How Left a Turn? Legacies of the Neoliberal State in Latin America

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Abstract
In the 1980s and 1990s, the Latin American region experienced a profound shift in development ideologies that resulted in the creation of a new type of state: the Latin American neoliberal state. This state emerged in three stages: the stabilization stage—focused on balance of payments and austerity; the structural adjustment stage—which was more broadly and deeply focused on changing the structure and culture of society; and the institutional turn—which was an acknowledgment that the neoliberal state had not effectively dealt with poverty, inequality, or the quality of institutions that integrated market, society, and polity. Beginning in the early 2000s, an electoral shift to the left swept through the region and was characterized by antagonistic rhetoric towards neoliberal policies. This study compares the historical developments of Argentina, Ecuador, and Peru and shows that in cases where the neoliberal state was fully developed, the leftist shift either did not occur (Peru) during the 2000s, or where it did occur (Argentina) did not constitute a break with the neoliberal state but rather formed a fourth stage of neoliberalism. In this stage, the government sought to increase spending on some social programs but did so in ways that legitimated the wider neoliberal state rather than creating a new developmental model that would move beyond neoliberalism.

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“Neoliberal” policies did not affect Latin America because they were semi-established or were not established at all. Let me explain: Until the 1990s, the prevailing economic system in Latin America was the state capitalism, which consists of the State having all the means of production considered important or strategic (public services, health, natural resources), leaving the rest of the economic activity in private hands. Until the 1990s, the prevailing economic system in Latin America was the state capitalism, which consists of the State having all the means of production considered important or strategic (public services, health, natural resources), leaving the rest of the economic activity in private hands. Naturally this created a state monopoly that was not efficient. Recent papers in Latin America’s left turn. Papers. People. The Government of Beans: Regulating Life in the Age of Monocrops. What have been the legacies of the left turn and how can they be measured? Who are the key actors shaping the new ‘anti-populist’ discourse and in what sense are they different from the social more. Has the left turn come to a definite end? The event shook the neoliberal order in Bolivia and was closely followed by the massive uprisings of October 2003 that toppled the President, opening political opportunities for the rise of Evo Morales and his Movement Towards Socialism (in power since 2006). I analyse these events and their contentious performances to suggest that they targeted the political system rather than the institutions of neoliberal governance. Turning Privatization Upside Down: Petrobras as an Example of Successful State Capitalism. Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Vol. 35, Issue. 69, p. 231. Paths to Financial Policy Diffusion: Statist Legacies in Latin America’s Globalization. International Organization, Vol. 66, Issue. 1, p. 95. The legacies of partial possession: From agrarian struggle to neoliberal restructuring in Mexico and Colombia. International Journal of Comparative Sociology, Vol. 53, Issue. 5-6, p. 345. An alternative analysis, relying on a dichotomous coding of left versus nonleft executives, produced very similar results.