Ethnic separatism has been virtually nonexistent in modern Brazil
- But Instability of democracy amid rapid social mobilization and extreme inequality
- Despite that, strong electoral competition; electoral tradition
- Large scale democracy will not become stable in Brazil until we have strong political parties
- Democracy not the end, it is the means to the end of consolidation

- There are LOTS of theories of democracy - both democratization, process of becoming a democracy, and democratic consolidation, how you maintain a democracy once you have it
- New theories of authoritarianism and democratic backsliding.
- Could have a whole course on this; we will just touch on a few theories that are relevant to our material and the L. American case that we are discussing this week.
- In fact, a lot of the political science literature on democratization comes out of Latin America

Theories of Democratization

Lipset (1959)

- democracy emerged in societies as they modernized as part of the process of urbanization, industrialization, increased education
- inspired by modernization theory
- Increased wealth \implies democracy

Theories of Democratization

O'Donnell (1973)

- Challenges Lipset and modernization theory
- He argues that the collapse of democracy in L. America in 1960s/70s (Brazilian coup 1964) undermined the income-democracy relationship and that modernization \neq democracy
- Many of the wealthy countries in LA (Brazil/Argentina) were the ones w/ the military coups
- social conflict, often class and distributive conflict, has been behind most of the democratic collapses and coups in L. America

Theories of Democracy and Inequality

Boix (2003)

- Inequality harms both democratization and consolidation
- Democracy prevails when either economic equality or capital mobility are high
- Authoritarianism prevails where the level of inequality and the lack of capital mobility (assets tied to land) are high
- Equal societies more likely to democratize than unequal societies (distributive conflicts)

Theories of Democracy and Inequality

Acemoglu and Robinson (2006)

- Inequality inhibits consolidation but relates to democratization through an inverted U-shaped curve
- Equal countries do not democratize b/c the potential redistribution and expropriation gains are small and the population does not threaten to revolt. The elites can maintain the regime w/o facing the threat of revolution
- At intermediate levels of inequality, revolution becomes appealing to the population; elites are unwilling to use repression b/c redistribution is relatively inexpensive and they democratize
- At higher levels of inequality the cost of redistribution surpasses that of repressing revolts; the elites repress the population and there is no democratization

Inequality in Brazil

Lots of causes and roots of inequality in Brazil;
political/economic/cultural causes

- Colonial legacies
- Govt policies
- Subnational/regional variation
- Modern day income distribution

Overall inequality

- Levels of inequality and mass poverty in Brazil are among the worst in the world
- Causes of persistent inequality are cultural, political and economic
- Nature of world economy:
- Increasing income gap between skilled and unskilled workers
- Rapid industrialization is capital rather than labor intensive

Inequality in Brazil

Very unequal in terms of income inequality

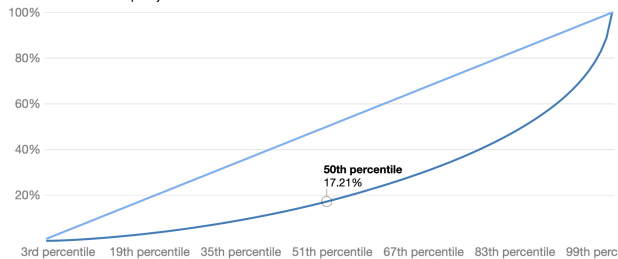
- Measured with the Gini coefficient; number between 0 and 1
- Zero is perfect equality; 1 is perfect inequality
- Perfect equality means everyone has the same income
- Perfect inequality means 1 person has all the income, others have none
- Ideally, x percent of the population should control x percent of wealth / income

Income Inequality for Brazil

Lorenz curve: Brazil

Income distribution in 2015

■ Brazil ■ Perfect equality



Horizontal axis: population percentile by income; vertical axis: cumulative income

Source: [World Bank](#)

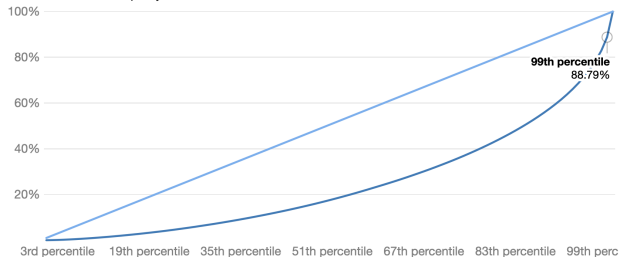
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Gini Score by Country

► Gini pct by country

Inequality of Race?

Inequality of income, inequality of opportunity; regardless race is a critical part of the story [▶ Al Jazeera video on race](#)

Corruption in Brazil

► Economist corruption