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Latin America's Populist Revival

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Latin American populism was widely thought to have run its course by the 1980's as the region embraced far-reaching market reforms. In recent years, however, new and strikingly diverse populist movements have returned to political prominence, reopening historic debates about the meaning of populism and its political and economic correlates. This article suggests that populism should be understood as a top-down process of political mobilization that is directed by a dominant personality, and it traces the resurgence of populist movements to the political and economic limitations of Latin America's "dual transitions" to democracy and market liberalism at the end of the 20th century. In particular, populism's revival is rooted in the institutional frailties and market insecurities of contemporary Latin American democracies, conditions that have made the region prone to new patterns of social and political mobilization.

Although populism in its myriad forms has appeared in many parts of the world, its most indelible imprint may be on the political landscape in Latin America. Since the onset of mass politics in the early-to-mid 20th century, repeated waves of populist mobilization have convulsed the region. In some countries these waves had an ephemeral existence, but in others they proved to be extraordinarily resilient, producing long-lasting political and institutional legacies. Indeed, the region has provided fertile terrain for some of the world's most quintessentially populist political experiments; leaders like Argentina's Juan Perón and Venezuela's Hugo Chávez are virtually synonymous with populism, endowing the concept with vivid images of charismatic rulers who energize the masses, challenge traditional elites, and assert national autonomy in the international arena.

Even in Latin America, however, populism has ebbed and flowed in its political prominence, and it is far from homogeneous in its political, economic, and institutional expressions. Historically, Latin American populism was affiliated with the state-led model of capitalist development known as import substitution industrialization (ISI), which allowed interventionist states to extend material benefits to organized working and lower class constituencies. Consequently, many presumed populism had run its course when ISI collapsed in the 1980s, the victim of a region-wide debt crisis and inflationary and balance of payments pressures that bankrupted developmentalist states.[1] The crisis culminated in near universal adoption

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of austerity programs and free market (or "neoliberal") economic reforms, as states retreated from a broad range of developmental and social welfare roles historically associated with populism. Deeply embedded in the notion of a region-wide "Washington Consensus"[2] for political and economic liberalism was the belief that populism—along with the two "-isms" that followed, statism and nationalism—had been eclipsed in a new era of democracy, fiscal austerity, and market globalization. Conventional wisdom held that henceforth public policies would be determined by responsible technocrats who understood the laws of the marketplace, rather than by social mobilization or the political pressures applied by organized, rent-seeking interest groups.

The demise of populism, however, proved to be short-lived. By the middle of the 1990s, scholars had begun to focus attention on new forms of populist leadership that coexisted with—or even implemented—neoliberal structural adjustment policies, thus challenging the assumption that populism as a political phenomenon was necessarily coupled with a particular model or stage of socioeconomic development.[3] And by the end of the 1990s, the explosive rise of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela demonstrated that even more traditional, statist variants of populism remained potentially potent in Latin America's neoliberal era. Indeed, the early years of the new millennium produced a broader trend of left-leaning parties and populist figures in national office in Chile, Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia, and Peru,[4] reopening historic debates about alternative modes of development that the technocratic Washington Consensus largely had foreclosed during its heyday. Although the populist label is hardly appropriate for some of these new governments, as discussed below, there is little doubt that populism has experienced a revival in post-adjustment Latin America.

What explains this remarkable revival of a political phenomenon that appeared moribund only a few short years ago? The ebb and flow of populist waves in the region should make us wary about attributing populism to underlying and relatively constant cultural influences. More likely, it emerges from the intersection of highly exclusive socioeconomic and political orders with institutional contexts that create political space for outsiders to mobilize anti-elite or anti-establishment popular sentiments. If this is true, then populist waves should occur during periods of institutional crisis, decay, or transition, when established political institutions lose their capacity to contain or channel popular political mobilization.

Not surprisingly, then, populist waves have coincided with the two great political and economic transitions of the 20th century in Latin America—that is, with the "critical junctures" that mark the transition from one era of development to another. The first of these was the post-1930 transition from oligarchic rule and agro-export-based economies to mass politics and ISI. Where oligarchic parties were unable to channel the political mobilization of an emerging proletariat, they were often eclipsed by populist leaders and parties who sponsored the initial political incorporation of the working and lower classes.[5] The second great transition occurred in the aftermath of the 1982 debt crisis, when ISI declined and market reforms

swept across the region. The combination of economic crisis and reform weakened the mass-based party and labor organizations of the ISI era, opening political space for outsiders and populist figures to appeal directly to unorganized mass constituencies. Initially, several of these figures—such as Alberto Fujimori in Peru, Carlos Menem in Argentina, and Fernando Collor in Brazil—coupled populist leadership styles with neoliberal platforms, a political novelty that inspired a vigorous scholarly debate about the meaning and properties of populism.[6] More recently, as the Washington Consensus began to fray amidst financial crises and renewed social mobilization, populist figures have sought to capitalize on public disaffection with the social deficits of the neoliberal model.

Although this new wave of populism differs in several respects from that of the ISI era, it also manifests some important similarities. This paper thus tries to explain contemporary populism in Latin America by placing it within a comparative historical perspective on populist mobilization. This perspective suggests that the region's populist revival is rooted in the limitations of the "dual transitions" toward political and economic liberalism—or democracy and free markets—in the 1980s. As shown below, the legacies of these transitions were the aforementioned structural and institutional conditions that are most conducive to populism—namely, political and economic exclusion, and institutional frailty. These conditions fostered the rise of classical populism during the ISI era in Latin America, and they are integral to understanding the political economy of populism in the current period as well.

Exclusion, Institutional Frailty, and Populist Mobilization

Populism is, as Kurt Weyland emphasizes, a heavily contested concept, especially in Latin American scholarship.[7] It has been used to characterize an extraordinarily broad range of empirical phenomena, from political regimes to parties, leadership styles, economic policies, and mobilization patterns. Despairing of ever reaching a consensus on the meaning, attributes, and applications of the concept, some scholars have even recommended that it be jettisoned from the social science lexicon.[8] Nevertheless, the concept would not be so deeply embedded in both scholarly and popular discourse if it did not convey meaning and provide analytical leverage. Indeed, it seems futile to try to interpret contemporary political dynamics in Latin America without recourse to the concept.

As used here, then, populism refers to the top-down political mobilization of mass constituencies by personalistic leaders who challenge elite groups on behalf of an ill-defined *pueblo*, or 'the people.' This conceptualization is explicitly political in content, with an analytical focus on the pattern of mobilization that links a leader to mass constituencies. This approach has two principal advantages. First, it does not weigh down the populist concept with a series of economic, sociological, or historical attributes that are neither logically nor empirically intrinsic to the political phenomenon. It recognizes, for example, that populist patterns of political mobilization are not bound to any specific set of fiscal policies, redistributive strategies, or

modes of state economic intervention and interest intermediation. Populist leaders can thus emerge in widely varying developmental contexts and employ a broad range of economic policies and organizational models in their attempts to mobilize support (even if they have elective affinities for some over others). Second, this conceptual demarcation facilitates comparative analysis along a central political dimension across cases and time periods. It makes possible, for example, the identification of political similarities in quite different socioeconomic contexts or, conversely, political differences in otherwise similar cases.

If populism is understood in political terms, then the economic policies adopted by populist figures are a subject of empirical investigation rather than definitional fiat. Specific policies or policymaking patterns—such as wage hikes, fiscal profligacy, patronage distributions, or state-led industrialization—can be understood as economic instruments that belong to the populist "tool kit" for mobilizing and securing popular support. Although some types of populist mobilization rely heavily on the material incentives offered by such economic policies, other types may emphasize non-material mobilizational frames such as nationalism or popular resentments against a political establishment or cultural elites. Populist tool kits, therefore, may include a diverse (and often fluid) set of economic and political instruments with widely varying levels of internal coherence and compatibility—a fact that helps account for the lack of ideological definition of most populist movements.

These conceptual and analytical distinctions clearly affect the application of the populist label to different types of political movements. Whereas an economic conceptualization might lump the movements led by Hugo Chávez and Bolivia's Evo Morales in the same populist category,[9] the political definition adopted here differentiates them on the basis of their quite distinct mobilizational patterns—specifically, the greater autonomy of lower-class and indigenous socio-political mobilization in Bolivia. Morales's leadership, as we will see, was spawned by a social movement which toppled two presidents and then successfully entered the electoral arena itself, creating a political dynamic that is quite different from Chávez's top-down process of populist mobilization in Venezuela.

Similarly, this political definition does not presume any particular mode of organization (or, conversely, non-organization). Populist figures mobilize their followers from the top-down in a variety of civic and political spheres, but they may or may not create organizational intermediaries to facilitate, institutionalize, or control such mobilization. Consequently, Latin American populist movements have varied widely in their organizational expressions. Some populist figures, such as Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre in Peru, founded highly disciplined mass party organizations, thus demonstrating that personalism and charismatic authority are not necessarily antithetical to political institutionalization. Others prioritized the organization of civil society. Perón, for example, built a formidable labor confederation while maintaining an under-institutionalized political party.[10] Still others, such as José María Velasco Ibarra in Ecuador or Fujimori in

Peru, preferred a direct, unmediated relationship with mass constituencies, and thus eschewed all but the most fleeting forms of social or political organization. Chávez, on the other hand, has supported a multi-tiered and decentralized network of grass-roots organizations, many of them outside the ranks of his "official" national party organization. Neighborhood committees (known as "Bolivarian circles"), partisan cadres, election campaign teams, economic cooperatives, and networks organized around different social "missions" have all played vital and constantly evolving roles in the popular organization of *Chavismo*.

Like economic policies, then, popular organization is a malleable political instrument that can adopt different forms and be employed in distinct arenas for a broad range of strategic purposes. In particular, mass organization is a weapon employed by populist figures who need to mobilize the strength of numbers as a counterweight to the economic or institutional resources commanded by elite opponents. Consequently, mass organization tends to be a function of political conflict: the greater the challenge posed by a populist figure to elite groups, and the more threatening the elite counter-reaction, the more extensive popular organization is likely to be.[11]

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Given these diverse economic and organizational expressions, how does populist mobilization relate to the structural and institutional conditions of Latin American societies? The first great wave of populist mobilization during the early stages of ISI is relatively straightforward to interpret, as it was rooted in attempts to overcome the political and socioeconomic exclusion that prevailed during the region's post-independence century of oligarchic rule. This exclusion had both structural and institutional foundations. Structurally, it was rooted in pre-industrial, commodity export-based economies with highly concentrated patterns of land ownership, heavy reliance on semi-feudal and coercive rural labor practices, and the absence of organizational rights for peasants or the incipient working class. Institutionally, exclusion was enforced by class-based restrictions on suffrage where elections were held, and by patrimonial or military forms of authoritarian rule where they were not.

Socioeconomic modernization and suffrage reform in the early 20th century undermined this oligarchic order by creating new popular subjects—primarily the urban industrial working and middle classes—who articulated claims for political incorporation and economic redress. Workers, in particular, had urgent material demands and a capacity for collective action, yet they remained on the margins of existing representative institutions. Their political mobilization foreclosed the reproduction of oligarchic regimes

founded on exclusion, acquiescence, and social control, and it generated the critical junctures that profoundly shaped national trajectories of political development during the ISI era.[12]

These critical junctures grew from the structural contradictions that existed between economic modernization, class formation, and social mobilization, on one side, and political/institutional exclusion, on the other. Three basic resolutions of this contradiction were possible, reflecting alternative methods of addressing the tensions between political democracy and social inequality. In a handful of cases—most prominently Uruguay and Colombia—traditional elitist parties effectively channeled (and contained) the initial working class political mobilization, becoming catchall parties with multi-class constituencies secured by extensive clientelist linkages. In most of the region, however, oligarchic institutions were less effective at incorporating popular sectors and thus succumbed to the rise of mass politics. In some countries, especially in the Central American region,[13] this eclipse caused elites to retreat behind the protective shield of increasingly harsh authoritarian regimes to suppress popular challenges to the social order. In others, however, elites were forced to share the political stage with new populist leaders and parties who sponsored the political incorporation of ascendant urban (and sometimes rural) masses. In short, Latin American countries entered the modern era of mass politics with development trajectories that were marked by the repression, cooptation, or mobilization of working and lower classes, with populism fundamentally shaping the latter pattern.

Although the limited size of the industrial working class and the structural heterogeneity of popular sectors militated against the formation of highly institutionalized, class-based political parties,[14] populist figures employed charismatic appeals to aggregate multi-class (but anti-oligarchic) socio-political coalitions. These populist figures, such as Perón in Argentina, Lázaro Cárdenas in Mexico, Getulio Vargas in Brazil, and Haya de la Torre in Peru, mobilized their followers from the top-down by combining nationalist appeals and an anti-oligarchic discourse with commitments to state-led industrialization, workers' rights, and social welfare reforms.

With a few exceptions, such as Velasco Ibarra in Ecuador, these ISI-era populist leaders were institution builders. They established mass-based party and/or labor and peasant organizations that dominated lower-class political representation, in several cases for generations to come. They also forged corporatist linkages between these collective social blocs and redistributive states to process the exchange of organizational and material rewards for political loyalty.

To the extent that historic populist movements became institutionalized while retaining their control over mass political loyalties, they served to crowd out new or competing populist projects, as well as more radical leftist alternatives. Indeed, in countries like Mexico, Venezuela, and Bolivia, dominant populist parties moderated over time and became the backbone of a reconfigured political establishment—a far cry from their more polarizing outsider or even insurgent origins. In other countries, such as

Argentina, Brazil, and Peru, populist parties were strong but polarizing, and elite and/or military opposition led to extended periods of political proscription under authoritarian regimes. In general, the rise of powerful leftist guerrilla movements in the 1970s and 1980s occurred in countries where populist mobilization and social reform had been nipped in the bud by repression or cooptation during the ISI era—specifically, in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Colombia.[15] Although virtually every country in the region developed some type of guerrilla movement in the aftermath of the Cuban Revolution, strong traditions of populist mobilization—where they existed—appeared to inoculate most countries from large-scale insurrectionary movements.[16]

Not surprisingly, then, the second great wave of populist mobilization began at the tail end of the 20th century, when the institutional legacies of these earlier patterns of populist mobilization began to erode, and the combination of social exclusion and institutional frailty re-emerged to provide both incentives and a favorable political opportunity structure for new populist movements. The socioeconomic and political correlates of this new wave of populism are analyzed below. These correlates suggest that the demise of ISI and the transition to market liberalism, far from rendering populism obsolete, may have actually contributed to its political revival.

Back to the Future: Populism in Latin America's Neoliberal Era

The dual transitions towards political democracy and market liberalism that swept across Latin America during the waning decades of the 20th century created a series of contradictory effects with profound implications for political representation. On one hand, new democratic regimes extended basic citizenship rights where they had often never reached before—in particular, delivering voting rights and the recognition of cultural autonomy for indigenous peoples.[17] On the other hand, the highly uneven application—both socially and geographically—of the rule of law often impaired broader civil rights.[18] Simply put, large swaths of the population in many countries lived on the margins of legal and administrative structures that could enforce equal rights of citizenship, from access to the courts to protection against police brutality.

Sadly, in 2004—more than twenty years after the debt crisis, and following two decades of growth-oriented market reforms—more than 40 percent of Latin Americans continued to live below the poverty line, 46.5 percent of the workforce toiled in the informal sector, and the average Gini index of inequality stood at .542, far above the world average of .381.

Furthermore, rights of social citizenship were often retracted as economic crises and market-based structural adjustment programs forced states to relinquish some of the regulatory, redistributive, and social welfare functions that they had assumed during the ISI era. In particular, economic restructuring and labor market liberalization eroded employment security, caused wages to stagnate or fall in much of the region, and swelled the ranks of informal and temporary contract sectors of the workforce that were excluded from the social safety net. At the same time, anti-inflationary austerity programs often forced cuts in public spending, which had long cushioned popular living standards. Sadly, in 2004—more than twenty years after the debt crisis, and following two decades of growth-oriented market reforms—more than 40 percent of Latin Americans continued to live below the poverty line, 46.5 percent of the workforce toiled in the informal sector, and the average Gini index of inequality stood at .542, far above the world average of .381.[19]

In the short term, the tensions between expanded voting rights, deepening economic insecurity, and declining social citizenship were politically manageable because dual transitions often produced a demobilization of popular social and political movements. Indeed, they wreaked havoc on the mass-based party-labor blocs that had been forged during the ISI era. The combination of economic crises and free market reforms decimated labor movements, as unions were hard-pressed to organize an increasingly informal, heterogeneous, and precarious workforce. Furthermore, the political dynamics of the market reform process frayed the historic organizational and programmatic linkages that bound labor movements to mass parties. In one of the great paradoxes of the neoliberal era, free market reforms in countries like Argentina, Mexico, Bolivia, and Venezuela were not implemented by conservative, pro-business parties, but rather by historic labor-based and populist parties that had been the very architects of ISI development policies. Consequently, in much of the region the transition from ISI to neoliberalism left labor and popular sectors politically marginalized, if not orphaned, by dramatic shifts in parties' programmatic orientations.

The detachment of voters from established parties, however, was hardly restricted to labor-based or populist parties. It was, in fact, a more generalized phenomenon that reflected a deep-seated crisis of political representation in the region.[20] This crisis had a number of sources, including the political fallout from economic crises, which produced widespread anti-incumbent vote swings; state weaknesses or failures in diverse arenas that tainted all established institutions; and the spread of media-based election campaigns that allowed political entrepreneurs to appeal directly to voters without relying on the intermediary role of mass party organizations. Both political behavior and attitudes reflected the crisis. Behaviorally, growing electoral volatility indicated weak partisan attachments and a fluid, mobile electorate. Attitudinally, public opinion surveys provided evidence of declining partisan identification, and confidence rankings placed parties the lowest among all public institutions. Across the region, only 21.9 percent of Latin Americans expressed confidence in political parties, and less

than 16 percent claimed to be "very close" or "somewhat close" to a party organization.[21]

The decline of intermediary institutions in both civil and political society clearly vacated political space that could be filled by populist figures and other "outsiders." Indeed, new populist leaders not only capitalized on the decline of established representative institutions; they also accelerated it with their verbal attacks on parties and, in some cases, labor movements for being undemocratic, corrupt, and self-interested bastions of a failed status quo. This type of anti-establishment populist discourse was highly malleable ideologically and programmatically. Under a leader like Fujimori, and in the context of an economic and security crisis such as that confronted by Peru in the early 1990's, this formula could be wedded to a conservative agenda that advanced the process of neoliberal reform. Fujimori thus railed against a "partidocracia" that had driven the country to ruin, as well as a labor movement that supposedly represented the interests of union leaders rather than rank-and-file workers. With traditional representative institutions in decay, and with his own "party" little more than a registration label, Fujimori could advocate a misnamed "direct democracy"[22]—in reality, a form of autocratic authority that bypassed intermediary institutions and appealed directly to lower class groups who were highly dependent on state social programs.

As Chávez has demonstrated, however, an anti-establishment discourse can also be harnessed to a more radical, leftist agenda of socioeconomic and political change. Whereas Fujimori attacked party and labor organizations that obstructed market reforms, Chávez challenged those which supported or acquiesced to them. Indeed, the election of Chávez in 1998 symbolized the revival of populism's historic nationalist and anti-market thrust, as well as the renewed capacity of popular factions to mobilize politically against market-generated insecurities. In subsequent years, mass protest movements toppled a series of pro-market presidents in Ecuador, Argentina, and Bolivia, and new left-of-center governments were elected into office throughout much of South America. Suddenly, and often unexpectedly, the Washington Consensus was in tatters, and a social backlash had repoliticized development policy, offering group solidarity, collective action, and an interventionist state as alternatives to the material insecurities of market individualism.[23]

Renewed popular mobilization thus brought to the forefront the latent contradictions of Latin America's dual transitions—in particular, the tensions between the extension of democratic political rights and the retraction of social citizenship rights. In countries with relatively strong institutions for mediating conflict, like Chile, Brazil, and Uruguay, "renovated" or post-Marxist social democratic parties articulated and managed these tensions, gradually accumulating electoral support, gaining access to national executive power, and pragmatically seeking to address their "social deficits" within the constraints of globally integrated market economies. Institutionalized channels of political representation thus restrained populist tendencies in these countries and moderated their political expression.[24] In

much of the region, however, parties with popular bases were less institutionalized or more easily captured by dominant personalities, and political space existed for new social and political movements to channel popular discontents. These discontents were expressed in strikingly diverse ways, however, and not all of them warrant the appellation of populism.

One pattern entailed the political ascension of historic populist parties under new or reinvigorated populist leadership. This pattern appeared in Argentina and Peru, where Nestor Kirchner and Alan García revived the populist traditions of Peronism and *Aprismo*, respectively, while ushering their parties back into power. In Argentina, Kirchner outmaneuvered his rivals to consolidate a high degree of personal control over Peronism's vast but fractious party machine, while simultaneously pulling the party at least partially back toward its nationalist and statist roots following the financial collapse of the neoliberal experiment that was implemented by Kirchner's Peronist predecessor Carlos Menem in the 1990's. Argentina's financial crisis and severe recession of 2001–02 triggered a massive social protest movement that overthrew the Radical Party-led government of Fernando de la Rúa and devastated the non-Peronist side of party system. The crisis made possible a reassertion of Peronist political hegemony when first Eduardo Duhalde and then Kirchner restored political order and managed a surprisingly successful economic recovery. In the process, the Peronist leaders defaulted on the national debt, defied the IMF and international creditors, absorbed or neutralized most of the social protest movement, and restored some price controls and state ownership of public utilities.

The Peruvian case offers one of the most startling political comebacks the region has ever seen, with the return of a charismatic populist figure who had been discredited thoroughly after governing through the debacle of the late 1980's and spending a decade in exile fighting corruption charges. APRA—the mass party founded by the legendary populist leader Haya de la Torre, and inherited by García following Haya's death—saw its electoral support nearly evaporate over the course of 1990's, as did other traditional parties eclipsed by the personalistic authority of Alberto Fujimori. A political landscape virtually devoid of representative institutions, however, was highly conducive to personality-based electoral movements, creating a logic of "serial populism" under which rival populist figures dominated the electoral arena and succeeded each other in office. Following the implosion of the Fujimori regime in 2000, García returned and pulled APRA along with him, initially by articulating popular discontent with the social deficits of Peru's neoliberal model, and then—paradoxically —by representing the most viable "mainstream" alternative to the more radical nationalist and populist figure Ollanta Humala in the 2006 campaign. Like Hugo Chávez in Venezuela—who openly backed his campaign—Humala came from a military background and made his entrance to the political arena by leading a military rebellion. His campaign for the presidency, which finished first in the initial round of balloting, was vintage populism; it shone the spotlight on a dominant personality and a consummate outsider who appealed to largely unorganized masses with an eclectic message that was impossible to

categorize ideologically. Indeed, Humala's campaign evoked highly contradictory images of ethnic identification, Peruvian nationalism, militarism, anti-imperialism, economic statism, and distributive politics.

Although diverse sectors of the Peruvian electorate ultimately coalesced behind García to deny Humala the presidency, the latter's mercurial rise was strikingly reminiscent of that of Chávez eight years before. Together, the two leaders are paradigmatic examples of a second pattern of populist resurgence—that of new electoral movements formed around dominant, charismatic personalities with little prior organization of partisan or social spheres. Such movements may incorporate different grassroots groups within their ranks, but they are novel eruptions on the national political scene that are mobilized from the top-down and highly dependent on a dominant personality. Prior to 1998, for example, a variety of small leftist parties, dissident unions, and community organizations resisted neoliberal reforms in Venezuela, but they did not comprise a national movement, and they can hardly be said to have spawned *Chavismo*. The populist movement erupted on their margins, then quickly subordinated or absorbed them as Chávez mobilized mass electoral support among the previously unorganized poor (who in many cases were subsequently incorporated into new community-based *Chavista* organizations that played central roles in the social programs of the Bolivarian government). Similarly, prior to the rise of Humala, Peru was notable for the weakness of indigenous and lower-class social mobilization, in comparison to its Andean neighbors Ecuador and Bolivia.[25] Both Chávez and Humala, then, were the fulcrums of new electoral movements that were formed around their leadership and subordinate to their authority; in neither case was this leadership an organic expression of autonomous social or political movements.

The contrast with Bolivia's Evo Morales is striking, and it highlights the distinctions between political and economic conceptualizations of populism, as mentioned above. In the Bolivian case, support for Morales gradually increased over successive electoral campaigns as a logical extension of the social protest movements that rocked the country after 2000. Morales himself got his start in politics as a leader of the largely indigenous coca growers' union, which mobilized initially against U.S. drug eradication programs. The coca growers played a major role in subsequent mass mobilizations that combined indigenous cultural claims with material or class-based demands related to land and labor. Increasingly, these mobilizations took aim at Bolivia's neoliberal model, which included some of the most far-reaching market reforms seen in the region. The protests known as the "water wars" and the "gas wars," for example, successfully challenged the privatization and denationalization of natural resources that were intrinsic

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to the neoliberal model. These protest movements were so widespread and unrelenting that they forced two presidents to resign from office, and they provided an organizational foundation for a new leftist party that under girded Morales' election to the presidency in 2005.

Clearly, then, the Bolivian case is an example of an autonomous social movement—or, more properly, a network of allied movements—that effectively enters and contests the electoral arena. The leadership role of Morales and his party is rooted organically in this social mobilization from below, creating a very different dynamic from the top-down mobilization of mass constituencies integral to a political conceptualization of populism. Morales, then, may align himself internationally with Chávez and adopt similar types of statist, nationalist, and redistributive economic policies—in short, he may be considered an "economic populist" —but his leadership rests upon a different logic of political authority and constituency mobilization. It is a logic not of populism but of autonomous, grass-roots social mobilization that is channeled into the electoral arena and translated into political power. It is, in fact, the very antithesis of populism.

These subtle but important distinctions highlight the diverse political expressions of popular resistance to market liberalization in contemporary Latin America. They also guard against attempts to separate these responses into the simple, dichotomous categories of populism and social democracy—according to which the "responsible" leftist parties governing Chile, Brazil and Uruguay are characterized as social democratic, and a variety of more radical and less institutionalized alternatives are lumped together in a residual populist category. Such generalizations lack the precision that is required to fully understand different logics of political representation. The tensions between political democracy and social exclusion are sometimes resolved by conservative political dominance or institutionalized reformist politics, while at other times they generate mass political mobilization that transcends established representative institutions. Such mobilization can be directed from above by a dominant personality, or generated autonomously by diverse social movements. The former pattern is archetypal populism; the latter, a form of movement politics that is best understood with a separate set of conceptual and analytical tools.

Notes

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[2] Williamson, John. "What Washington Means by Policy Reform," in John Williamson, ed., *Latin American Adjustment: How Much Has Happened?* Washington, D.C.: Institute for International Economics, 1990.

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[4] Castañeda, Jorge. "Latin America's Left Turn," Foreign Affairs 85, 3. May–June 2006.

[5] Collier, Ruth Berins and David Collier. *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, the Labor Movement, and Regime Dynamics in Latin America.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.
[6] See, for example, Lynch, Nicolás "Neopopulismo: Un Concepto Vacío." *Socialismo y Participación* 86 (December 1999): 63–80; Vilas, Carlos M. "¿Populismos Reciclados o Neoliberalismo a Secas? El Mito del 'Neopopulismo' Latinoamericano." *Revista Venezolana de Economía y Ciencias Sociales* 9, 3 (May–August 2003): 13–36; and Weyland, Kurt. "Clarifying a Contested Concept: Populism in the Study of Latin American Politics." *Comparative Politics* 34 (October 2001): 1–22.
[7] Weyland 2001.
[8] Roxborough, Ian. "Unity and Diversity in Latin American History." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 16 (May 1984): 14.
[9] See, for example, Castañeda 2006.
[10] McGuire, James W. *Peronism Without Perón: Unions, Parties, and Democracy in Argentina.* Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 1997.
[11] Roberts, Kenneth M. "Populism, Political Conflict, and Grass-Roots Organization in Latin America." *Comparative Politics* 38, 2 (January 2006): 127–148.
[12] Collier and Collier 1991.
[13] Mahoney, James. *The Legacies of Liberalism: Path Dependence and Political Regimes in Central America.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001. 236–263.
[14] Dix, Robert H. "Cleavage Structures and Party Systems in Latin America." *Comparative Politics* 22, 1 (October 1989): 23–37.
[15] For the Central American cases, see Brockett, Charles D. *Political Movements and Violence in Central America.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
[16] The outlier was Peru's Shining Path insurgency in the 1980's, which emerged in a country that already contained a major historic populist party—Haya de la Torre's APRA—as well as a powerful electoral left.
[17] Van Cott, Donna Lee. *The Friendly Liquidation of the Past: The Politics of Diversity in Latin America.* Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000.
[18] Democracy in Latin America: Towards a Citizens' Democracy. New York: United Nations Development Programme, 2004.
[19] Social Panorama of Latin America: Statistical Appendix. Santiago: United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2005, 317–318 and 336–337; *Democracy in Latin America: Towards a Citizens' Democracy,* 125.
[20] See, for example, Scott Mainwaring, Ana María Bejarano, and Eduardo Pizarro, eds. *The Crisis of Democratic Representation in the Andes* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).
[21] J. Mark Payne, Daniel Zovatto G., Fernando Carrillo Flórez, and Andrés Allamand Zavala, *Democracies in Development: Politics and Reform in Latin America.* Washington, D.C.: Inter-American Development Bank and the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, 2002. 38, 138.
[22] Fujimori's mode of governance could hardly have been more different from direct democracy as it is understood in democratic theory– namely, to refer to the direct participation of citizens in deliberation, legislation, and the making of public policies.
[23] Polanyi, Karl. *The Great Transformation.* New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1944.
[24] In Brazil, however, a series of corruption scandals induced President Luis Ignacio da Silva ("Lula," for short) to distance himself from the Workers' Party while running for re-election in 2006. To the extent that Lula came to rely increasingly on personal bases of support rather than his party's organized constituencies, his leadership style assumed more populist characteristics.
[25] Yashar, Deborah J. *Contesting Citizenship in Latin America: The Rise of Indigenous Movements and the Postliberal Challenge.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.