

# Democracy in Latin America

## First Session

# Introductions



- São Paulo has 12 million inhabitants (taking the metropolitan area into account, 22 million).
- It has the 4th largest population and is the most populous city in the Western and Southern Hemisphere.

# Brazilian Presidential Election



# Why study comparative politics?

- What is systematic comparison?
  - We compare political systems in different countries following a set of parameters.
  - For example, a set presidential democracies. Or a set of personalistic regimes.
- What do we gain from it?
  - Our hope is to understand political phenomena.
  - For example: why are some countries more democratic than others? Or why are some countries more economically developed than others?

# Definitions 1

- **State:** a community that successfully claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory (Weber, 1946).
- **Nation:** an imagined political community that is imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign (Anderson, 1983).
  - Imagined: members never really meet all members
  - Limited: finite, if elastic, boundaries
  - Sovereign: not divinely-ordained, but man-made
  - Community: deep horizontal comradeship

# Definitions 2

- There are nation-states (France), states with two nations (Canada) or nations without states (the Kurds).
- What makes the United States a nation? How about any Latin American country that you are familiar with?

# Definitions 3

- **State capacity:** the ability of a state to impose its rule through the territory and over the population it claims to control.
- **Nation building:** the deliberate effort to connect the state and the nation, and to construct a sense of nationhood in part by defining the role of different racial and ethnic groups in constructs of the national.
- **Patrimonial state:** the state apparatus is an extension of the rulers' private property (jobs in the public sector and the enforcement of rules and regulations are contingent on personal favors).

# State Formation and State Capacity



# Pre-State Formation

- Pre-1500: Zapotec, Teotihuacán, Maya, Toltec, Mixtec, Inca and Aztec in Mesoamerica and the Andean region. In other regions, nomadic tribes.
- 1500-1810: Spanish and Portuguese colonial rule.

# Teotihuacán





# Spanish and Portuguese Colonial Rule

- Both ruled through viceroys, who were envoys of the monarchs.
- The ultimate authority lay outside the region (the monarchs).
- They both took steps to develop administrative bodies. These were patrimonial structures.
- Difference: the Spanish subdivided the areas they controlled, and the Portuguese did not.

# The Formation of Modern States (1810-1875)

- A three-fold process:
  - Independence
  - Anarchy
  - State Formation

# Independence

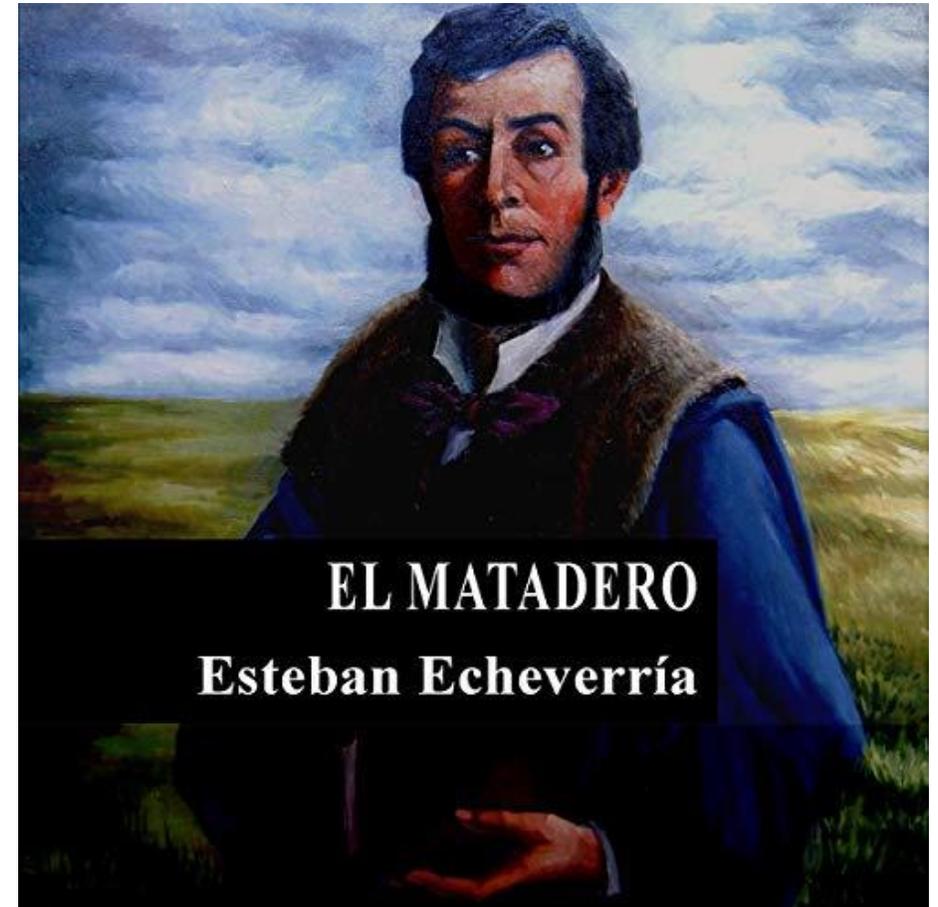
- The movements responded to the Napoleonic invasion of the Iberian Peninsula and the desire of local elites to end the trade monopolies enacted by Spain and Portugal.
- In South America, armies led by Simón Bolívar and José de San Martín played a key role.
- The independence of Brazil was a peculiar, less violent, case.

# Anarchy

- The withdraw of the colonial powers led to the flourishing of a myriad of local and regional caudillos, strongmen capable of mobilizing a sizable group of armed followers.
- Civil wars destroyed much of the productive infrastructure. At the same time, the demand for Latin American raw materials was weak.
- The problem of lack of order: who is in charge?

# *The Slaughterhouse*, Esteban Echeverría

- Argentine author who fought against the dictatorship of Juan Manuel de Rosas.
- *The Slaughterhouse* was written around 1838 during his exile in Uruguay.
- What is the plot?



# *The Slaughterhouse*, Esteban Echeverría

- Topics for discussion:
  - Post-Independence in Argentina: what model of State should be adopted?
  - Unitarians vs. Federalists.
    - The unitarians believed in a unitary liberal state that would modernize quickly through foreign investment, European immigration and free market. They were not religious and did not hold much economic power.
    - The federalists believed in a federation of several provinces. They were xenophobes and very religious. They held strong economic power.
  - Juan Manuel Rosas was a dictator and a caudillo. What does it mean to be a caudillo?

# State Formation

- Studying state formation in the Western European context, Charles Tilly proposed that “war made the state, and the state made war”. Violence -> order.
- “Darwinian geopolitical game”: in a context of anarchy, rulers mobilized resources to engage in war by building state capacity. Example: they imposed taxes on their subjects.
- “The emerging central state penetrated the countryside, destroyed recalcitrant local oligarchies, and upgraded public administrations, making the transition from patrimonial to bureaucratic rule” (Mazzuca, 2011).

# Centeno: What Happened in Latin America?

- Wars in themselves do not make anything (as measured by taxation, Latin American states did not penetrate societies). Why?
- Another source of resources: export of primary goods, borrowing or just inflation.
- Lack of structure (state and economy destroyed by independence wars) and ideology (liberal economic thought did not like a powerful state).

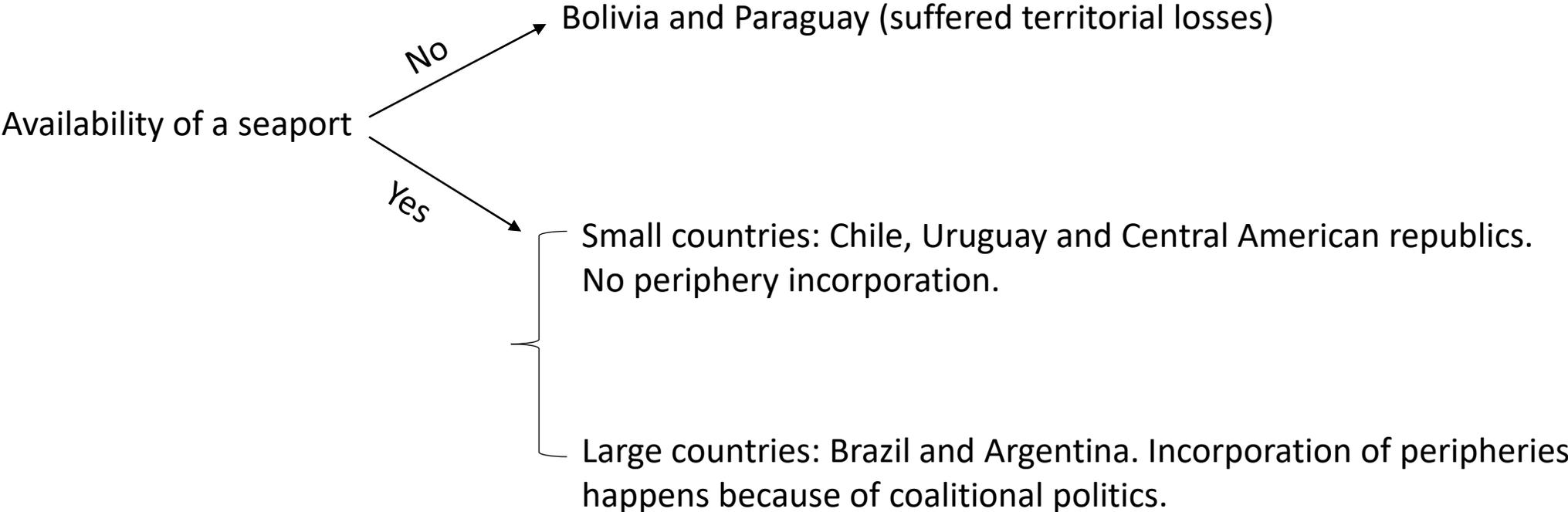
# Mazzuca: it's trade, stupid

- Two key differences:

- 1) Latin American states were built under an international hierarchy, not anarchy.

- 2) States in Western Europe were built before the rise of modern capitalism.

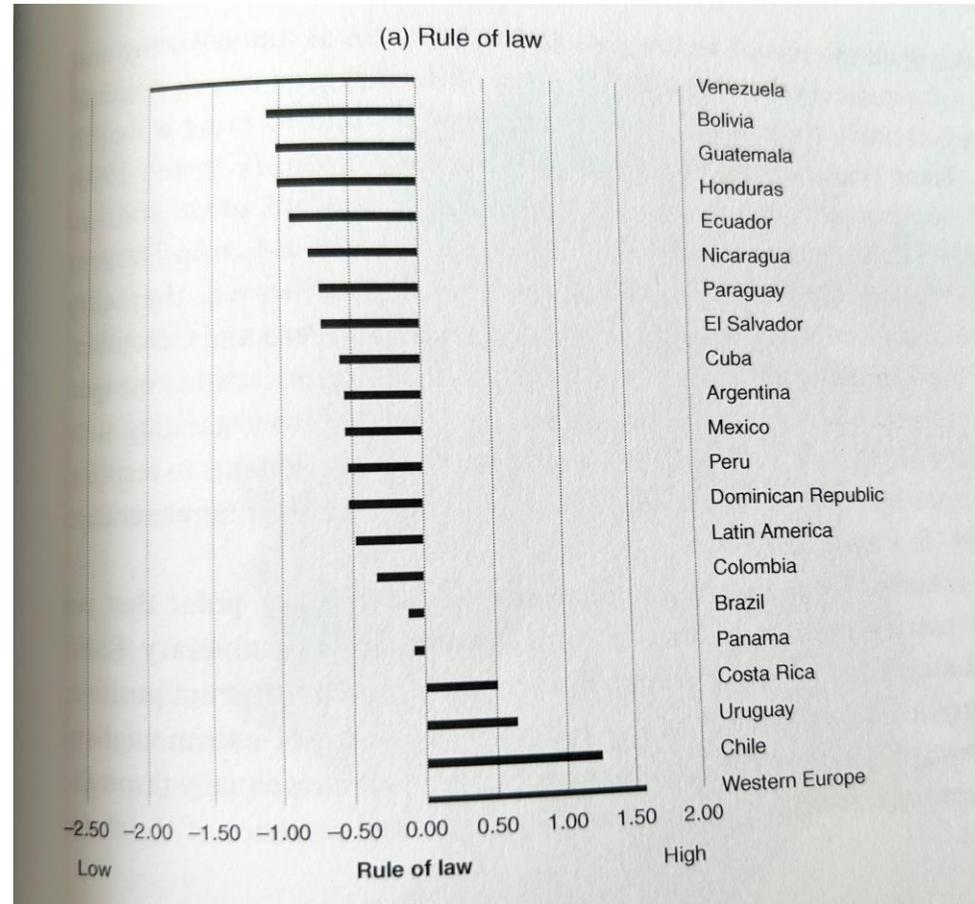
# The role of trade



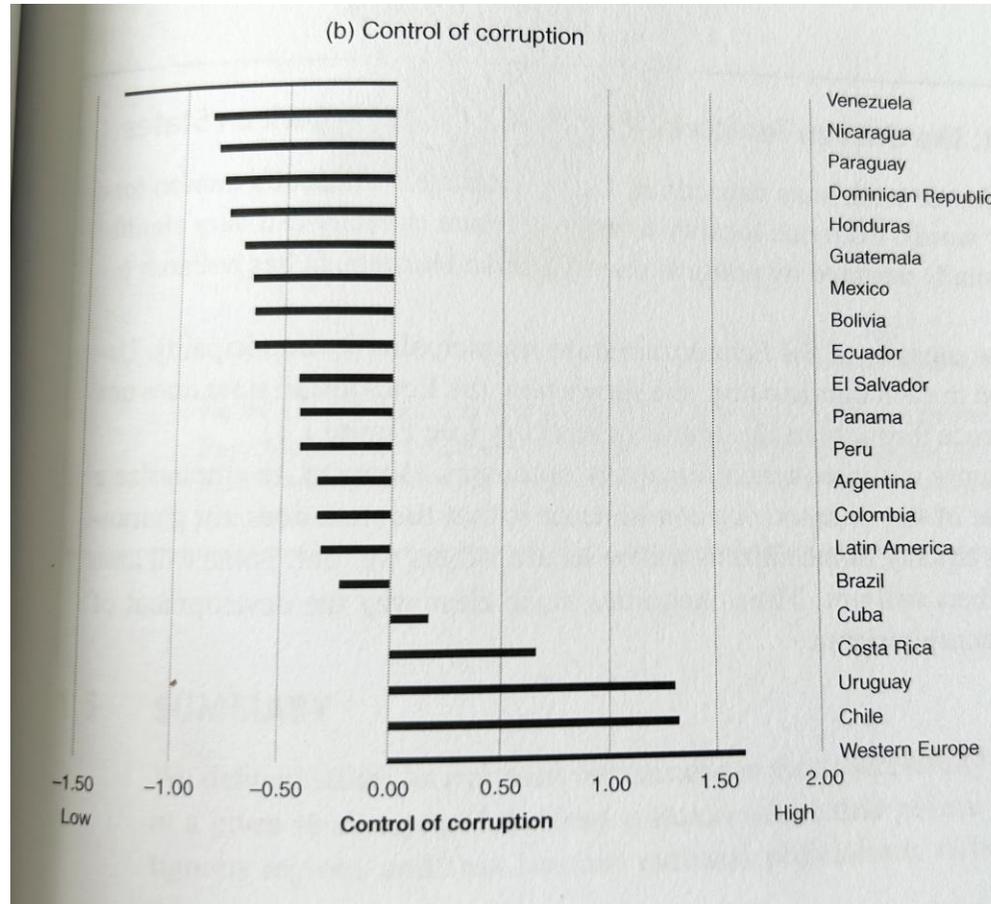
# State Formation and Territorial Governance

- *Rentier Federalism*: instead of competing for private investment, subnational units collude with each other and with national leaders in search for financial aid from the central government.
- *Patrimonialism*: rural oligarchies ruled in a patrimonial fashion at the local level. With the incorporation of the periphery, patrimonialism was transmitted from the local level to the national level.
- How awesome is knowledge accumulation in science? 😊

# State Capacity 1 (2010-2019)



# State Capacity 2 (2010-2019)



# But Why Are States Still Weak?

- Colonial institutions?
- Lack of inter-state wars?
- Territorial consolidation process?

# Nation building in Latin America



# Before Modern States

- The Americas absorbed approximately 10.7 million African slaves. Brazil alone accounted for almost 5 million. Slaves worked in mines and agriculture.
- Before independence, three core groups formed societies: white European settlers, indigenous people and Blacks. Societies were based on racial hierarchy.
- *Mestizaje*: the interbreeding and cultural intermixing of people of different races and ethnicities.

# The End of Slavery in Spanish Colonies

- In the Spanish colonies, slavery ended because of the independence wars. Indians, mestizos, mulatos and even slaves participated.

# The End of Slavery in Brazil

- 1850: Slave trade is abolished because of the pressure from the British.
  - 1871: Law of the Free Womb (all children from slaves were free).
  - 1885: Sexagenarian Law (all slaves over 60 were free).
  - 1888: Golden Law (total emancipation).
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- By the time slavery was abolished, the practice had already begun to decrease due to the modernization of agriculture and increasing migration from cities to rural areas.
  - No concern with the aftermath of the abolition. No integration policies.

# Nation Building 1

- 1880-1930: Elite vision of the nation
  - Idea of the nation based on a model of white, European, civilized nations.
  - Mass migration, racial whitening.
  - Creation of national systems of education and military conscription.

**Table 2.6 The whitening of Brazil and Cuba, 1890–1931**

Country/Year	White	“Mulatto”	Black	Others
Brazil				
1890	44.0	32.4	14.6	9.0
1940	63.5	21.2	14.6	0.7
Cuba				
1899	66.9	17.2	14.9	0.9
1931	72.1	16.2	11.0	0.6

*Note:* The data are the percentage of the total population of each category.  
*Source:* Authors’ elaboration, based on IBGE (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics) census for various years and Andrews 2004: 155.

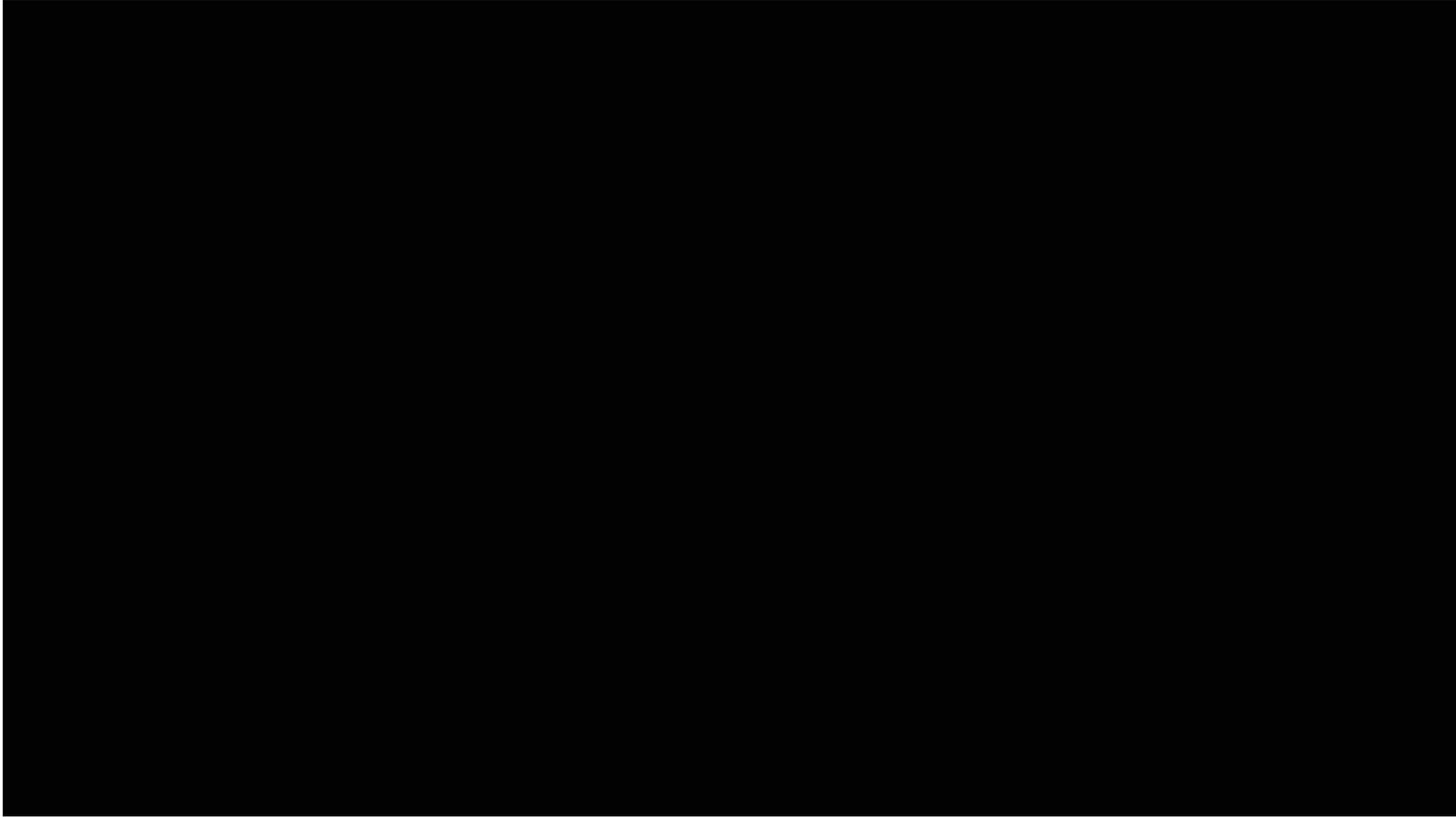
# Nation Building 2

- 1930-1980: National-popular vision of the nation
  - The people as the essence of the nation:
    - Anti-imperialist and anti-oligarch approach
    - Coalitions formed by the lower and middle classes and intellectuals. Political leaders mobilized people from above.
    - Examples: Vargas (Brazil), Peron (Argentina).
  - Embrace of mestizaje. Indigenous civilizations as a source of national pride.
  - Brazil as a racial democracy

# Nation Building 3

- 1980-2010s: Plural vision of the nation
  - Nation as a multicultural construct. That is: minorities should not be expected to assimilate into the dominant culture.
  - Identities of indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants were emphasized.
    - Colombia and Bolivia constitutionally recognize indigenous people in 1991 and 1994
  - Plurinational states (more on this in two weeks).
    - Ecuador declares it has a Plurinational state in 2008. Bolivia in 2009.

# Black in Latin America



# Racism in Brazil

- The misleading idea of a racial democracy.
- The overlap between race and class.