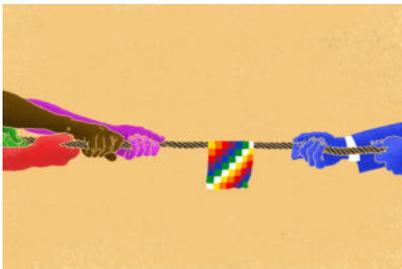
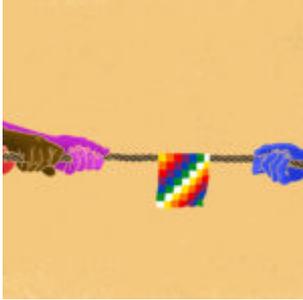


# Walking the Tightrope: Latin America's Pink Tide

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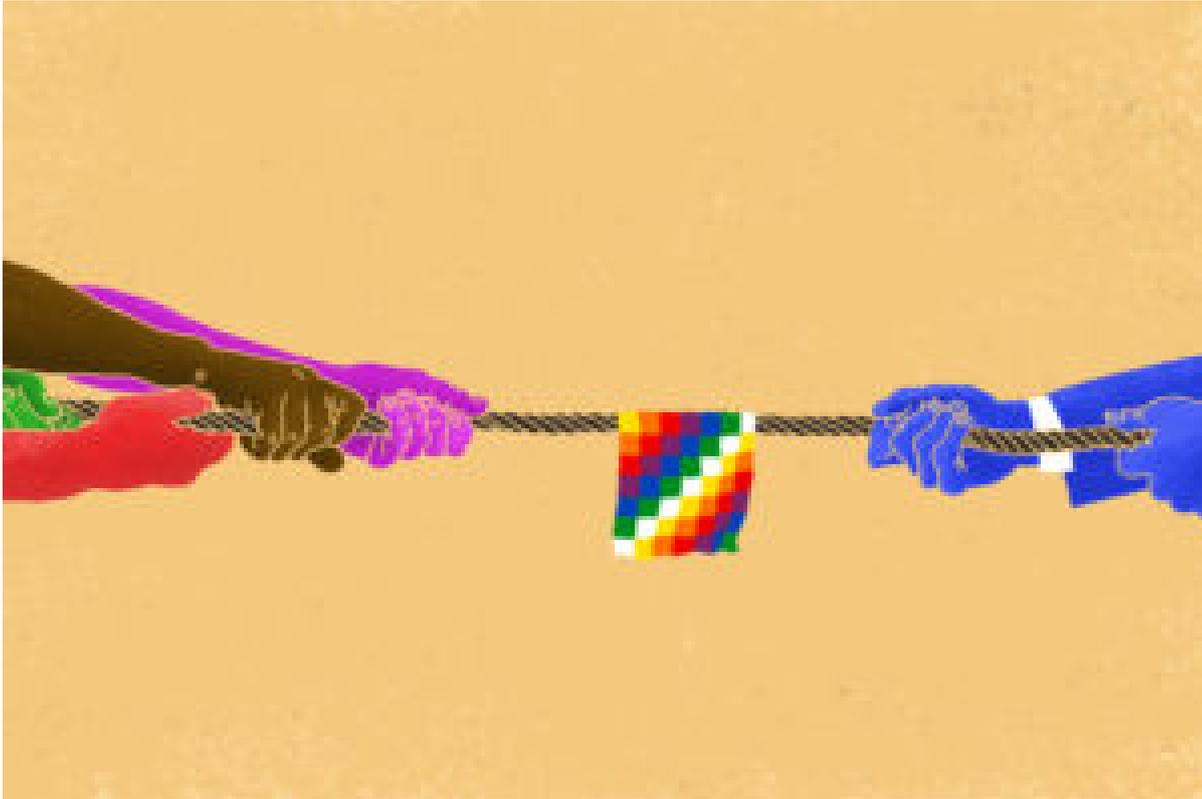
*Latin America's Pink Tide: Breakthroughs and Shortcomings*  
Steve Ellner, ed. Foreword by Boaventura de Sousa Santos  
Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020. 355 pp.

*Latin America's Pink Tide: Breakthroughs and Shortcomings*, edited by economic historian and prominent Latin Americanist Steve Ellner, offers a critical ethical theoretical framework for assessing the performance of left and left-of-center governments in Latin America during the Pink Tide. The "Pink Tide" refers to the wave of progressive governments beginning with the election of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela in 1998. These progressive governments provided alternatives to the neoliberal economic model that had brought growing economic and social inequality, austerity, privatization of public resources, and political subordination to Washington to most of the region during the last two decades of the twentieth century. Pink Tide governments were brought to power by widespread disillusion with traditional political parties and were buoyed by social movements that sought economic and social justice and more democratic participation in the political life of their nations.

The Pink Tide brought a period of economic nationalism, progress toward regional integration, and the inclusion, in various degrees, of formerly marginalized constituents in democratic procedures. Millions were lifted out of poverty through state-sponsored social programs, though without breaking free of rentier capitalism and therefore without achieving the significant structural change necessary for sustainable economic development.

By 2015, with the cumulative impact of the world financial crisis that began in 2008 and the drop in commodity prices upon which many Pink Tide governments were dependent, one progressive government after another suffered electoral defeat by right-wing parties seeking the restoration of the neoliberal regime in partnership with Washington. These setbacks gave rise to a period of

critical reflection on the shortcomings that debilitated left and center-left governments alike.



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Eduardo Gudynas, a leading Uruguayan scholar on *buen vivir*,<sup>1</sup> has argued that the progressive regimes under consideration have evolved into a heterodox form of governance. This means that they have combined progressive and regressive tendencies. They were originally propelled to power by the popular sectors, as in the cases of Bolivia, Ecuador, and Venezuela. Having secured leadership positions in the liberal democratic state, they wrest a degree of power from traditional elites, take more control over natural resources, redistribute rents, facilitate new forms of participatory democracy, recognize, to varying degrees, indigenous and Afro-descendent rights, and are anti-imperialist, insisting on national independence and regional integration. But over-reliance on hydrocarbon extraction in these South American nations has led to some regressive tendencies:

This progressive framework suffered (and suffers) enormous tensions. Progressivism encourages and protects development based on extractivisms, whose serious environmental and social impacts increasingly generate conflicts with local communities, including farmers and indigenous people. Progressive [governments] are unable to exercise more control over these ventures, since they need part of that surplus. They are governments that on the one hand try to regulate capital but on the other hand yield to this [economic model].<sup>2</sup>

As political scientist Massimo Modonesi points out, such regressive tendencies within progressive governments, in combination with a regrouping of conservative forces, can lead to concessions to capital that undermine the long-term socialist project and sideline popular participation in governance.<sup>3</sup>

Are the reversals in the region, starting around 2013, due to an inevitable cyclic historical movement that alternates between conservative and progressive institutions and practices? Has the inevitable insertion of rentier economies in the global capital system prevented the advance toward economic

development? Did progressive governments take full advantage of propitious moments to advance structural economic reforms? Or did they succumb to pressures from the right to make regressive concessions that curtailed popular participation in governance and left them vulnerable to a conservative restoration?

*Latin America's Pink Tide* provides us with the theoretical tools to critically inform our attempts to answer these questions. Rather than see the dynamics of the Pink Tide governments in relation to right-wing restorations as the result of deterministic cycles, each reading takes a more nuanced approach by taking into account the economic and political context of specific countries and the balance of forces at critical junctures. Here we will unpack the theoretical framework used throughout this edited work, with a focus on four exemplary essays.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Although the essays in this reader cover a variety of left and center-left governments of the Pink Tide, the authors apply the same basic theoretical framework to each country. The breakthroughs and shortcomings in each case are viewed as a function of the pragmatic measures adopted by the left or left-of-center governments to accommodate an often hostile domestic and transnational opposition. The pragmatic measures were taken in order to avoid economic boycotts and destabilization. At the same time, Pink Tide governments also adopted populist measures to fulfill the governments' promises of social investment and political inclusion of the popular sectors. This framework suggests a correlation between the degree of hostility of the opposition and the shortcomings of both the pragmatic measures and populist measures. It is like walking a tightrope. On the one side of the balance, the pragmatic accommodation of dominant sectors often fails to neutralize an implacable opposition, and on the other side, populism, without cracking down on corruption, tends to lend itself to clientelism and bureaucratism in the implementation of social programs. Both the pragmatic and populist measures, however, give rise to shortcomings whose corrections are feasible during times when the government has the upper hand over the opposition. This is what Ellner refers to as the element of timing.

This theoretical framework of dynamic tension between pragmatic and populist responses to the opposition is further determined by the inability of Pink Tide governments to move away from rentier capitalism, which embeds the economy in the global capital system and subjects these economies to the contingencies of commodity booms and busts. Rentier capitalism also comes into conflict with efforts to democratize institutions both inside and outside the state because it lends itself to top-down management of the economy, what some of the authors refer to as techno-bureaucratic statism.

Again, context and timing are all-important features of the theoretical framework employed in this reader. Ellner takes issue with neoextractivists who fault Pink Tide governments with the failure to diversify the economy and move toward import substitution but do not recognize the important differences between neoliberalism and neoextractivism. As Ellner points out, the Pink Tide governments, as opposed to neoliberal regimes, strengthened the role of the state in strategic industry sectors, advanced a more nationalistic foreign policy, and deployed a significant portion of rents for social programs. So while rentier capitalism does not give rise to structural change, progressive governments, to varying degrees, promoted "popular participation in decision making and the incorporation and empowerment of excluded sectors of the population" (9).

In addition, Ellner's theoretical framework views the dynamic between the progressive government and reactionary opposition not only in terms of the constituted power of the state versus its adversaries on the right, but also in terms of class struggle. Even when progressives are in the executive branch of government, elites still occupy "apparatuses" of power and compete with

“power centers” representing popular aspirations. It is the mobilizing capacity of social movements that can both pressure the state to advance the process of change and resist challenges from the right to extract more concessions from, or overthrow, the government. Pink Tide governments, therefore, alienate the popular sectors and fail to democratize state institutions at their own peril.

### **Walking the Tightrope: Doing Too Much Versus Doing Too Little**

In “Walking the ‘Tightrope’ of Socialist Governance,” Marcel Nelson enriches the theoretical framework with a more detailed discussion of Nicos Poulantzas’ strategic relational theory. Basically, Poulantzas points out that while a progressive government may attain control over one branch of government, it may be faced with opposition not only from outside, but also from “power apparatuses” within the state that represent the interests of the dominant classes.

“When it comes to the ‘democratic road to socialism,’” says Nelson, “governing from the left is likened to ‘walking a tightrope’ between pursuing transformative programs while managing challenges from dominant classes that retain their structural power” (60). Nelson applies these insights to three Pink Tide governments: Ecuador, Bolivia, and Venezuela. He uses the image of the tightrope as an allegory for the balancing act required in each case between a government doing too much, thereby provoking the dominant classes to violent reaction, or doing too little, by over-accommodating the dominant sectors. In the latter case, the government runs the risk of alienating the very popular sectors who provide the lifeline of potential popular mobilization by means of which these governments can possibly push back against the reactionary tide and advance, at propitious moments, the socialist project.

Nelson also points to a tension between the statist tendency toward centralization and the more horizontally organized expressions of popular power. In each case, rentier capitalism, which embeds governments over-reliant on extractive industries in the global capital system, requires democratization of the state and strong links to popular power if they are to advance a social project. This involves negotiating the tightrope without falling into techno-bureaucratic statism, on the one hand, or provoking destabilization by the dominant classes on the other.

Nelson gives a few examples. In the case of Ecuador under Rafael Correa and the Alianza Pais (AP), Nelson maintains that the government opted for a statist redistribution of extractive-industry rents and minimized the inclusion of popular movements within state institutions, missing opportunities to create democratic “centers of power” within the state. Instead, Correa forged strategic alliances with the dominant classes (and in particular the agricultural elites). For this reason there was limited land reform and some clashes with environmental and indigenous groups, with the most infamous case being conflict over the expansion of extractive industry in Yasuní National Park.

Nelson puts the case succinctly: “The difficult relationship between the government and the social movements highlights the limits of pursuing an agenda of social transformation in the context of extractivism guided by a statist outlook” (67).

Nelson maintains that a similar situation took place in Bolivia. By accommodating the dominant classes of the Eastern Lowland agro-industrial sector, Evo Morales also succumbed to a largely extractivist agenda. By failing to expand its base through democratic mechanisms, the Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS) was unable to fortify its relation with social movements, and the state took on a techno-bureaucratic form. This led to capitulation on a number of important features of the constitutional reform process that culminated in 2009. Over the next four years, the government developed a public-private partnership that was formalized in the 2013 “Agenda Patriótica 2025.” This agenda ended up favoring the interests of the dominant classes. By failing to expand indigenous autonomy, Morales missed an opportunity to deepen democracy within and outside the state.

Nelson argues that the Bolivarian revolution in Venezuela did more to open spaces for organized expressions of popular power, both within and outside the state, than other Pink Tide governments. For this reason, "Chávez was able to repel opposition from dominant classes more forcefully than the AP and MAS" (74). So when the dominant classes tried to overthrow Chávez in 2002-2003 by means of a coup and then an oil strike, Chávez was able to prevail thanks to the popular mobilization that demanded his return. As a result of gaining control over the oil industry and security forces after the coup and oil strike, Chávez was able to launch social missions that brought free education, health care, and housing to formerly marginalized Venezuelans. Yet despite the gains brought about by the social missions, rentier capitalism has not been an optimal motor of socialist transformation. Notwithstanding efforts to empower democracy from below, Chavista governance has led to top-down statism. "The projects designed to democratize the Venezuelan state and society were undermined by the logic of rentierism by encouraging weak oversight by state personnel, corruption, and inefficiency" (75).

The essays that follow Chapter 3 employ the same theoretical framework and tightrope analogy to other Pink Tide governments and assess whether they did too much or too little to advance the socialist project, each in its own social, economic, and political context, and whether the government took advantage of propitious moments to make inroads against the dominant classes in order to bring about a measure of lasting structural change. What follows is a sampling of this very fruitful approach to the study of the Pink Tide.

### **Brazil**

In Chapter 4, "The Rise and Fall of the Brazilian Workers Party (2002-2016)," Pedro Mendes Loureiro and Alfredo Saad-Filho argue that Lula da Silva was elected president in 2002 in the context of growing disenchantment with anemic growth, deindustrialization, and inequality imposed by the neoliberal economic model. Thanks to a boom in demand for primary goods, especially by China, and devaluation of the real (which gave a boost to exports) Lula delivered, for a time, an improved standard of living for millions of formerly marginalized Brazilians. As the authors point out, "Higher minimum wages and transfers, credit, fiscal activism, and booming exports sustained a circle of growth and distribution that drove an unprecedented reduction in poverty and inequality during the PT [Workers Party] administrations" (95).

These gains, however, were not structural in nature. Without a majority in Congress, the PT accommodated the dominant classes, and Lula, at the height of public approval, missed an opportunity to advance a socialist project. His pragmatic concessions to the dominant classes included allowing the exchange rate to float and making cuts in government spending. While raising the minimum wage, and social programs such as Bolsa Familia, did indeed improve the lot of the poor, the lion's share of growth went to the top 1 percent, who held 25 percent of the national income.

The decline that began around 2010 coincided with the election of Dilma Rousseff, and by the time of her re-election in 2014, Brazil was facing a US\$100 billion deficit. After Rousseff was re-elected in 2014, as Loureiro and Saad-Filho argue, the government responded to the economic crisis by adopting the very neoliberal measures she ran against: imposing austerity, cutting unemployment benefits, and cutting pensions. Yet all of this accommodation of the dominant classes did not bring about capital investment. Because of these pragmatic accommodations of the dominant classes, Rousseff and the PT were unable to mobilize in opposition to her impeachment. Loureiro and Saad-Filho conclude, "Instead of recognizing the limits of pragmatism, the PT chose to ignore them and stick to the path of least resistance in the economic, social, and political domains" (105). In 2016 Rousseff was removed from office in what the PT viewed as a parliamentary coup. On the tightrope of pragmatic accommodation versus advancing structural change, Loureiro and Saad-Filho conclude

that Lula and then Rousseff did not do enough to promote change.

## Uruguay

In "The Frente Amplio Governments in Uruguay: Policy Strategies and Results," Nicolás Bentancur and José Miguel Busquets argue that the leftist party, Frente Amplio (FA), which ruled for three terms starting in 2005, advanced a hybrid form of governance that combined liberal democracy with a significant measure of participatory democracy. During the period of economic growth from 2005 to 2017, the governments of President Tabaré Vázquez and later José "Pepe" Mujica were able to achieve impressive reductions in poverty and economic inequality and progressive reform of social welfare programs. Beginning with the economic slowdown in 2016, however, the FA faced an erosion of popular support and serious challenges from the right. What, according to Bentancur and Busquets, went wrong?

The democratic participation of broad sectors of civil society in deliberations that impacted legislation on important social issues constituted what the authors call a "hybrid" form of governance. The authors give a detailed account of the education policy debate in 2006. This debate led to a national conference during which consensus recommendations were hammered out for consideration by the legislature. Although the recommendations were only partially adopted, the input of various stakeholders gave the education reform a degree of legitimacy.

On the labor front, the wage councils included representatives from labor, business, and government. The councils played a key role in negotiating wages and other labor issues. Once again, such deliberations led to recommendations that were promulgated into collective bargaining laws in 2009. The authors indicate that "wage councils fostered an increase in real wages by 52 percent between 2005 and 2014" (118).

And in still another area of public concern, the reforms in social security policy had the benefit of a broad-based national dialogue, and agreements reached by the dialogue were reflected in legislation impacting the social security system. An advisory council for change was set up, and participants included labor, business, civil society, and public sector representation. The council had input on reforms of the Health Care Services Administration.

In each of these cases, broad-based deliberation had an impact on legislation. Bentancur and Busquets point out that although the civic-state partnerships were forms of democratic inclusion of civil society in determining public policy, they did not include macroeconomic and tax policy deliberations, which remained largely at higher levels of governance.

Here is where the tightrope analogy becomes useful. "On several occasions the Frente Amplio had to choose between making commitments to civil society actors and reaching political agreements with opposition politicians" (125). The authors maintain that during the first two FA terms (2005-2015), the government, to a large degree, opted for the former, but without provoking destabilization efforts by the opposition. But beginning with the third FA term in 2015, a conservative offensive brought charges of corruption and mismanagement against the government. An economic downturn in 2016 brought pressure on the government to reduce public spending as well as taxes. By 2018 the opposition had formed a coalition, Un Solo Uruguay, that would soon pose a challenge to FA governance in the next election.

Bentancur and Busquets conclude that the hybrid liberal democratic model that combines participation from below on social welfare matters with a more vertical form of decision making from above on macroeconomic issues brought significant gains in poverty reduction and reform of public services, but it fell short in challenging macroeconomic policy. In order to bring about more

income equality, “it would be necessary to apply participatory mechanisms to other policy areas, such as macroeconomics and tax legislation, and to broaden the scope of debate to include objectives and priorities” (130). On the tightrope of pragmatism versus structural change, the authors suggest that while FA made great strides in democratic participation, by limiting the field of deliberation to social welfare policy, FA did not do enough.

## Venezuela

Part III of the reader includes an introduction and three essays on the more radical Pink Tide governments. Steve Ellner, in “Class Strategies in Chavista Venezuela: Pragmatic and Populist Policies in a Broader Context,” gives a clear illustration of the theoretical framework employed by other essays in this part. Hugo Chávez was elected president of Venezuela on the heels of widespread disillusionment with the neoliberal regime and the domination of elite parties (PuntoFijismo), which had relegated the majority of Venezuelans to poverty for four decades. Chávez ran on a platform that promised to “pay the social debt,” assert control over the nation’s natural resources, and promote national independence.

Ellner provides a detailed account of challenges to Chávez’s social project by the business sector and the pressure to deliver on paying the social debt by the popular sectors. In December 2001, in response to reforms derived from the new constitution of 1999 and Chávez’s plans to reform the oil sector, Fedecámaras (the Venezuelan Chambers of Commerce) organized protests that led to a short-lived coup in April 2002, followed by a strike against the oil sector later that year and into early 2003. In the aftermath of these attempts at regime change, Chávez took pragmatic measures to accommodate certain “productive” business sectors while shunning those that had participated in the Fedecámaras protests and strike. He also began the missions—social programs in health, education, and housing—to meet popular demands for a better quality of life.

Ellner points out that some critics of Chávez’s pragmatism charge that favor given to certain business sectors over others led to the creation of a corrupt class that took advantage of government contracts and favorable exchange rates to enrich themselves. And other critics, this time of the social missions, took issue with the clientelism, corruption, inefficiency, and bureaucratism that afflicted the programs.

A more nuanced approach, argues Ellner, would consider the pragmatic and populist measures in their political context. In order to counter the attempts by the opposition to bring about regime change, it was necessary to bring some of the business sector, if not to the side of Chavismo, then at least to some form of coexistence. In the case of the missions and government support for communes and cooperatives, the government was able to mobilize the popular sectors to its defense when under attack by the opposition.

Ellner defends, to a certain degree, the pragmatic approach to business because it allowed the Chavista project to blunt the attacks by the opposition bent on regime change. And he also rejects characterizing the missions and government support for organized expressions of popular power as crass populism because, he argues, they had a lasting impact on building democratic participation and alleviating poverty.

Ellner maintains that timing, that is, seizing moments when the balance of forces are favorable to the government, provided opportunities to address the shortcomings in both pragmatic accommodation of the business sector and populist measures directed at the working class. Chávez had such opportunities in the 2000s and took advantage of them by nationalizing basic industries, expropriating companies that ceased operations, and prosecuting some corrupt businesspeople. He could have done more, however, to go beyond social programs and take measures to reform the

exchange system and stimulate productivity.

Maduro also had opportune moments in 2013 (with Chavista victories in the municipal elections), after the defeat of the guarimbas<sup>4</sup> in 2014, after the elections for a National Constituent Assembly in 2017, and again in May 2018 with his re-election. During each of these opportunities to address the shortcoming of pragmatism and populism, Maduro failed to take decisive action. Ellner sums up the crucial issue of timing and context:

Timing as a strategic tool was the key to overcoming the negative effects of pragmatic and populist measures. Victories provided the government opportunities to advance in the achievement of five basic objectives: deepening of the process of change (objective one); weakening of the disloyal opposition (objective two); renovation of the Chavista movement and government through measures in favor of internal democratization and against bureaucratization and corruption (objective three); prioritization of economic goals ... (objective four); and implementing unpopular policies (such as gasoline price hikes) in order to eliminate or minimize the negative effects of certain practices associated with populism (objective five). (181-82)

Ellner provides us with the theoretical tools to make a fair-minded assessment of Chavismo in Venezuela. Chávez had gone further than other Pink Tide governments in promoting the political participation of marginalized sectors in both the government missions and the more autonomous community councils and other organized expressions of popular power. By building alliances with the business sector and building popular support, the government has been able to ward off the relentless attack by the U.S.-backed hard-line opposition. But by not doing enough in favorable moments to crack down on corruption, address economic problems, and democratize government institutions, Maduro makes it more difficult to face these issues in times when the government is under frontal attack.

## Nicaragua

In a reader that is critical, nuanced, and fair-minded, the essay on Nicaragua stands out, in my opinion, as somewhat one-sided. In “The Rise and Fall of Sandinista Alliances as a Means of Sociopolitical Change in Nicaragua,” Héctor M. Cruz-Feliciano employs the same theoretical framework, examining the use of pragmatic alliances as well as populist social projects by the Sandinistas after their electoral defeat in 1990 and in particular in the years leading up to the presidential elections of April 2018.

Cruz-Feliciano focuses on three important alliances. First, the FSLN (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional) reconciled with the Catholic Church. The new, pragmatic alliance with the church began in 2004 and led to “the passage of legislation criminalizing therapeutic abortion, [Cardinal Miguel] Obando’s designation as head of the Peace and Reconciliation Commission, and his recognition as National Hero of Peace and Reconciliation by the Sandinista-dominated National Assembly” (277). Ortega also forged an alliance with former contras, inviting former contra leader Jaime Morales Carazo to be his vice presidential candidate on the FSLN ticket, and assured the business sector of his belief in the market economy. The third alliance was with the business sector. Ortega’s vice presidential candidate helped the FSLN gain the support of the Superior Council of Private Enterprise. The proposed alliance, Cruz-Feliciano points out, was based on Ortega’s promise that poverty would be alleviated through policies that include private sector initiatives.

These pragmatic alliances, argues Cruz-Feliciano, were important to the FSLN electoral victories of 2006, 2011, and 2016 and were conducive to economic development:

Until April 2018, Ortega's tenure was characterized by an increase in economic cooperation, growth in the number of state-supported social programs, and a sustained decrease in poverty levels. For a country that has for decades been one of the poorest in the hemisphere, these accomplishments are not to be taken lightly, since they help to explain the immense popularity of the FSLN and its growth with each election. (280)

Cruz-Feliciano maintains that these pragmatic alliances came into conflict with the FSLN's expressed progressive agenda and curtailed participatory democracy. In some cases, the government used repression against dissent, such as the case of clashes between the Sandinistas and indigenous communities over the construction of the Grand Nicaraguan Interoceanic Canal project.

With regard to the attempted coup of April 2018, Cruz-Feliciano exceeds legitimate criticism of Ortega's centralizing tendencies with a one-sided account of the events of that month. Claiming to be on "leftist" ground, he describes the anti-government protests as a legitimate response to the government's brutal repression of peaceful demonstrators and suggests that as a result of this betrayal of constituents, the FSLN ought to find a new leader to replace Ortega to move forward.

Cruz-Feliciano further suggests that by 2018, the FSLN had lost its leftist way and was being challenged from the left. What he calls "most accounts" of the events that took place in April of that year are limited to anti-government perspectives; his own account conspicuously makes no mention of the U.S.-backed attempt to overthrow the elected government of President Ortega, the significant pro-government reaction, and the use of violence and murder by some sectors of the opposition.

Yorlis Gabriela Luna, in "The Other Nicaragua, Empire and Resistance,"<sup>5</sup> gives a detailed alternative account of the demonstrations of April 2018, pointing out that not all anti-government violence was counter violence, but a significant dimension of those protests were motivated by a U.S.-backed right-wing attempt at regime change.

Cruz-Feliciano argues,

While by most accounts what ignited the popular uprising was the repression itself, many have observed that the repression served as a means of legitimating a massive demonstration of discontent with the government's lack of policy coherence and the imposition of a governance model that gives the impression of being inclusive but does not actually provide the means for effective participation. (282)

Overreaction to protest is never excusable. But a balanced view would also take into account that during the protests and road blocks—in response to the fact that some Sandinistas or persons associated with Sandinismo were attacked and in some cases killed—there was also a "massive demonstration of discontent" by Nicaraguans who were determined to defend their neighborhoods from anti-government violence. Unfortunately, such demonstrations are not mentioned by Cruz-Feliciano.

It is interesting that Cruz-Feliciano argues that the Sandinistas did not do enough to advance structural changes, which would have involved policies "unsettling to the church, political associates, and business elites" (287). The Sandinistas, according to this argument, missed an opportunity prior to April 2018 to advance popular democratic participation at all levels of government. Cruz-Feliciano dismisses claims by the Sandinistas that some government critics of these very forces were involved in a coup attempt. "In much the same way that the government overreacted toward the civic protests, it attacked the business sector and the Catholic Church for allegedly being part of a plot to stage a 'soft coup'" (286). For this reason, says Cruz-Feliciano, the

FSLN ought to disassociate itself from Ortega and Murillo and return to its roots in order to recuperate its legitimacy. It is not clear, however, that the elected government has lost democratic legitimacy, though the events of April 2018 have indeed set the stage for a vigorous political contest, by means of democratic procedures, in the next presidential election scheduled for 2021.

The theoretical framework employed in *Latin America's Pink Tide* is a valuable tool for understanding politics in the region. It provides lessons for future governance and helps us ask the right questions. For example, in Mexico, will Morena degenerate into an electoral machine or retain its roots in grassroots organizing? Is Lopez Obrador doing what is feasible, or is he failing to take advantage of his enormous popularity to bring about structural reforms? Can the FMLN in El Salvador renovate the party, reconnect with its base, and avoid the centralization that led, in part, to its electoral defeat? Can Alberto Fernandez avoid excessive pacts with the right? And will Nicolas Maduro be able to balance pragmatic negotiation with the moderate opposition with protecting the working class from the brutal and relentless assault by U.S. Monroeism? Each of these cases involves walking a tightrope, but one on which successful leaders will find the right balance between pragmatism and populism to continue advancing a progressive agenda.

#### Notes

1. A social philosophy of collective wellbeing that stresses harmonious community development and ecological balance.
- 2 Eduardo Gudynas, "Los progresismos sudamericanos: Ideas y prácticas, avances y límites," in *Rescatar la esperanza. Más allá del neoliberalismo y el progresismo* (Barcelona: EntrePueblos, 2016), 40. Translation into English by Frederick Mills.
3. Massimo Modonesi, "Fin de la hegemonía progresista y giro regresivo en América Latina. Una contribución gramsciana al debate sobre el fin de ciclo," in *Viento Sur* (Number 142, October 2015), 23-30.
4. Violent street barricades.
5. Council on Hemispheric Affairs, "The Other Nicaragua, Empire and Resistance," Oct. 2, 2019.