

CHAPTER 7

Public Sphere and World-System: Theorizing Populism at the Margins

Jeremiah Morelock and Felipe Ziotti Narita

The rise of populism and its authoritarian variations over the last decade has not been confined to the West. Recent academic literature/debate on populism¹ points out that the global populist surge constitutes a diffuse set of political and economic categories (rhetoric, style, identity, etc.) that can also be perceived at the margins of the West in countries like Hungary, South Korea, the Philippines, Bolivia, Poland, and Venezuela (Sowa and Ciobanu 2016; Nilsson-Wright 2016; Stewart and Wasserstrom 2016; Juego 2017; Nowak 2014; Petkovski 2015). Further, while populist movements may have their most palpable manifestations within the geographical and political parameters of particular nation-states, all nation-states are dynamically inextricable from global capitalism. Hence, all populist movements take place within a global context, and are shaped not just by the race and class composition of particular nations, but also by the race and class composition of the capitalist world-system, and the place of particular nations within the global compositional order. To theorize populism adequately, due focus must be dedicated to its manifestations in countries other than the Western core, as well as to its transnational dynamics. This chapter illustrates an effort at elaborating and analysing an open-ended theoretical scheme on these dynamics through the prisms of critical theory (Jürgen Habermas) and world-systems analysis (Immanuel Wallerstein). We develop this scheme in

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application to authoritarian populism in general, and specifically to populisms in the history of peripheral and semi-peripheral countries of Latin America in their world-systems context.

Habermas and Wallerstein are not the most intuitive thinkers to pair together in dialogue, notably due to Wallerstein's Marxian focus on global economic processes and Habermas' linguistic and Weberian focus on communication and rationality. Habermas is not as far from Marxism in his earlier work, however, including his theorization of the bourgeois public sphere (1962/1992), his updating and embellishing Marx's crisis theory into his own theory of 'legitimation crisis' (1975), and in his efforts at 'reconstructing' historical materialism (1976).² He also included Freudian psychoanalysis in his earlier work (1978). In large part his early work reached an apex in the 1980s in the form of a two-volume magnum opus (1984, 1987) that also marked his full break from Marx and Freud; and by extension marked his break from the original *critical* foundations of the Frankfurt School. Recently – perhaps inspired by the threat of populist movements of the far-right emerging across the globe – scholars have become impatient with Habermas, Honneth, and others of the contemporary Frankfurt School designation who do *not* take influence from Marx, Nietzsche, or Freud; and correspondingly *do* take much of the critical edge out of critical theory (see Thompson 2016).

Rather than tossing Habermas aside completely, we suggest he may still be useful for truly critical work, provided his theories are put into dialogue with appropriate others.³ Indeed, linking communicative rationality with the dynamics of global capital can give us a broader picture than just sticking to one or the other – provided of course that the links can convincingly be forged. This chapter is constructed as a modest offering toward this aim. We hope it may serve as a basis for further theoretical and empirical work. In a similar vein, we present our theoretical scheme without pretensions to finality or totalization. Yet this tentativeness is not just an expression of our conviction that modesty must be exercised in connecting these thinkers as we do here; it is also an expression of a methodological strategy to use theory in an open and loose fashion. We do not propose a deterministic Habermasian–Wallersteinian theory of populism. Instead, we identify non-deterministic structural preconditions of populism, and we situate these preconditions within a world-systems framework, identifying sites of contact and potential synthesis of Habermas' and Wallerstein's theories especially as they pertain to varieties of populism in the periphery and semi-periphery in Latin America.

Our discussion, in this sense, is divided into three main components: (1) a conceptual delimitation of populism and its authoritarian variations; (2) an outline of some of Habermas' and Wallerstein's theories as they pertain to populism; and (3) an attempt at bringing Habermas' and Wallerstein's theoretical models into conversation via an operational scheme dealing with world-systems analysis and the problem of the public sphere and lifeworld, which we apply to (semi)peripheral regions. The theoretical and historical terrain we

cover is broad here, and complex. In a sense, we have cracked open a can of rhi-zomatic worms. We hope to encourage further theoretical work that combines Habermas and Wallerstein, and focuses on peripheral and semi-peripheral regions, in order to further analyse the anatomy of populism at the margins.

7.1. Authoritarian Populism: Conceptual Delimitation

Populism always appeals to a claimed ‘people’ (Touraine 1997, 239). Yet as an interpolated collective subject, ‘the people’ can carry different meanings, depending on how civil actors are incorporated into politics (Katsambekis 2016). And here lies the ambivalence of populism in the context of democracy: populist movements seek legitimation through ideological hegemony. To this end, they use the banner of ‘the people’ to integrate discontents into a collective narrative. In this sense, instead of a mere political pathology that rises within weak political institutions (Sorj and Martuccelli 2008), populism can be understood as an emergence of political representation that stretches beyond the institutional procedures of representative democracy. According to Panizza (2005, 11), thus, populism is not always and only about a crisis of representation; it can also be the beginning of representation for previously excluded subpopulations. In other words, even if populism can arise from a crisis of previously established and cohesive political representation, actual populist practices cannot be reduced to this framework.

Populist movements are always at least partially a response to the anomic impacts of rapid social change. In Calhoun’s (2010) terms, populism is a movement of discontent and reaction, and should not be assumed to involve a well-reasoned programme for moving forward. Hence it is a defensive uprising. A population becomes dispossessed, and rises up to reclaim the stability, centrality, and dignity they believe should be theirs, as ‘the people’ of a particular nation. In tandem, Calhoun maintains populism *per se* is not a right-wing or left-wing phenomenon.⁴ Jan Werner-Müller (2016) offers a comprehensive typological divide between left and right variants of populism. Left-wing populism involves the revolt of ‘the people’ against the elite. Right-wing populism involves the revolt of ‘the people’ against the elite *and an underclass or scapegoat subpopulation*, ‘the people’ viewing the elite and underclass/scapegoat as in association. When the cleavage is along class lines, left populism will be a movement of the lower class(es), whereas right populism will be a movement of the middle class(es).

The participatory imaginary and the central figure of the strong leader span populisms across the political spectrum. Populism typically involves a charismatic approach to politics that narratively reduces elite persons and established institutions to bastions of corruption. In the wake of this problem of representation, polarization constitutes a major feature of populist politics. At this point, there is a remarkable ambivalence in the collective appeal to the people. As exclusive and inclusive modalities of the ‘we’ (Arditi 2007, 14), the social

antagonism deals with dichotomies like we/they, inclusion/exclusion, etc. This point reveals that populism, besides a political practice and a way of conducting *the political*, is a *social* and *discursive* phenomenon (Rosanvallon 2011). In broad Habermasian (1989) terms, populism concerns more than just the system level of society; it also takes place in the *lifeworld*, which needs to be examined at least partly on its own terms, or without analytical reduction to being a reflection or expression of systemic developments.

To illustrate this argument, consider the problem of politically representing ‘the people.’ Populist efforts and the social polarizations that surround them centrally concern identities and their attendant narratives. Nation, ethnicity and social dichotomies (elite/people, insiders/outsideers etc.) play important roles in this sense. Populist movements vary according to their capacity for mass mobilization, this mobilization operating as a kind of counterweight (Roberts 2006) to the ‘elite’ or the ‘establishment.’ The political conflicts they inspire involve shocks to prevailing identity relations (Ociepka 2006), polarizing public allegiances and affections (Demertzis 2006) regarding who to categorize as ‘the people’ and what rights to ascribe to them vis-à-vis other subpopulations – the nationalist rhetoric of Hungarian prime minister Viktor Orbán and Fidesz (the ruling nationalist-conservative political party) (Hlousek and Kopecek 2010, 173) illustrates this situation both in its materiality (with the building of a wall on the Croatian border in 2015 and the anti-immigrant fences on the Serbian border in 2017 in response to the refugee crisis in the Balkans) and in its ideological dimension (we can remember, in this sense, Orbán’s ‘five threats’ in 2017 and the refugee referendum of 2016) (Timmer 2017; Bogaards 2017; Pogány 2017).

The problem of representation may constitute a structural *crisis* of political representation; but it also involves the *discursive* issue of naming collective actors, and the diffuse yet pervasive *cultural* pressures of unsatisfied social demands that challenge prevailing political norms. The left-wing grassroots tradition of *Chavismo* in Venezuela stretches the ambivalence of this situation to its limits. On the one hand, in the wake of anti-neoliberal protests of the 1990s and efforts at producing a radical democratic experience with Chávez in the 2000s, participatory grassroots politics implied a politicization of social inequalities with the emergence of commune councils, participatory institutions and social production enterprises between 2006 and 2010 (Ciccariello-Maher 2016). This process facilitated the constitution of ‘the people’ as a collective actor with unsatisfied demands, canalized outside of and directed against the state apparatuses (Laclau 2006). In this sense, instead of a ‘crass populism’ (Ellner 2016), popular participation and social policy provided important mechanisms for the empowerment of marginalized sectors and their cultural identity. On the other hand, amid poor economic prospects, the political centrality of the leader and the polarization of the public sphere led this populist rupture to a serious institutional crisis (Corrales 2005; Servigna 2015; Canache 2014).

Arditi (2007, 69) argues that populism is a mode of representation in contemporary media-enhanced politics to the extent that populist leaders are conceived 'as a crossover between acting for others, authorization, and the strong role of imaginary identifications and symbolic imagery.' If leaders claim to speak in the name of the people and to use ordinary language, a dramaturgical dimension of politics underlies this process of naming the people as a collective actor. Populism, thus, implies the performative reference of 'the people,' that is, the theatricality of populist politics (Moffitt and Tormey 2014) and its appeal to social mobilization polarize the public sphere.

For our purposes here, we will take the leap of claiming that 'authoritarian populism' has a specific and a general meaning. Specifically, it was coined by Stuart Hall in his discussions of Thatcherism in Britain in the late 1970s. One of the main theoretical implications of Stuart Hall's (1985) notion of authoritarian populism is how authoritarianism can arise within populist movements through electoral mechanisms of Western democracies. Hall conceives authoritarian populism in the framework of hegemonic politics, which is to say, the way in which popular consent can be orchestrated by a historical block seeking hegemony. In this sense, he tried to understand a new moment in the class democracies based on a new configuration of state control over social life in light of a significant decline of the institutions of political democracy and its representative system. As a kind of *Zeitdiagnose*, Hall was looking to the shift towards Thatcherism in Britain, which implied an understanding of populism as a combination between neo-liberal politics and strong nationalist rhetoric – and the main structure of this concept of authoritarian populism has been somewhat present and has been debated by scholars in recent years in order to grasp Brexit, Trump and the rise of right-wing populism in Western Europe and in the United States (Kellner 2016; Agozino 2016 ; Chacko 2017; Surin 2017).

In more general terms, inclusive of but not subsumed by Hall's use of the term, 'authoritarian populism' refers to authoritarian varieties of populism, or *the sites where populism and authoritarianism connect*. Authoritarian populism is not necessarily reducible to dictatorship or law-and-order regimes. In what follows, we will analyse the connection between populism and authoritarian *slips* in light of structural as well as cultural considerations. At its outer limits, our open frame involves the meeting of ideas from Wallerstein concerning the capitalist world-system and anti-systemic political movements, and Habermas concerning the public sphere and revolts against the colonization of the lifeworld. We emphasize that populism, as a contested concept (which can be understood according to a variety of theoretical paradigms) (Kögl 2010), beyond the variety of empirical forms it may have assumed in left-wing or right-wing parties/movements during the last 60 years (March 2017), can be discussed in light of the analytical core suggested by Francisco Panizza (2005), which is to say, a mode of identification (polarization and social antagonism), a process of naming ('the people' and the anti-people) and a dimension of politics (symbolic system).

The question should be asked: ‘When is populism specifically ‘authoritarian populism’ as opposed to simply being populism?’ To answer this question requires that ‘authoritarian’ be given a coherent definition. The definition we will use here, which we consider to be broadly equivalent with Hall’s employment of the term, is the following: to be ‘authoritarian’ is to use coercion (which can be legal, physical, psychological, and so on) to eliminate or otherwise subdue difference. In other words, to be authoritarian is to seek homogenization by force. Using this definition, it is clear that the label ‘authoritarian’ is somewhat up to interpretation, marking a judgment along a continuum. How *much* force is authoritarian? However, we may consider a social movement to be authoritarian if it supports the *increased* use of coercion to counter social difference.

In the sense that authoritarian and populist revolt both involve the use of force; they are two sides of the same coin. Both express militancy and will-to-power on the part of a portion of the population against another portion of the population. Both aim to realize their goals against the will of their opposition, hence to control difference, at most to achieve hegemony, at least to quiet differing opinions and oust their containing persons from monopolizing the reins of power. We might distinguish militancy as ‘authoritarian’ by the defense of already-existent power, whether perceived to be under threat or recently eroded. This could mean the militant action of a majority against encroaching minorities, or of a minority against a threatening majority. However, a minority can only have such already-existent power in a formal sense (holding political office and commanding social including military resources). A majority might have power in the aforementioned formal sense, but also might have power just by virtue of being the majority, having a dominating cultural legacy in a given region, and so on.

In light of the forgoing, the main difference between authoritarianism and non-authoritarian revolt is: in the latter the militant agency is an oppressed group looking to overturn hitherto dominant power, whereas in the former the militant agency is already in power, and looks to maintain, solidify, or extend that power. However, the force of revolution is at least prone to moving in an authoritarian direction. As in Weber’s diagnosis of the inevitable ossification and perversion of charismatic authority upon its triumph, so ‘revolution from below’ is inherently prone to transform into ‘revolution from above’ once the revolutionaries gain the reigns of control. And even if overt force is not required, the war remains, if in latent form, politics perhaps being really ‘war by other means’ (Foucault 2003). It is imaginable that even the cruellest dictators may narrate themselves as acting for the common good, just as the genocide of subpopulations may be enacted on the grounds of aiming to protect the larger society.

Authoritarianism *per se* is not a left-wing or right-wing phenomenon. And yet here we will go out on a proverbial limb and suggest the distinction: right-wing populism is authoritarian *by definition*, whereas left-wing populism may or may not be authoritarian. To put it differently, right-wing populism is

authoritarian on the surface, whereas left-wing populism may turn to authoritarianism behind its own back, or by default, etc. The reason for this is that – if we use Müller’s distinction between left-wing and right-wing populism – right-wing populism is about the defense and fortification of a class already occupying a position of relative privilege in society, whereas left-wing populism is not. When militancy is aroused to protect a privileged class against – at least partially – an underprivileged class, it is by our definition authoritarian.

7.2. Public Sphere and Lifeworld Colonization

Habermas (1962/1992) identifies the public sphere as a distinct realm of society from the private sphere, the market and the state. Through media and in-person forums of public life that facilitate the rational exchange of ideas unencumbered by state control or market forces, people are drawn together to bring their private understandings into a dialogic and transformative social arena. Importantly, this arena is positioned as a countervailing power to state control, compelling the state to be genuinely responsive to and reflective of public sentiment. The public sphere is thus a democratizing force.

Decades later, Habermas (1987) describes the historically growing rift between lifeworld (crudely put: personal experience and local culture) and system (crudely put: abstract, formal structures of society). As the system increasingly alienates from the lifeworld, it also becomes prone to dominating the lifeworld, ‘colonizing’ it with its own rationality. Habermas posits the positive potential for resistance to the colonization of the lifeworld in the ability for pockets of the lifeworld to maintain their integrity somehow within a system-dominated macrostructure. This requires intentional buttressing of the lifeworld from systems-rational forces. Exactly how this might play out in a palpable or at least structural sense is beyond the scope of Habermas’ theory. His focus is on rationality, and while his theory may infer necessary structural parameters, he does not say what they might be, or how they might arise; only that the colonization of the lifeworld is often decried by people during transitional periods. But he does portray a needed development where the lifeworld has traction against systems forces, through the fortifying of organic pockets of rational, democratic will-formation, and similar to the public sphere as unencumbered by outside and alien macro-forces.

Unfortunately, resistance to lifeworld colonization can easily take ‘regressive’ conservative forms. Revolts against the growing power of systems-rationality vis-à-vis the lifeworld may constitute progressive ‘new social movements’ (Habermas 1981) but often they come instead with authoritarian outcries for defense of tradition. Habermas is clear that preserving the dogmas of the past against rationality *per se* is different from fortifying the opportunities for organic and democratic will-formation against the rationality born of systems imperatives. And it is the latter that he views as a way forward. The former he

associates with fascist movements and like forms of destructive public reaction; in other words right-wing populism.

Calhoun (1988) identifies populism as a response to the separation of system and lifeworld, although he reframes them both – not just the lifeworld – to be within human experience. In other words, the ‘system world’ is something perceived and understood by people, not ontologically distinct from the lifeworld. The difference between system world and lifeworld is the alien and reified character of system world experience. The key movement in the separation of the worlds is that people experience a growing separation between the logic of what appear to be abstract, removed, calculating, objective institutions of control, and the logic of the organic, personal, and locally relevant lifeworld. When articulated in political terms, ‘regular people’ experience alienation from government, and they understand political elites as legislating according to different logics from their own.

Building from Calhoun, we propose that the separation of system world from lifeworld might be viewed as one of several non-deterministic *preconditions* for populist movements. By ‘preconditions,’ we do not mean that they are necessary for the instigation of populist sentiment and revolt, or that they always inspire populism. Rather, we suggest that they may help ‘set the stage’ in various empirical contexts, fertilizing amenable ground upon which the performance of populism can thrive. Whether a society under such preconditions generates a populist movement, and to what extent the populist movement takes an authoritarian direction, are questions that must be approached with an historian’s eye for particularity. Whether a charismatic leader arises and whether identity narratives and their tensions are strong enough to inspire revolt by a subgroup self-identifying as ‘the people’ cannot be answered through predictions based on structural preconditions. However, the theoretical analysis of preconditions may be useful in understanding what structural conditions may be particularly vulnerable to populism and its authoritarian varieties. In Habermasian terms, we suggest that in addition to the alienation of system/life worlds, problems of the public sphere may be another precondition. We propose two such problems: a) population sub-groups are excluded from access to and representation in the public sphere, and b) the state acts without recourse to ‘public opinion’ (‘public’ defined as those granted access to participation in the public sphere). For the sake of brevity, in the remainder of this chapter we refer to these preconditions as ‘status-group exclusion’ and ‘general exclusion,’ respectively.

Regarding urbanization in Habermasian terms, the advent of urban centres is favourable to the growth of the public sphere – which, when functioning at its best, is stabilizing for democracy. As long as the public sphere that thrives with urbanization is given political representation, popular unrest is less likely at least among those included in the public sphere. However, the advent of the public sphere makes the society more susceptible to mass mobilization in the case that general exclusion – lack of political representation for those given

voice in the public sphere – takes shape. The formation of the public will must be accompanied by the sense of belongingness and collective experiences and interests. Hence, conditions in the urban public sphere favour the development of the imaginary of ‘the people.’ On the flipside, if rapid modernization and urbanization take place within a previously traditional rural society, a sense of ‘the people’ may arise among those still living in – or attempting to hold on to – the traditional rural culture. Indeed, there can be multiple enclaves claiming to be ‘the people’ within the same national boundaries. Whichever way, modernization is not neutral regarding susceptibility to populist sentiments: it is an agitator and instigator. A collective imaginary finds fertile ground, and the question of political representation becomes a crux of social stability – under democratic conditions, stability; under conditions of general exclusion, vulnerability to populist revolt.

Regarding rationalization, modernization involves a growth in the complexity of formal, rational systems for the administration of society, as well as the increasing alienation of those systems from local organic cultures (the lifeworld). Coupled with the institutionalization of rational law over traditional authority, modernized societies face the need to justify their existence. Formally or informally, popular consent is required for modernized societies to continue without revolt. The authority of office no longer suffices so the authority of reason has to be maintained through ostensibly rational argument. ‘The people’ require that the system come along with justification, otherwise there is a crisis of legitimation, which is prone to lead to social movements, including populist ones. Rapidly modernizing societies are especially unstable in this regard. Rapid modernization comes with the anomic destruction or transformation of traditional ways of life under systemic forces, only to supply instead rationalized steering mechanisms without local history or cultural grounding, or the internal colonization of the lifeworld. And this rapid colonization brings with it a vulnerability to resistance in the form of populist revolt (Habermas 1975, 1984, 1987).

Yet for Habermas, rationalization also has the positive connotation of *rational deliberation* and public will-formation. Indeed, rationalization is also an historical prerequisite for the flourishing of ‘communicative action’ – or authentic and congruent communication geared toward rational deliberation and mutual understanding – in the political realm (Habermas 1984, 1987). In different but still Habermasian terms, rational and free deliberation is the medium of public will-formation in a functional public sphere; which secures the salience of responsive democratic political institutions (Habermas 1962/1992). To the extent that communicative action is integral to meaningful democracy, it is also specifically non-authoritarian. Hence we might supplement our earlier definition of authoritarianism – as coercion directed against difference – with one specific to communication, taking the liberty of extending Habermas’ typology: *authoritarian action*, or coercive action aimed at silencing or eliminating difference, is directly opposed to communicative action (and vice versa).

Habermas' theory is helpful, yet limited due to its overall generality, which some have identified as Eurocentric (Allen 2016). From a Marxist perspective, another problem with Habermas is that his theory ignores political economy, and social inequalities generally (Thompson 2016). Whether or not Habermas is deserving of vitriol is not our concern. However, we are in agreement with his critics that his theory leaves out a dedicated consideration of power, notably in terms of transnational dynamics and social inequalities such as race, class and gender. Our approach in this paper is, rather than tossing out Habermas, 'bringing the Marx back in.' Regarding transnational dynamics and class inequalities, we propose Wallerstein's world-systems analysis a fruitful complement to Habermas' lifeworld/system and public sphere theories. Other complements (such as focus on race and gender) would also prove useful, but it is not our purpose here to cover everything, nor to propose yet another theory with pretensions of totalization. Instead, we hope to highlight a platform for the cross-fertilization and integration of some world-systems and Habermasian concepts, in application to populism in general and semi-peripheral and peripheral regions in particular. In the following sections, we outline Wallerstein's world-systems analysis, and propose some preliminary points of integration using examples from peripheral and semi-peripheral regions in Latin America.

7.3. Peripheries and Semi-Peripheries within the Modern World-System

In this section, we discuss the unequal development of capitalist integration of world-economy in the light of world-system categories (especially Wallerstein's main concepts). We think that Wallerstein's world-systems perspective is useful for understanding the anatomy of twentieth century populist movements in peripheral regions, as well as their contexts of appearance. These populisms were formed in the wake of modernization efforts at the margins of the capitalist world-system, and this influences the anatomy of the populist movements that emerged. However, after entering this debate (to which our last section will be devoted), it is important to take into account the general structure of Wallerstein's approach.

As a mode and as a conceptual apparatus of analysing macro-sociological and historical processes (Mielants 2017), Wallerstein's world-systems theory can be analysed in light of a double axis: a *structural* position of its elements within an integrated system (nations, regions, etc.), and a historical *dynamics* concerning the constitution of this system. Together, these two dimensions constitute a *structural dynamism* of the world-system. According to the methodological focus of this paper, we will not discuss in depth the whole historical constitution of world-system covering the period running from the medieval prelude to the complete development of capitalist structures in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (as it is expressed in Wallerstein's first three volumes of his ambitious

The Modern World-System). What interests us most in this chapter is that, for Wallerstein, the *modern* world-system is a *capitalist* world-system. And this statement has important theoretical implications for our approach.

The sixteenth century marks the great turning point towards the constitution of a capitalist *world-system*. From that period onwards, with the incorporation of colonial zones in the Americas, Africa and Asia, capitalist expansion subordinated them and held them tightly within an *integrated system* (Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein 1989, 54) – integrated, but not equal or undifferentiated. In this sense, as an uneven and combined development based on unequal material exchanges (Wallerstein 2004, 12), market structure plays an important role in the constitution of the world-system. Since the market is not seen as enclosed within each nation-state, but rather as a unitary world market (Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein 1989, 6), socio-economic integration is grounded in three main axes (division of labor, profit, and commodity exchange), which implies a dynamic arrangement of nation-states according to their structural positions within the world-system and its endless accumulation of capital (Wallerstein 1993, 90–91). For Wallerstein, that is why it makes no sense to speak of an articulation of modes of production (like Harold Wolpe, Barry Hindess, Paul Hirst, Jacob Gorender and others do), since the world-system's units (nations, regions, states, and so on) interrelate in a comprehensive structure.

In this sense, 'core,' 'periphery' and 'semi-periphery' are relational categories identifying the structural position of regions/countries within the modern world-system. According to Wallerstein (2004, 28), since the axial division of labor implies both the profitability of production and the position of core, peripheral and semi-peripheral regions (which is to say, historical capitalism was built on the basic capital-labor principle), the societal transformation of production (e. g. industrialization, urbanization, etc.) entails a change in the structural position of each region/country. The constitution of the modern world-system, thus, tended to produce commodity chains based on territorial differentiation *internal* to the system itself (Wallerstein 1993, 30). This hierarchization of space and the functional integration of the elements according to their specialization (colonial areas and agricultural goods, core areas and manufactured goods and so on) structured relational positions to the extent that they represented unequal processes of the accumulation of capital and, above all, the conditions of change within global capitalism.

The above-mentioned structural dynamism of world-systems theory is particularly important in this sense: 'core,' 'periphery' and 'semi-periphery,' instead of ontologically prior existents, are moments in the historical process of the transforming world-system according to its material dynamics. The fluctuant historical character of this structure points to the possibility of non-teleological structural rearrangements, as opposed to the Eurocentric supposition that the prior paths of core societies are the predetermined paths of peripheral transformations (and that is the focus of Wallerstein's main critiques on the modernization theories of the 1950s and 1960s and some of the Latin American

dependentistas). Rather, historical transformations occur when one of the main axes (division of labor, profit, and commodities exchange) produces a functional reorientation that impacts the structural position of each country/region within the system.

7.4. Synthesis and Preliminary Example Application

Much as with Habermas, Wallerstein's theory does not offer a direct and sustained treatment of populism. But the main components of his world-systems analysis can provide a theoretical scheme that provides the anatomy and structural entanglement between modernizing moves (Domingues 2009) and the problem of populism in (semi)peripheral areas. We suggest that, concerning populism, Habermas' theories benefit from incorporating world-systems insights. The rise of populism in peripheral regions transitioning into semi-peripheral positions within the modern world-system can be analysed in light of this general framework.

One important example is the structural transformation of Latin America between the 1930s and the 1960s in the light of what Wallerstein (2000) called the chaotic transition within world-system structures. In the region, especially in countries like Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Chile and Venezuela, urbanization increased alongside a model of industrial growth grounded in import substitution industrialization. This conjuncture was marked by a double transformation of a former colonial area. On the one hand, instead of raw materials and agro-export goods, industrialization illustrated an attempt at suppressing the colonial economy in order to stimulate a differentiated system (urban services and heavy industrialization) that promoted a new integration of the region into modern capitalism and its axial division of labour (Halperin Donghi 2013; Almandoz, 2008; Baer 1972). On the other hand, in the wake of this new position of an emerging industrial region within the structural division of labour, city life and demographic pressure expanded notably in that conjuncture (Potter and Lloyd-Evans 2014; Lattes 1995).

Accelerated industrialization and urbanization favoured the development of representative governance, involving mass mobilization and the structural integration of urban actors into class society (Germani 1973, 18). Beyond rhetoric and political demagoguery, populism was thus the political expression of new forms of social integration in peripheral regions undergoing material transformations within the world-system context. Alongside the material aspects of the transition of a peripheral region from an oligarchic political system towards an urban society, the ideological realm of a massified public sphere structured a new form of hegemony grounded in an anti-establishment mobilization that, although incarnated in the figure of the leader, counted on the proactivity of the new multitude (Debert 2008).

The incorporation of urban actors into the public sphere encompassed a larger base of representation. In a context of representative politics, as Wallerstein (2004, 51–52) argues, ‘the people’ carries ambivalence as a concept of both inclusion and exclusion. In light of deep social transformation – especially in the classical cases of Vargas (Brazil) and Perón (Argentina) – the new urban actors played an important role in the legitimation of the regimes and the constitution of the political as a sphere of claim and dispute of the content of this singular collective (‘the people’) (Demier 2013; Finchelstein 2017). To the extent that the ideological effort to give a voice to those who are outside political representation (and here the polarization between insiders/outsideers is crucial) do not grasp pluralist tendencies among ‘the people,’ ‘the danger is the creation of an image of the People as One’ (De la Torre 2013).

In Latin America, between the 1930s and the 1960s, industrialization and urbanization promoted new forms of social integration that presented the political dilemma of the popular participation of the urban masses (O’Donnell 1993; O’Donnell and Schmitter 1986). The new configuration of the public sphere based on the modern press industry (*Pressegewerbe*) and communication structures (Habermas 1990, 282) promoted ideological efforts at unifying new social actors into a multitude or one ‘popular will’ (Capelato 2009). In this sense, mass politics and the populist incorporation of urban masses in the context of structural change in peripheral areas promoted a kind of politicization of social spaces (streets, cafes etc.): José Maria Velasco Ibarra, president of Ecuador, on five occasions between the 1930s and the 1970s illustrates this situation by constructing ‘the people’ as a singular political will through the political appropriation of the public sphere and turning his rivals into ‘moral enemies’ (De la Torre 1994, 229).

As a political practice directed towards collective affections and the public imaginary, populism emerges not solely through the modernization of structures, but also from the strong presence of symbols and collective appeals within the public sphere (Álvarez Junco 1994), turning on the separation of system world from lifeworld and the alienation of ‘regular people’ from institutional politics; a kind of ideological substratum upon which populist mobilization can build, with its polarized representations of ‘the people’ and the ‘anti-people,’ the establishment and the anti-establishment, and so on. Wallerstein (2004) notes that semi-peripheral nations may be especially prone to typically nationalist measures, which is likely to be accompanied with nationalist ideology in the case of a social movement: Vargas, who was the president of Brazil in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, led this kind of populist mobilization with a strong nationalist rhetoric (Lima 1990) grounded in the invention of the national roots of ‘the people.’ With the populist mobilization of José Eliécer Gaitán in Colombia between 1945 and 1948, the ideological fusion of the masses under the leader’s will fuelled a strong convulsion in the political system (Chaouch 2009). In this case, the anti-establishment rhetoric was

grounded in hostilities against the organized worker's movement and trade unions like the Confederation of Workers of Colombia (CTC) and the Union of Workers of Colombia (UTC) (Pécaut 2000). The discourse against the degenerated (oligarchic) political system was also a populist attempt at (re)enacting a homogeneous political will. While opposing a regenerated 'people' to a corrupted 'elite' (the oligarchy), the movement also produced an ideological unification in the fragmented nation.

7.5. Future Directions

In this chapter, we proposed a general theoretical framework concerning populism and its authoritarian varieties in order to expand the analysis of authoritarian populism beyond the present situation in contemporary Western democracies in Europe and the United States. From a global perspective, populism constitutes a multidimensional phenomenon. Populisms of the (semi) periphery in the twentieth century can be traced back to modernizing moves and associated structural transformations of the regions, integrally in interaction with their locations in global divisions of labor and power. Latin America is a typical example of this situation. Our main effort, thus, consisted in bringing the rise of the twentieth century industrial world (urban life, urban masses, and so on) and the challenges of the public sphere together to understand the problem of populism in (semi)peripheral countries. We highlighted some important cases of populism and authoritarian slips in Latin America (Vargas in Brazil, Perón in Argentina, contemporary Venezuela, and so on).

We maintain that accelerated capitalist change produces major impacts on communicative structures – and populism can be conceived in the light of these developments. At the margins, thus, populism and its authoritarian slips have strong roots in the context of capitalist transformations of the lifeworld. We might speak of a dialectic of populism, its crux lying in the new subjectivities that emerge from capitalist circuits. With the rise of urban publics, new poles of reference favour dichotomous ideological narratives of societal integration (the people, the nation, and so on). The present situation within the modern world-system stretches this general framework to the very institutional limits of liberal democracies, illustrating the articulation of ultra-nationalism and right-wing populism into a broad transnational movement that may be headed towards autocratic forms of rule.

In the above paragraphs we have lightly scratched the surface of what might be done with the open framework that we have suggested. As mentioned early in the paper, the terrain is vast and complex. Unfortunately this means that in the space of approximately 7,500 words we can only introduce the barest shadow of what might be done. Fortunately this means there is a lot further that such analytical scheme could go. In the theoretical frame we did not even touch upon the overlap between populist movements and 'antisystemic movements'

(Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein 1989). Nor did we satisfactorily address the question of competing ascriptions of ‘the people’ in urban vis-à-vis rural society during rapid modernization, or even just the existence of ‘counterpublics’ in general (Warner 2002). We only briefly mentioned – and only on theoretical ground rather than in case examples – the negative relationship of Habermas’ notion of communicative action with action oriented towards authoritarian ends. The list goes on. We did not delve in depth via extended case studies into the varied history of populist movements throughout the various regions of Latin America, to apply these theories in careful and nuanced fashion. If there is one ‘takeaway’ we can offer it is that we suggest future work should be done on bits and pieces of what we have just gestured towards in the constellation thrown onto these pages.

Notes

- ¹ A strong tradition of Latin American studies also deals with this contested concept (Aggio 2003; López 2004; Aldao 2013).
- ² See also Habermas (1973).
- ³ For another example see Morelock (2016).
- ⁴ The sense of a *crisis* of representation is more likely an issue for classes used to being represented, perhaps more a ‘middle class’ than a ‘lower class’ issue. We suggest it is likewise perhaps a right-wing more than a left-wing issue; and that the beginning of representation for previously excluded subpopulations is more likely (but not necessarily) a left-wing issue.

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