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ARBEITSVORHABEN

The Last Snapshots of the Latin American Revolution: Culture, Politics, and Nostalgia, 1979–1991

When, where, and how did the leftwing revolutionary projects and imaginations end? This project aims to answer this question and shed new light on the history of the leftwing political culture, from the victory of the Sandinista Revolution in 1979 to the critical biennium 1989–1991. This biennium included the Sandinistas' electoral defeat as well as the "democratic revolutions" that swept across Eastern Europe and the collapse of the former Soviet Union. As historian Eric Hobsbawm famously said, that biennium entailed the end of the "short" twentieth century. However, by focusing on that finale, the historiography has thus far sidestepped a thorough examination of the Left's resilience in the 1980s. This study will demonstrate that this political culture in Latin America brought together millions of people of different class origins, ethnic groups, and generations. Although with different modalities and intensities, they continued to work for and believe in revolutionary projects. They sought to reconcile longstanding struggles for socioeconomic equality and anti-imperialism with a renewed agenda centered on democracy and equality in gender, sexuality, and race. Widespread support for the Sandinistas in other regions indicated that some of these projects appealed to leftwing militants and sympathizers in North America and Western Europe as well. This study argues that the (would-be) last snapshots of the Latin American revolution contributed to the persistence and transformation of a global leftwing political culture during the 1980s.

Recommended Reading

Manzano, Valeria. The Age of Youth in Argentina: Culture, Politics, and Sexuality from Perón to Videla. University of North Carolina Press, 2014.

–. Historia de la juventud en la Argentina de los siglos XX y XXI. Siglo XXI Editores, 2025.

–. La última ilusión: La crisis de la revolución en América Latina, 1979–1991. Bielefeld University Press, 2025.