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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Electoral Realignments Within the Left in the Aftermath of Neoliberal Crises. A Critical Juncture Framework for Latin America and Southern Europe

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ABSTRACT: The Latin American "Turn to the Left" consisted in either the consolidation of traditional left-of-centre parties or the emergence of new anti-neoliberal populist projects that decisively shaped the respective national party systems in reaction to major neoliberal crises. Some Southern European countries similarly experienced the rise of new populist parties (Podemos, Syriza and the Five Star Movement) while in Portugal we witnessed the consolidation of the existing left-of-centre parties. This article proposes a middle-range theory to give a cross-regional account of the eventual emergence of different anti-neoliberal populist parties in the aftermath of a neoliberal economic crisis. The argument focuses on the heterogeneity of such an 'Anti-Neoliberal Populism' category, by looking at the party organisation and the relationship with the unions and with the anti-austerity social movements. The framework thus proposes four different categories of "successful political projects" emerged in the aftermath of the crisis: a "Labour-based Left" (in Uruguay and Portugal); a "party-rooted populism" (in Argentina and Greece); a "movement (based) populism" (in Bolivia and Spain); and a "leader-initiated populism" (in Venezuela and Italy).

KEYWORDS: Populism, Social Movements, Party-Union Relations, Latin American Politics, Anti-Austerity Politics

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1. Introduction and Research Question[1]

The Great Recession, and the austerity measures adopted to cope with it, have led to social and political discontent in Southern Europe, visible in social mobilisations taking quite different forms. In the political-electoral arena, the left side of the political spectrum in Spain, Italy and Greece has been reshaped in the early aftermath of the crises by the rise of (left-wing) populist projects such as Syriza, Podemos and the (ideologically more transversal) Five Star Movement, producing major electoral realignments. In Portugal, however, we observed a substantial continuity, although the pre-existing partisan Left was able to strengthen itself and to achieve governmental positions. The so-called 'Pink Tide', mainly in reaction to the Washington Consensus era and its social effects, marked the past twenty years in Latin America, and has been extensively analysed in comparative perspective (e.g., De La Madrid, Hunter and Weyland 2010; Levitsky and Roberts 2011; De La Torre 2013), often stressing the variation *between* "populist" (e.g. Venezuela, Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador) and "social-democratic" (e.g. Chile, Brazil, Uruguay) political projects but also *within* each of these categories, according to different party-society linkage strategies (Kitschelt 2000) adopted.

This article intends to dialogue with the literature addressing, more precisely, the phase of emergence of challenger parties in times of crisis of neoliberalism in comparative perspective in Latin America (e.g., Morgan 2011; Roberts 2014) and Southern Europe (e.g. Della Porta et al. 2017; Hutter and Kriesi 2019). This works proposes a typological theory that intends to 'travel' across both regions and that focuses on the complex interplay between the political-electoral arena, the social mobilisations against austerity, and the union movements, to explain the different paths followed by the national Lefts in the countries analysed and the different kinds of anti-neoliberal populisms that emerged, by proposing a novel sub-categorisation of the broad (anti-neoliberal) populist category[2]. Three kinds of anti-neoliberal populisms are identified, according to the social and political processes leading to their emergence and to their organisational features: "movement-based populisms" (the Bolivian MAS-IPSP and the Spanish Podemos), "party-rooted populisms" (the Argentine Kirchnerism and the Greek Syriza) and "leader-initiated populisms" (the Venezuelan Chavism and the Italian Five Star Movement). The article thus intends to contribute to avoid putting all these populist phenomena "in the same box": a tendency that could provoke serious analytical pitfalls.

The argument draws on the concept of union-party hub (Handlin and Collier 2008), i.e. the main leftist structures of interest aggregation at the societal and political level, typically composed by the main peak un-

[1] This framework (and previous versions of it) has been presented in several academic conferences during 2016-2018 (ECPR 2016; PSA 2017; ECPR 2018; SISP 2018) and forms the theoretical core of my recently published monograph (2020a), which empirically tests the framework on eleven case studies – including the eight case studies mentioned here. I am extremely grateful to the *Partecipazione e Conflitto*'s anonymous reviewers who highlighted major shortcomings concerning my earlier (and erroneous) adaptation of the critical juncture causal framework to my typological theory.

[2] I prefer to talk about "anti-neoliberal populisms" instead of categories such as "left/left-wing populism" (e.g., March 2011) or "inclusionary populisms" (e.g., Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2013). The first category would not surely apply to the Italian Five Star Movement, which has been sometimes, although controversially (see e.g. Pirro 2018), included within the "inclusionary populist" category (e.g., Font et al. 2019). However, on the one hand, such category derives from the so-called "ideological" approach to populism, which posites, erroneously in this author's view (see also Katsambekis 2020), "anti-pluralism" as a defining attribute of populist phenomena. On the other hand, the category of "anti-neoliberal populism" better captures a central feature of all the populist phenomena analysed in this article, i.e. their rejection of austerity measures, as part of a broader rejection of the neoliberal model (including calls for 'democratic renewals', as Hutter and Kriesi 2019 put it), as a central part of their agendas, discourses and identities. By adopting such label, this article intends to escape any "ahistorical" use of the concept of populism (in this sense, see Moffit and Tormey 2013).

ion confederation(s) and the main left-of-centre or labour-based (Levitsky 2003) political party, often linked each other by strong organisational linkages (Tsakatika and Lisi 2013). In particular, the argument highlights how the (eventual) weakening and the discredit of such structures of interest aggregation (and socio-political integration) made them unable to channel the popular discontent triggered by the crisis of neoliberal economic model and hegemony, and conduced to the emergence of new social actors representing the demands of broad popular and middle-class sectors, looking at credible political aggregators of such demands.

The article thus also intends to contribute to the literature regarding the effects of social movements on electoral politics, at least in terms of formation or emergence of various kinds of populisms. The literatures on social movements and on party politics and party organisations have not talked to each other for a long time, although during the last years various attempts of integrating them have been made (e.g., MacAdam and Tarrow 2010; Della Porta et al. 2017). This article offers a perspective about the relationship between non-institutional and political-electoral politics in times of crisis, as a part of a broader framework.

2. Rises and Varieties of Anti-Neoliberal Populisms in Latin America and Southern Europe

Since many similarities between the social and economic crises in several Latin American countries and the Southern European Great Recession have already been noticed (Zanotti and Rovira Kaltwasser 2016; Roberts 2017), the lack of comprehensive researches about the rise of anti-austerity, progressive populisms in the two regions is surprising[3]. All of these crises, apart from provoking enormous social costs, have been initially addressed from a policy standpoint through "orthodox", pro-cyclical measures. In both regions, pressures from international (such as the IMF) and supranational institutions (in the case of Southern Europe) were decisive for the implementation of pro-cyclical economic policies (e.g. Streeck 2011). Not coincidentally, only in these two regions anti-neoliberal populisms have achieved considerable success. Some important works directly or indirectly provide important insights for the central topics of this research, although they did not offer per se a comprehensive answer to the questions that this article tries to address, for different reasons.

Della Porta et al. (2017), after having disclosed the strong links between the structural transformations brought by neoliberalism, its crisis, and the appearance of anti-austerity protest cycles, focus on the relationship between anti-austerity movements and parties in Southern Europe. Della Porta and colleagues also offer a comparison with Latin American experiences (Bolivia, Ecuador, Venezuela). The book highlights the 'neoliberal turn of the centre-left' and the 'politicization of new cleavages' (namely, social and political exclusion) as explaining factors for the rise of new 'movement parties'. While building up of some of Della Porta et al.'s insights, I also argue that the concept of 'movement party' is insufficient to capture the variation between different experiences, both at the social movements and at the parties level. Such an approach may tend to underemphasise the different demands and sociological profiles of the anti-neoliberal movements that

[3] While studies on the Latin American Pink Tide abound, comparative analyses of the emergence of different kinds of anti-neoliberal populist parties in Southern Europe are scarce (Della Porta et al. 2017 and, in part, Hutter and Kriesi 2019 are major exceptions). Academic research has mostly focused on descriptive accounts of ideological and discursive differences within the family of the European Radical Left in the aftermath of the Great Recession (e.g., Katsambekis and Kioupkoulis 2018) or within Southern European "inclusionary" populisms (e.g., Font et al. 2019). It does not develop causal accounts for these variations.

emerged in both Latin America and Southern Europe, and may lead to explain the different movement-parties linkages in a non-satisfactory or unsystematic manner[4]. The attempt of this article is precisely to offer a comprehensive interpretation of the variation between different movement-party linkages in the countries selected. Considering the movements' ability of pursuing alliance-building strategies to understand their different impact on both the social and political-electoral sphere (as for instance Yashar 2006 [on Andean counties] and Silva 2009 [in a broader analysis of Latin American anti-neoliberal mobilisations] did) seems also crucial to understand such variation.

Kenneth Roberts' masterwork on party system changes in Latin America as a reaction to neoliberal reforms (2015) has also been key to develop the argument of this article. Roberts first differentiates between Latin American countries that had followed an ISI (Industrialisation through Substitution of Importations) path to economic development from those which did not. Only in the former group (including Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia and Venezuela, among others), transition to neoliberalism implied strong changes in state-society relations and stronger social resistances. In Roberts' analysis, established party systems, in these countries, faced major changes only when the same party that acted as the political integrator of the working-class under the ISI phase (e.g., the Argentine PJ, the Bolivian MNR or the Venezuelan AD) concretely implemented pro-market reforms, often through a 'bait and switch' strategy (Stokes 2001). Only in these cases we witnessed the upsurge of new populist challengers, who proved to be particularly able to appeal to the growing – as a by-product of neoliberal reforms – number of labour market outsiders (Morgan 2011). While the argument of this article builds up on Roberts' work, it starts from a conceptualisation of populism that, unlike Roberts', puts *also* emphasis on its 'bottom-up' and articulating features, without overlooking its 'top-down' characteristics. By this way, it is also possible to shed further light on the 'Argentine exception', i.e. the resilience of the Peronist political movement despite its 'neoliberal turn' under Carlos Menem.

By relying on the extensive theoretical literature on populism, we must here recall why (anti-neoliberal) populist political projects, in both regions, proved to be so appealing under such a contentious and difficult context. First, populist projects, by "emphasizing similarities and downplaying differences" (Jansen 2011) amongst heterogeneous social sectors, broadly included in a common "People", differentiate themselves from more traditional interest or class-based appeals and cast a wide net to attract different social strata in highly fragmented and stratified societies. The enemy of "The people" is usually identified by antineoliberal populisms, unsurprisingly, as a neoliberal (and even neo-colonial: see Filc 2015) elite and as those sectors enjoying allegedly illegitimate privileges due to their ties with the "establishment". Such elite is the supposed ultimate cause of all the different grievances emerging in the country, according to populist discourse. Furthermore, populist leaders, parties and movements pretend to speak in behalf of the totality of (their) People in order to occupy the public institutions and bring a political change: populist projects thus underscore the centrality of nation-state structures to implement concrete changes.

While populisms are surely concerned with the outputs of democracy (Barr 2009), they can be also (and sometimes even more) concerned with its input side, offering very different (and even contradictory) solution to restore national and popular sovereignty (Padoan 2017). Some "populist subtypes" (what I defined elsewhere [2017] *electoral-delegative populisms*) tend to focus exclusively on the outputs, and develop organiza-

[4] It would be "unsatisfactory" if we relied on Kitschelt's (2006: 180) definition of movement parties: "coalitions of political activists who emanate from social movements and try to apply the organizational and strategic practices of social movements in the arena of party competition". Such definition would not really apply to any of the parties under scrutiny. It would be instead "unsystematic", and prone to quite *ad hoc* explanations of movement-parties linkages, if we defined movement parties, as Della Porta et al. do (2017: 4-5), as "political parties that have particularly strong organizational and external links with social movements".

tional models that can be either quite rudimentary and centred on the unmediated relationship between a 'Leader' and the 'Masses' (in the so-called "neo[liberal]populisms": Weyland 2001), or closer to the traditional mass-party (in the populist radical Rights: Heinisch and Mazzoleni 2016). Instead, new mechanisms of direct and participative democracy and of candidate selection have been commonly suggested by anti-neoliberal populisms, arguing that the poor record of liberal democracies is the direct consequence of the scarce involvement of "The people" in the decision-making process. Therefore, the solution would lie in the mobilisation and the active political participation of the citizens, and particularly of the popular sectors, in order to occupy State institutions (*participative-mobilising populisms*: see Padoan 2017).

Several organisational features of anti-neoliberal populist projects, in which a certain autonomy of the partisan periphery in terms of agenda setting and membership recruitment, along with "ideological flexibility"', make them particularly fit to dialogue with different, particularistic movements – whose impact in the public sphere, in times of crisis, was often very high - and to be perceived by such movements as a "loyal institutional ally", thus easing the creation of a broad "popular network" in which the political party plays a nodal role.

Nevertheless, decentralisation is typically accompanied by a strong cohesion at the top of the party's pyramid, to control factionalism and to assure party discipline. A strong leadership also provides the party with a single voice to be exploited for communication purposes and reserves some room of manoeuvre for tactical adjustments in a fluid context.

However, not all the Lefts were shaped by the emergence of successful populist political projects. Moreover, antineoliberal populisms also assumed very different characteristics. I opted for creating a typology of possible "outcomes": i.e. the different kinds of anti-austerity political projects that achieved a dominant – or, at least, electorally relevant – position within the Lefts in the aftermath of the crisis. These "successful political projects" are quite easily identifiable in all of the countries selected: in Latin America, the Bolivian MAS-IPSP, Venezuelan Chavism, Argentine Kirchnerism or the Uruguayan Frente Amplio; in Southern Europe, the Spanish Podemos, the Italian Five Star Movement, the Greek Syriza, and the Portuguese Radical Left, composed by two different parties (the Portuguese Communist Party and the Leftist Bloc).

I claim that it is possible to relevantly categorise the different "successful projects" according to three, branching variables, namely: the previous existence, or not, of the political party and/or of partisan structures; their relationship with the unions; and the kind of party-(anti-austerity) movements linkages. This leads to the typology illustrated by Table 1.

The first outcome is quite self-evident. It illustrates a pattern of political continuity. The existing Left, strongly linked to the organised working-class, is not only able to "resist", but even to take electoral advantage of the crisis. The first outcome implies the resilience of the "old Left", perceived as a credible alternative to "neoliberalism", and able to play a leading role in the protests and achieve important electoral results. This is the outcome observed in Uruguay and in Portugal.

The other three outcomes represent "populist paths" to realignments within (and beyond) the national Lefts. In contrast to Labour-based leftist parties, which keep strong linkages to the unions, rely on class-based political discourse and retain mass-party organisational features, all the anti-neoliberal populist political projects share quite different characteristics. In terms of internal organisation, they tend to approximate the "charismatic party" model described by Panebianco (1988), in which a strong leadership coexist with organisational decentralization, strong organisational linkages with contentious social movements and innovative forms of participatory linkages (Tsakatika and Lisi 2013). Anti-neoliberal populist projects do not retain or seek any "special relationship" with the unions; they lack encompassing and coherent ideologies and typi-

cally advance inter-classist appeals by claiming to represent "The people", exploited by rapacious political and economic elites. Their discourse is centered on the necessary restoration of popular and national sovereignty, through People's re-occupation and strengthening of state institutions, against a political class unresponsive towards "the People" and only accountable to national and foreign corporate powers and supranational institutions (Padoan 2017).

Table 1 - The Dependent Variable. A Typology of the 'Successful Political Projects' Shaping the National Lefts in the Aftermath of a Crisis of Neoliberalism.

	Pre-Existing Partisan Structure		**New Partisan Structures**	
Successful Projects on the Left	**Labour-Based Left**	**Party-Rooted Populism**	**Movement (Based) Populism**	**Leader-Initiated Populism**
Party-Unions Relationship	Unions remain the most important organizational linkage	Relationship with the unions depends on conjunctural factors.	Unions at best as subordinate allies	Antagonistic relationship with the unions, fully considered as part of the 'old regime'
Party-Movements Relationship	*Union-Led* mobilizations and incorporation of labour market outsiders' demands helped to bridge the insider-outsider's representational divide	Cooperative-cooptative strategy towards the movements through populist rhetoric and organizational decentralization/fractionalization	The party exploits the populist frames and the militancy produced by the protest cycle.	Issue-owning' strategy towards fragmented movements by a political maverick
Influence of Movements on Party Organization	Party retains control of candidate selection process.	Party retains control of candidate selection process.	High overlapping membership and strong influence of the movements over the party, in terms of political platform and (in the case of movement-based populism) of candidate selection.	Low, apart from cases of overlapping membership at the local level (→agenda setting, candidate selection). Plebiscitarian internal organization + bottom-up procedures for mobilizational purposes
Empirical Cases	Frente Amplio (UY); Portuguese Radical Left	Kirchnerist Peronism (AR); Syriza (GR)	MAS-IPSP (BO); Podemos (ES)	Chavism (VZ); Five Star Movement (IT)

Source: Author's Elaboration.

The two, theoretically and empirically, possible successful political projects relying on existing political parties are the labour-based Left, described above, and "party-rooted populism". In the latter case, an existing party assumes an inclusive (i.e., pluralist and non-sectarian) and antagonistic populist discourse and, thanks to specific organisational resources, develops strong electoral linkages with multiple social sectors and effective organisational linkages with the protesters. Argentine Kirchnerism and the Greek Syriza fall into this category. Organisationally, both parties displayed some forms of power decentralisation (particularly in the Kirchnerist case, which exploited the Peronist electoral machinery) which proved to be fit for their brokerage role. In both cases, the leader retains and strengthens her autonomy on strategic choices, and eventually coordinates the distribution of particularistic incentives (either programmatic or – in the case of Kirchnerism - clientelistic) to keep the loyalty of different organised (and mobilised) actors.

The last two outcomes consist in the rise of a new anti-neoliberal populist party. Nevertheless, these outcomes highly differ in terms of their linkages with unions and social movements and – particularly – their internal organisation. In the path labelled leader-initiated populism (Venezuelan Chavismo and the Italian

M5S), the new party is fully centred, since the beginning, around its founder's and leader's figure, a typical political "maverick" exploiting the window of opportunity generated by the crisis. As for their internal organisation, very low barriers to entry and a certain autonomy of the grassroots at the periphery, in terms of political platform (in both Venezuelan and Italian cases) and candidates' selection (in the case of the Italian M5S), coexist with a tight control from above of any crucial strategic decisions. The leader, lacking control of any mass movement or organisation, mostly relies on programmatic and charismatic linkages to appeal to quite dispersed and unorganised constituencies. Appeals for "democratic regeneration" against the entire socio-political system (and, in particular, the union-party hubs, i.e. their closer competitors) and the promise of universalist social policies to deal with the social emergency provoked by the crisis are recurrent features of leader-initiated populisms. However, leader-initiated populisms also appeal to extra-institutional movements and interest groups, mainly through a strategy of "issue-owning". The latter consists in the ability of collecting and connecting disparate unsatisfied popular demands, while aspiring to be the only "true supporter" of all of these "micro-publics" (Spanakos 2011) who felt excluded by the previous political order.

The fourth outcome is the rise of a movement (based) populism. As the label indicates, the influence of the social movements having animated the protest cycles over the party is higher than in the other three types. Nevertheless, this fourth outcome must be split into two subtypes. We can conceive the possibility that the main social movements leading the protests decide to enter electoral competition by themselves (as in the case of the MAS-IPSP in Bolivia), or the possibility that some social activists put into motion a political project bringing into the polity domain the main demands emerging from the protest cycle (as in the case of Podemos in Spain).

In the first case, we observe the creation of a movement-based party (Anria 2014), a sort of 'instrument' of the founding movements. In the second case, the movements *de facto* converge into the 'sociopolitical space' created by the party, thus providing to the latter militancy and finding in it a reliable institutional ally. In both kinds of parties, power centralisation allows to limit and solve both inter-organisational and factional disputes and to strengthen electoral charismatic linkages.

In movement (based) populist cases, we observed quite a complex and at times antagonistic relationship between the party and the unions, moving between cooperation and confrontation, particularly when the latter enjoyed strong links with the "old parties" (Padoan 2019) or when the movements are the expression of constituencies that are quite different from salaried sectors, as it occurred in the Bolivian MAS-IPSP (Silva and Rossi 2018).

3. The Argument

In the causal argument that this article advances, neoliberal crises act as the *shock* opening the *critical juncture* (Collier and Munck 2018) that decisively shape the leftist side of the party systems analysed (see Figure 1). I adopt the definition of Slater and Simmons (2010, 889), who define critical juncture as "periods in history when the presence or absence of a specified causal force pushes multiple cases onto divergent long-term pathways". The relevant causal forces can act before ("critical antecedents") or during the critical juncture, and their combination produce divergent outcomes.

Table 2 – Periodization of economic shocks, consequent Critical Juncture and divergent outcomes in terms of realignments within the political Left in eight Latin American/Southern European countries.

Country	Shock	Beginning of Critical Juncture	Critical Elections / End of Critical Juncture	Outcome
Argentina	1995 (beginning of economic recession); 1997 (Brazilian crisis); 1999 (initial austerity measures imposed by President De La Rúa)	1999 (national diffusion of *piquetero* movements). Peak in 2001 (*Argentinazo*)	2005 (legislative elections: victory of Kirchnerist faction over Right-Wing Peronist and Anti-Peronist parties); 2007 (Cristina Kirchner's triumph in presidential elections)	Kirchnerism dominating the Peronist space (2005-ongoing)
Bolivia	1999 (initial austerity measures imposed by President Sánchez de Losada)	1999-2000 (Cochabamba Water War). Peak in 2002 (Gas War; Sánchez de Losada renounced)	2005 (Evo Morales' triumph in presidential elections)	Party system structured around the *masista* (Left) - *antimasista* (Centre-Right; Extreme Right) dimension (2005-ongoing)
Uruguay	1997 (Brazilian crisis); peak in 2001 (effects of Argentine economic crisis)	2001	2004 (Tabaré Vázquez's triumph in presidential elections)	From a tripartite to a 'two-party and a half' party system (thanks to Left's stregthening): *Frente Amplio* (Centre-Left; left) and 'traditional parties' (*Blancos* [majoritarian] and *Colorados* [minoritarian]: Centre-Right) (2004-ongoing)
Venezuela	1989 (implementation of draconian austerity measures; *Caracazo*)	1989-1998 (on-going social and political instability, 'bait and switch' further imposition of austerity meausres, and further deterioration of economy)	1999 (Hugo Chávez's triumph in presidential elections)	Party system structured around the *chavista* (Left) - *antichavista* (Centre-Right; Extreme Right) dimension (1999-ongoing)
Greece	2010 (Troika intervention)	2010-2013 (peak at 2012, when the second MoU was approved)	May - June 2012 (Syriza's overtaking over PASOK); January 2015 ('pasokization', Syriza's triumph and election of Tsipras as PM)	Syriza substituted PASOK as the main party of the left-wing side of the political spectrum (June 2012-ongoing)
Italy	2011 (ECB's letter calling for austerity measures; election of technocratic government)	2011-2013 (Monti's technocratic government)	2013 (Five Star Movement became the most voted party at the parliamentary elections)	From bipolarism to tripartite party system: *Movimento 5 Stelle*, Center-Left and Center-Right (confirmed in 2018)
Portugal	2010 (first austerity measures imposed by Socialist government; then in 2011 came the MoU)	2010-2013 (phase of mobilizations led by Communist [majoritarian] trade unions)	2015 (legislative elections; election of Socialist Costa as PM, with parliamentary support of the Radical Left)	Party system stability. For the first time, alliance at the national level between Socialists and Radical Left
Spain	2010 (first austerity measures imposed by Socialist government; then in 2011, ECB's letter calling for further austerity measures)	2010-2013 (phase of social movements' protests against austerity; peak in 2011-2012 [*Indignados* and *Mareas*])	2015 (legislative elections; Podemos reached 20 percent of the votes, nearly reaching the PSOE)	From two to multiparty system (considering the rise of new centre-right parties). On the Leftist side: higher relevance of the Left, first formation of coalition goverment (Sánchez government, 2019-ongoing)

Source: Author's Elaboration.

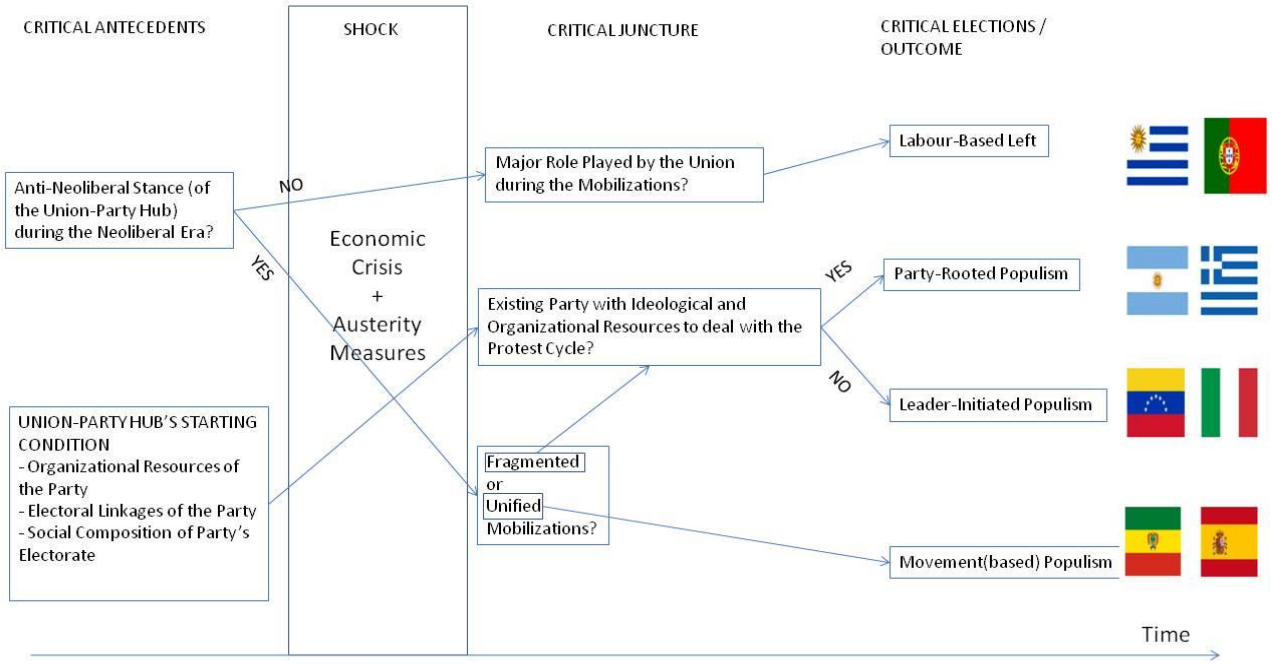
The argument is a middle-range theory whose "scope condition" is the existence of a union movement traditionally playing a central role as civil society actor, enjoying historical links with a major labour-based or leftist party and mainly representing the salaried working-class. The scope condition and the occurrence of such a critical juncture theoretically motivates the case selection: for instance, many South American countries did not develop, for historical reasons (see Roberts 2014), party-union hubs comparable to those existing in Bolivia, Argentina, Venezuela and Uruguay (or did not experience comparable economic crises since their democratic transition); a similar argument can be made for Ireland or Iceland, which were dramatically hit by the Great Recession.

The main critical antecedents are the political positioning of the union-party hubs and of the leftist parties in the pre-crisis scenario. These antecedents help to understand the subsequent evolution of the national political scenarios as they affect the credibility of the unions and of the parties as "antineoliberal" actors during the critical juncture. In addition, the linkages used by the parties in appealing to different segments of the voters, and the social composition of their constituencies, are variables to consider for a complete analysis of the "starting conditions" of the left-of-centre or labour-based parties when the crisis came and thus when the critical juncture began. We can chronologically circumscribe the "critical juncture" (see Table 2) in the period that precede what *a posteriori* we may call "critical elections": presidential (in South America) or legislative (in Southern Europe) elections that came after major anti-austerity mobilisations and that were, in terms of agenda, clearly dominated by polarisation on highly unpopular neoliberal reforms (see, in this sense, Hutter and Kriesi 2019).

The precise duration of the critical juncture is thus subjected to the effective centrality of the debate on neoliberal measures in the public agenda. In all the cases considered, the critical juncture ended when an actor clearly committed to end with austerity successfully emerged or achieved considerable electoral success, often changing either the left-of-centre political landscape (as occurred in Greece) or even the characteristics of the party system (as occurred for instance in Bolivia, Italy and Spain). However, this may be not necessarily the case: in Brazil, for instance, the relative success of the *Cardoso Plan* during the nineties closed the critical juncture with a substantial acceptance of the neoliberal socioeconomic model by all the main political actors (Handlin 2017). In the cases selected here, phases of political stalemates (as occurred in Greece during the 2012-2015 period) and presidential terms characterised by 'bait-and-switch' strategies (as occurred in Venezuela under the 1994-1999 Caldera's presidency) or inaugurated by weak and indecisive victories (as occurred in Argentina in 2003 with Néstor Kirchner) contributed to extend the duration of the critical juncture. In other cases instead, single "critical elections" (as occurred in Spain [2015] or Italy [2013], but also in Uruguay [2004] or Portugal [2015]) were sufficient to close the critical juncture.

The characteristics of the main social mobilisations against the neoliberal model, jointly with the critical antecedents, create the political opportunities for the (eventual) emerging and consolidation of different varieties of antineoliberal populist projects (i.e., the "outcome" phase in our model). The relevant "characteristics" of the mobilisations are: a) the role played by the unions b) the kinds of demands advanced (often related with the sociological profile of the protesters) and c) the ability of the movements to forge alliances amongst themselves.

Figure 1 – The Argument



Source: Author's Elaboration.

The argument builds up on Roberts' (2015) work and implies that when the labour-based Left kept an oppositional position during the neoliberal era, thus defending its credibility as a leading actor during the contentious phase, the left side of party system remained stable. This occurred in Uruguay, where the traditional brotherhood between the Frente Amplio and the PIT-CNT led to a coherent socio-political bloc opposing the reforms during the nineties: the 2001-2002 economic crisis merely accelerated the long-term rising electoral tendency of the FA (Lanzaro 2004). In Portugal, the main peak union – the CGTP – kept its linkages with the Communist party, maintained its oppositional position before and during the crisis (while defending its primacy within the union system against the moderate UGT, closer to the Socialists) and remained the most credible social actor against reforms and austerity, also tying alliance with other anti-austerity social movements (Accornero and Ramos Pinto 2015). In Uruguay, the ideological and organisational fragmentation of the FA allowed the party to diversify its linkage strategy: the Partido Socialista kept its organisational linkages with the PIT-CNT; some centrist fractions (like Asamblea Uruguay) improved the image of the party as an actor ready to assume governmental responsibilities; finally, Mujica's fraction advanced populist rhetoric and practices to appeal to the poorest strata and to establish organisational linkages with grassroots movements focusing on housing and anti-poverty issues (Luna 2014). In Portugal, we observed a similar "division of labour" between the two (rival) far-left parties, the PCP (controlling the unions and appealing to urban and rural working-classes) and the BE (much closer to the social movements' milieu). The leftist strategy pursued by the PS, particularly under Costa's leadership, helped to improve the deteriorated image of the party, and set the conditions for a post-electoral alliance in 2015 between the three major Portuguese left-of-centre parties (Lisi 2016).

In contrast, where the party-union hubs have lost the credibility for assuming the leadership of the "anti-austerity camp", a populist project emerges. A protest cycle in which the different movements are able to tie close-knit alliances, typically through the adoption of populist frames targeting a "common enemy" (see Aslanidis 2016) and downplaying the differences between them in terms of ideology and demands, paves the way for the emergence of a movement (based) populism.

Such a broad and unified protest cycle is likely to produce several "public goods" (Aslanidis 2016) such as inclusive frames and a numerous and motivated militancy, while its antagonism against the entire party system make unlikely its co-optation. If the movements are unwilling to run electorally for "occupying public institutions", or if they lack the necessary strength, then the militancy has to wait for a political project willing to (and successful in) taking advantage of the "public goods" produced by the impacting "unified" protest cycle ("movement populism"). This was clearly the case of Podemos, a party created "from above", by a small number of activists around the mediatic figure of Pablo Iglesias, while also (and crucially) attracting numerous social movements activists that formed the backbone of the party elite and militancy at the national, regional and local levels and that found in the party a "space" to bring their social and participatory claims into the institutions (e.g. Martín 2015; Padoan 2020a).

Otherwise, the movements can build their own "political instrument", channelling popular discontent through institutional avenues ("movement-based populism"). The influence of the movements over the new political project, in terms of definition of the programmatic agenda and candidates' selection will be higher than in the other outcomes that I identified. The Bolivian MAS-IPSP perfectly fits into this category: the MAS-IPSP, as a party, is little more than a "political brand" representing the main Bolivian peasant and coca-grower unions, although the coalition successfully expanded to include other actors, while the leadership (consisting of Evo Morales and his inner circle mainly composed by intellectuals and technocrats) achieved and strengthened its own autonomy over the grassroots throughout the years (Anria 2014).

The absence of a unified cycle of protest, jointly with the incapacity of the unions to play a leading role in the protests, led to either the party-rooted populist or the leader-initiated populist electoral outcomes. In Greece, Syriza proved much more able than other political competitors (such as the KKE) to play a "brokerage" role in the protests and to expand its influence within the "contentious camp", thanks to its populist rhetoric, ideological pluralism and presence in the streets, despite its quite reduced militancy (Kanellopoulos et al. 2016; Della Porta et al. 2017). What Syriza did from the streets, Argentine Kirchnerism did from the institutions: President Kirchner was able to include in his coalition, through both programmatic and clientelistic linkages, most of the main social actors stemming from the piqueteros' milieu or from radical unionism, which animated the long and fragmented Argentine protest cycle (1996-2003). Once built his own militant bases, and once strengthened his popularity thanks to the improvement of the socioeconomic condition of the country through quite radical policy decisions, Kirchner achieved the unchallenged control of the Peronist apparatus that had supported him in the 2002 presidential race, when he appeared a weak candidate under control of the former President, the conservative Duhalde (Ostiguy 2005).

The absence of such an existing "broker" party left a political opportunity for a new political project to emerge, in a social scenario marked by dispersed protests further feeding popular discontent. Such a scenario is the perfect humus for the emergence of a political maverick advancing a populist discourse aiming to a) offer a single political answer to the particularistic demands emerging from the protests, and b) identify a broad category of "excluded citizens" and promise to incorporate them through programmatic, clientelistic or organisational linkages. While different in many aspects, the socio-political processes leading to the emergence of the Venezuelan Chavismo and the Italian M5S shared striking similarities; furthermore, the ideolog-

ical vagueness, the anti-unionist positions, and the coexistence of organisational decentralisation, participative and deliberative features at the periphery, and a strong power centralization at the leadership level, are common characteristics of both Chávez's and Grillo's political projects. The very different ideological and programmatic evolutions (which provoked, in turn, very different organisational evolutions) of such experiences seem clearly related to the extremely high room of manoeuvre at the disposal of the elites controlling both projects.

In the following section, I first discuss more deeply how the critical antecedents that I identified above shape the "starting conditions" of the left-of-centre parties and thus their probability of keeping or achieving a dominant position within the Left in the aftermath of the crisis. Later, I better specify my categorisation of the different kinds of popular anti-austerity mobilisations, and I further clarify why this categorisation is relevant for my argument and for the divergent outcomes.

4. The Critical Antecedents. The "Starting Conditions" of Unions and Left-of-Centre Parties

In this section, I discuss how the different strategies of the main leftist parties and party-union hubs during the neoliberal era affected their probability of becoming electoral winners (or losers) in the post-crisis scenario. Their eventual ideological moderation, their inability to go beyond their traditional core-constituencies (i.e. labour market insiders: Rueda 2007), and the weakening of their participatory linkages (Tsakatika and Lisi 2013), created greater or lesser liabilities for the post-crisis scenario. However, populist parties closer to the *participative-mobilising* subtype (see Section 2) displayed a higher ability to adapt in the post-crisis scenario, as I argued in the previous section.

4.1 Historical Roots of the Union-Party Hubs in Dualised Welfare Regimes

In his seminal works, Rueda (2007) posited that the core-constituencies of the party-union hubs in Southern Europe are not the working class in its entirety. Instead, such core-constituencies are the insider sectors (i.e., salaried sectors with open-ended contracts), in partial detriment of the outsiders (i.e., unemployed, fixed-term or informal workers), who find high barriers to enter the "labour-market fortress" and are penalised by the contributory schemes and the lack of safety-net policies typical of the Mediterranean welfare regimes (Ferrera 1996). Party-union linkages were particularly important for the unions to keep a strong influence on labour market and welfare regime issues in countries where state regulation prevails (Rigby and García Calavia 2017).

In Latin America, the countries that followed an ISI (Import Substitution Industrialisation) economic model also developed a highly segmented welfare state, albeit with much lower levels of coverage and adequacy than in Continental Europe, due to state weakness and the size of the informal sectors (Haggard and Kaufman 2008). In those countries, the industrial and/or public sector workers normally provided an "encapsulated" core-constituency to labour-based parties such as the Uruguayan FA, the Argentine PJ or the Venezuelan AD (Levitsky 2003), linked (programmatically and even organisationally) with powerful unions[5].

[5] Rueda et al. (2015) emphasized several similarities between ISI-shaped Latin American and Mediterranean dualising regimes, also considering the role of unions, and called for a cross-regional integration of the discussion of the cleavages generated by those systems.

4.2 The Evolution of Party Linkages: Detachment from Society and Looser Linkages with Weakened Unions

During the apex of neoliberal hegemony, European social democracies rapidly embraced economic liberalism, loosened their long-standing ties with the union movement and emphasize their progressive post-materialist stances to differentiate themselves from the Right. European social democracies began arguing that labour market deregulation was the solution to deal with the rise of unemployment. However, in Greece, Italy and Spain at least, unions remained in alliances (and kept mobilising key voters: Allern and Bale 2017) with their traditional party referents to defend their participation in the policy-making process (e.g. Etchemendy 2011). This generally allowed for the protection of the comparatively high levels of permanent employment protection, often at the cost of introducing lower protections for labour market outsiders and thus deepening dualisation (Rueda 2007; Pérez 2014). Even more worryingly, since the beginning of the Great Recession even insiders' protection has been targeted by neoliberal reforms imposed by international financial and political institutions. As Hyman (2001, 52) put it, social dialogue "had come to mean sharing responsibility for the dismantling of many of the previous gains – acting as 'mediators of transnational economic pressures'".

In Latin America, the "neoliberal switch" on the part of some labour-based or left-of-centre parties (such as the Bolivian MNR and MIR or the Argentine PJ) was much more drastic, whereas in other cases, particularly when they did not access to governmental positions, they kept a leftist profile (as in Brazil and Uruguay). Party-union linkages, as in Southern Europe, weakened but did not disappear, although the dramatic increase in job informality diminished the power and the representativeness of the unions. Both in Latin America and Southern Europe, union movements that opted for a more confrontational strategy better positioned themselves in the early aftermath of the crisis than the more "conciliatory" ones, particularly when union-party hubs were "trapped in government" when the economic crisis exploded – and concretely implemented austerity measures to cope with the latter.

To address the poorest sectors during the neoliberal era, labour-parties typically relied on a mixed strategy consisting in means-tested cash transfers and clientelistic arrangements, with mixed results. Furthermore, state retrenchment and economic and budgetary constraints limited the resources available for targeted and/or particularistic answers, which thus became less efficacious (Luna 2014; Afonso, Zartaloudis, and Papadopoulos 2015) and the target of anti-corruption denunciations, particularly when the economic situation began deteriorating (Morgan, 2011). In addition, identitarian linkages, also because of the weakening of the social, cultural and organizational pillars of the old political cleavages, tended to weaken their capacity of 'voters' retention' by the traditional parties. In particular, advanced forms of cartelization (Katz and Mair, 1995) increased the perception of the political parties as self-referential organizations detached from society and deepened the tendency towards declining trust on parties and institutions.

5. The Social Mobilisations Against Neoliberal Model and Austerity

The popular reactions against austerity measures, and against neoliberalism, took very different forms in the countries analysed here. I argue that the specific forms assumed by these mobilisations, jointly with the critical antecedents sketched in the previous section, shaped decisively and differentially the socio-political

environment to which the existing parties had to adapt, and the political opportunities for the emergence of new parties on the left.

5.1 The Varieties of Social Demands during Austerity and the Question of Inter-Movements Alliances

To recognise the variety of demands that were advanced by (broadly defined) anti-austerity movements is a crucial step for understanding how the movements influenced the social and political arena. I first propose a rough distinction between universalist, sectorial and local demands. Universalist issues, such as levels of social spending, the struggle against corruption, or for gender equality, or for a more participative democracy, or for a radical rejection of the current political class, address a broad public and typically target national and supranational institutions in order to influence the law-making process and/or to claim for broad political change. I define them as universalist because they refer to broad constituencies, even the totality of the population, as they often refer to the defence of public goods. "Populist social movements" (Aslanidis 2016) such as the Spanish Indignados or the Greek Aganaktismenoi clearly led universalist mobilisations, generally focusing on a harsh critique of the political class and demanding new forms of popular participation, whereas the Spanish Mareas – or the Argentine Frente Nacional contra la Pobreza [2001] –concentrated on the defence of social rights.

The campaign for a new Constituent Assembly served as a powerful aggregator of the alliance between very different Bolivian peasant and indigenous organisations often having different priorities. In a similar vein, the Indignados imposed an "anti-caste" rhetoric that served as a "master frame" for other mobilisations around more specific goals. However, such a broad alliance did not flourish in Italy (Zamponi 2012), where ideological divisions within the leftist milieu, and the own presence of multiple political parties within the protests, prevented the development of stable political coalitions between different actors. Albeit characterised, as the Italian street politics, by 'social movement partyism' (i.e., overlapping membership between different movements and different party actors), in Greece during the peak of the protest cycle (2010-2012) a 'competing mode of coordination' (Kanellopoulos et al. 2016) between certain leftist actors involved in anti-austerity protests has been observed (Simiti 2014; Kanellopoulos et al. 2016; Vogiatzoglou 2017).

In turn, campaigns around local issues aim at provoking concrete and immediate changes or "answers" to some grievances emerging in a specific territory. Many such movements do frame their struggles as a form of resistance against the neoliberal socioeconomic model, and their targets are often public (even national and supranational) institutions, but their activists pretend to speak on behalf of a geographically concentrated constituency. These movements can flourish around very different issues, such as: contested public infrastructures; privatisation of common goods or natural resources (the Water War in Cochabamba and the Gas War in El Alto, Bolivia); inadequate responses to local unemployment rates or dismissals (which triggered the piqueteros movement in Argentina: see Pereyra and Svampa 2003), etc.

Finally, sectorial demands are advanced by activists claiming to defend a constituency defined on a basis other than a geographic one. These conflicts could refer either to the production (such as a conflict about wage increases for a specific job sector) or the consumption sphere, such as a campaign against rents' or tariff increases. Both local and sectorial demands are usually more disaggregated, thus potentially more suitable for ad hoc solution and more likely to find institutional allies to give an immediate solution to their concerns.

I recognise that the borders between universalist, sectorial and local demands and mobilisations are blurred, and that many movements advanced "mixed" demands. The distinction, albeit more analytical than

empirical, is useful to understand the different strategies available to political parties to respond to the movements' demands.

The union movement, empirically, has been an important participant almost everywhere (one way or the other) in the anti-austerity protest cycles (Ancelovici 2014). Nonetheless, the relationship between social movements and trade unions has often been difficult and full of suspicions. The unions have often been depicted as "discredited" or "bureaucratised" actors (as in Venezuela, Argentina, Greece and Spain, where the links with equally "discredited" parties were more evident), by several movements. The unions were sometimes accused of being almost exclusively focused on the interests of their core-constituencies. In Bolivia, for instance, the dominancy of the miners and the salaried workers within the COB finally forced powerful organisations, like the peasant unions, to organise by themselves, outside (and sometimes in contraposition to) the peak union confederation (Silva and Rossi 2018; Padoan 2020b).

However, the unions often proved to be important institutional allies sustaining several protests over time, as put in evidence by Portos (2016) for the Spanish case. Economic dismissals, wage freezing and political attacks against labour rights opened a window of opportunity for "building a bridge" between outraged outsider and insider workers, a window that was exploited, for instance, by the Portuguese CGTP (in alliance with anti-austerity and precarious workers' movements) and by the Argentine CTA, a new peak confederation organising both public sector and unemployed workers (Retamozo and Morris 2015).

5.2. Patterns of Mobilisations Against Austerity

Once having briefly analysed the different kinds of demands that the movements advanced, one should broaden the view to describe the macro-characteristics of the social mobilisations against neoliberalism and austerity. I identify three macro-types of patterns of mobilisations observable: (a) union-led, (b) unified and (c) fragmented protests (see also Figure 1).

a) The union-led pattern emerged where the unions and, in general, the institutional Left, thanks to their organisational resources and their coherent oppositional activity in the pre-crisis period, played a leading role in the anti-austerity protest cycle and acted as the most important political articulator of the different segments of the popular sectors.

In the other cases, the protest cycles were dominated by novel actors and the unions did not play any leading role in them. I called the additional, alternative patterns unified and fragmented.

b) The unified pattern can be described as a broad cycle of protests where different social movements were able to build a close-knit alliance network advancing broad economic, social and political claims, typically around inclusive, "populist" frames (Aslanidis 2016). Even movements built around sectorial or local demands have the possibility of becoming part of a broader cycle of protest, by exploiting the resonant frames generated by the mobilisations. Such pattern is interpreted here as the precondition for the emergence of movement (based) populisms. It generates resonant, antagonistic frames that produce strong collective identities and identify the boundaries between the victims and the culprits of the crisis, thus paving the way for bringing the polarisation from the social to the political-electoral sphere. Crucially, the mobilisations also create a vast militancy, potentially ready to be involved in electoral politics if a proper political project emerges (like Podemos in Spain) or if the social movements are sufficiently strong and organised to opt for

autonomously entering electoral competition (like the Bolivian peasant movements that founded the MAS-IPSP).

c) The last pattern of anti-neoliberal mobilisations that I identify is the fragmented one. Contentious movements mainly focus either on local or sectorial issues, without coordinating their demands at a broader level (and sometimes competing for scarce resources and looking for particularistic solutions and institutional allies, as occurred for instance in Venezuela or Argentina), or they find themselves divided along ideological lines (as occurred in Italy), which makes difficult even the convergence around universalist campaigns.

Mediating parties may fulfill the task of brokering, thanks to their organisational resources, and articulate the different demands by recurring to the use of populist frames, thus positioning themselves as *the* political referents of the struggles against austerity. Party-rooted populism is the outcome. Brokerage activity may be eased either by protest cycles in which a certain degree of collaboration between movements has been achieved (and reinforced by the own presence of political brokers, as occurred in Greece[6]), or by extensive territorial presence and control of public resources facilitating strategies of cooptation and alliance-building (as occurred in Argentina). In the absence of such mediating parties, fragmented protest cycle creates the perfect political opportunity for the emergence of a political outsider occupying a vacuum in the political space and positioning himself as a radical alternative to the party system. Leader-initiated populism is thus the outcome (see Figure 1).

6. Failing Adaptations to the Socio-Political Environment Shaped by Anti-Austerity Mobilisations

In all the countries where an anti-neoliberal populist project emerged, there were existing parties that could have exploited the window of opportunity that was opened by the critical juncture, but they failed to do so. The weak participatory linkages of the Spanish Izquierda Unida (quite visible in its bureaucratic functioning), and its own discredit as a reliable antagonistic actor (Ramiro and Verge 2013), prevented it from playing any relevant role in the protest cycle. The Bolivian Radical Left remained unable to tie linkages with the peasant movements, while the radical discourse of the Aymara ethno-nationalist party MIP proved to be dysfunctional for creating a nationwide alliance (Madrid 2008). In both countries, the own weakness or limitations of the partisan Left favoured the development of alternative alliance networks composed by the movements.

Looking at the countries experiencing a fragmented cycle of anti-neoliberal and anti-austerity mobilizations, some comments over the trajectories of La Causa R (Venezuela), the FREPASO (Argentina), PRC and

[6] In this sense, the Greek protest cycle might be put in between our "fragmented" and "unified" categories. As Kanellopoulos et al. (2016: 114) put it, "the overall network could neither be characterized as fully centralized nor as fully decentralized, neither as a cooperative one nor as an explicitly hostile one. In both cases it looks like an intermediary case". However, as Simiti (2014: 18) stresses, this may apply only to the peak of the protests, in 2011: "the 2012 protests were smaller, less vociferous and more sector-fragmented […] After the Square movement, the protestors' belief in the political efficacy of collective protest had weakened, undermining any further endeavour to unite diverse political forces". Furthermore, as also Vogiatzoglou (2017) emphasises, divisions within the own "Square movement" still remained quite visible. More generally, there was not any "sublimation" of political identities during the Greek protest cycle in a way comparable to the Spanish one (in this sense, see Díez García 2015), nor any coalitional arrangements as definitely occurred in Bolivia.

SEL (Italy) and KKE (Greece) may contribute to fortify the argument presented here. The FREPASO, a party born in the mid-nineties aiming to occupy the left-of-centre space and to cross the traditional Peronist/Anti-Peronist cleavage, for a while successfully dialogued with anti-neoliberal actors from alternative unionism and grassroots movements. Its gradual encapsulation within urban middle-class sectors (mainly due to its positioning within the Anti-Peronist side: see Garay 2010), and its involvement in the pro-austerity De La Rúa's presidency, fatally harmed its possibility of playing any role in the aftermath of the 2001 collapse. In turn, all the attempts of building a "political instrument" of the contentious movements failed, due to their extreme ideological heterogeneity and to the successful PJ's and Kirchnerist strategy of dialogue with those movements more willing to "get their hands dirty" with the Peronist apparatus (Boyanovsky 2010).

In Venezuela, La Causa R, a party with solid links with grassroots unionism, and with an anti-corruption and participative inspiration, became a major electoral force in the nineties. Nevertheless, LCR was "not populist enough". Its quasi-utopian "assemblearism" harmed its ability of providing concrete response to the fragmented mobilised actors representing territorial or sectorial popular constituencies, while also provoking internal schisms (Hellinger 2003). Also because of its organisational genesis and structure – tightly linked with the so-called "new unionism" in the state of Bolívar – LCR failed to build up its own organisation throughout the country (and particularly in Caracas), and to develop its own linkage strategies with the majority of the working-class, i.e. urban poors occupied in informal sectors (Morgan 2011: 138). Its decision to pursue a moderate strategy within the Congress – including pacts with one of the "traditional parties" - gave the full control of the "antisystem", anti-puntofijista discourse to Chávez's project (Handlin 2017).

In Greece, the ideological orthodoxy and isolationist strategy of the KKE prevented it from playing a brokering role in the protests, despite its numerous and committed militancy, in stark contrast to Syriza's trajectory. Finally, in Italy, the ideological fragmentation of the political Left (already discredited by its negative governmental experience within Prodi's coalition) was reproduced in the streets, making even more difficult the construction of a unified protest cycle. In addition, the strong influence exerted by institutional actors (like the CGIL) on the protests provoked a certain decline in contentiousness once Berlusconi resigned and the Democratic Party opted to back Monti's technocratic government (Andretta 2018). The M5S had thus the opportunity of giving voice to disparate local, sectorial and universalist (anti-austerity, anti-corruption, participative democracy, struggle against job precariousness…) demands, "retweeted" by Grillo's blog and by M5S' local branches (the MeetUps), whose autonomy in terms of programmatic platform, and their overlapping membership with many local committees, were functional to such a successful "issue-owning" strategy (e.g., Mosca 2015).

7. Concluding Remarks

The framework proposed here allows for categorising in a novel way the different anti-neoliberal populist projects that emerged, in different times, in Latin America and Southern Europe, in reaction to major economic crises and to the austerity measures that were adopted to cope with them. Crucially, the framework provides a causal account of the different paths (i.e. the outcomes, or legacies, according to the critical juncture framework) taken by the electoral Lefts in the countries selected. The categorisation proposed here, by focusing on the organisational features and on the kind of organisational and environmental linkages exploited by different types of populist projects, limits the risk of putting all these very different phenomena in the same "populist box", and may be analytically useful to better understand, among other things, the different

impact of social mobilisations on the political arena, the relationship between different anti-neoliberal populisms and the quality of democracy and of representation, or the linkage strategy and the sociological bases[7] of the electorates of each antineoliberal populist subtype.

Focusing on the organisational features of these parties seems particularly important because it is a strongly underresearched topic. Existing literature mostly focused on the novel (and plebisictarian) use of on-line tools (e.g. Gerbaudo 2018; Deseriis and Vittori 2019) for participative-mobilising purposes – with little results in terms of participation and efficacy. In contrast, this framework emphasises the importance of territorial rootedness and of environmental linkages (Tsakatika and Lisi 2013) for party's emergence (or resilience) and consolidation, still in "digital times". As Pérez et al. (2019: 166) put it, "cyber activism can usefully complement mobilization tasks [but it has often favoured the transformation] from mass-organic to electoral-professional parties", i.e. one of the aspects of the process of party cartelisation that was one of the targets of the political projects analysed here.

The framework also may shed new lights on the political consequences of (the lack of) 'union revitalisation' (Bryson et al. 2011) and to reflect on the strategies available to 'party-union hubs' in contemporary era, particularly in countries affected by severe welfare regime dualisation and failures to correct the latter. The "crisis of European social democracy" has been widely connected with such failures (e.g. Keating and McCrone 2013), and the loss of support for centre-left parties during the Great Recession has been effectively much more pronounced in Southern Europe (Hutter and Kriesi 2019). Silva and Rossi (2018) have indeed argued that populist challengers in Latin America have led a kind of "incorporation" of labour market outsiders within the polity domain, through different (organisational, programmatic and clientelist) linkage strategies. However, the same authors have emphasised the difficult relationship of some of these projects (particularly the *leader-initiated populist* ones) with the organised working-class. Even in Southern Europe, and particularly in the case of the M5S (Padoan 2019), we observed some tendencies towards the politicisation of the insider-outsider divide in a way that may jeopardise the legitimacy of any political role of trade unionism.

Popular uprisings have recently rived other countries, such as Chile. Claims for "popular sovereignty", anti-neoliberal critiques, extreme dissatisfaction with the functioning of liberal-democratic institutions and scarce trust on existing left-of-centre parties are all key ingredients of the contemporary Chilean protest cycle. Crucially, in Chile we previously observed a long process of "politicization of inequalities" in which social mobilisations played a key role (Castiglioni and Rovira 2016). This has been also identified as a key factor for explaining recent party system changes in Southern Europe, in contrast to other European countries where conflicts around the "cultural dimension" were more salient and where, consequently, radical right populisms were on the rise (Hutter and Kriesi 2019)[8].

[7] As I argued elsewhere (2020a: 266), "while the constituencies of Labour-based Lefts and party- rooted populisms had a mixed composition across the insider-outsider divide, and movement(based) populisms quite faithfully reflected the social composition [of their 'founding movements'], in the case of leader-initiated populisms the core-constituencies were quite clearly the outsiders". More fine-grained analyses of political sociology (and much better data) are needed, though. Covid-related lockdown measures, and the way these have been framed in the public discourse, may have even increased the explanatory capacity of the insider-outsider divide on political attitudes and voting behaviour.

[8] Not coincidentally, when cultural (e.g., the 'refugee crises') and national (e.g., the Catalan question) issues became relatively more salient than economic ones, even in Southern Europe we witnessed the delayed rise of radical right challengers (see also Padoan 2020a).

Table 3 – Ideological and Organisational Resources of (old and new) party actors during the Critical Juncture ("successful" projects in grey).

		Ideological Resources			Organizational Resources	
Country	***Party***	**Populist Strategy**	**Class-based strategy**	**Reformist strategy**	**Territorial Rootedness**	**Enviromental Linkages with Movements**
Venezuela	**Chavism**	X			Still limited	Strong, particularly with urban movements
	La Causa R			X	Concentrated in its stronghold (Bolívar State)	Concentrated in its stronghold (Bolívar State)
Argentina	**Justicialist Party – Frente para la Victoria**	X			High	Collaboration/Competition with "pragmatic" *piqueteros* and other territorial movements
	FREPASO – *Front for a Solidarian Country*			X	Low	None
Bolivia	**MAS-IPSP**	X			High	Extremely Strong
	MIP - *Movimiento Indígena Pachakutik*		X (*ethnic-based* appeals towards Aymara citizens)		High, but concentrated in La Paz Department	Strong, but concentrated in La Paz Department
Uruguay	***Frente Amplio***		X		High	Unions (close allies of the party) as the main social actors in the protests
Italy	**M5S**	X			Still limited but in expansion	Quite strong, particularly with some LULU movements (+ [even more decisively] "issue-owning" strategy)
	PRC – *Communist Refoundation Party*		X		Medium to Low, in decline	Only with ideologically close movements
	SEL – *Left, Ecology and Freedom*			X	Low	Low
Greece	**Syriza**	X			Medium to Low	Strong (brokerage role; overlapping membership)
	KKE – *Greek Communist Party*		X		Medium	Only with "ancillary" organizations
Spain	**Podemos**	X			Still limited but in expansion	Strong (overlapping membership; coordination for programmatic purposes)
	IU – *United Left*		x	X	Low	None
Portugal	**PCP - *Portuguese Communist Party***		X		Medium	Unions (close allies of the party) as the main social actors in the protests
	BE – *Leftist Bloc*		X		Medium to Low	Strong (overlapping membership) with precarious workers' movements

Source: Author's Elaboration.

Focusing on the legacy of the critical juncture opened by neoliberal crises (see Table 2), Latin American presidential systems have favoured party systems' restructuration around a populist-antipopulist cleavage, while in Southern Europe the changes have been confined to the leftist side. Where 'pasokization' has been

avoided, the greater saliency of the "cultural dimension" seems to have cemented new (litigious) coalitions within the (renewed) leftist space, although party identities, programmatic agendas and core-constituencies of "newcomers" remain quite different from mainstream parties' ones. All of these considerations definitely support the positions of those scholars preferring to talk about "varieties of populisms" (e.g., Caiani and Graziano 2019) and to stress the very different structural and conjunctural conditions paving the way for the emergence of different "varieties".

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