IAPSS

Politikon

the IAPSS Journal of Political Science

2414-6633

Volume 21 Number 1: March 2021

ISSN 2414-6633

https://doi.org/10.22151/politikon.48

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Originally published as Volume 48 (March 2021). Corrected October 2026: volume and issue numbering.

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Editorial Note

https://doi.org/10.22151/politikon.48.0

Volume 48 presents four articles and a book review and includes works both from senior and junior scholars. Three of the four articles belong to a special section titled 'Populisms, Hybrid Regimes, and Political Change: Memoirs of the First Edition of the Leonardo Morlino Lecture Series'. This special section has been initiated by Dr. Rafael Plancarte Escobar, whose coordination has been indispensable to the improvement of the manuscripts developing ideas from the Lecture Series. Professor Morlino kindly agreed to provide an introductory overview of the three articles.

The Leonardo Morlino Lecture Series took place in late November 2019 at the Autonomous University of Querétaro (Mexico) with a dual purpose: 1) to establish a space for scientific reflection around conceptual and empirical discussions associated with democracy and democratisation; and 2) to recognise my contributions to these fields of study. This venture was initiated by a group of scholars from the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences, and brought together pundits from a number of Mexican and foreign universities, who exchanged perspectives on different dimensions of the study of democracy. The lecturers agreed that democracy and democratisation are phenomena subject to political change, which is why reflection on these issues must be constantly renewed. The Lecture Series was launched a few months before the COVID-19 crisis. The impact this crisis has and will have on democracy intensifies interest in phenomena such as the resurgence of nationalism, the proliferation of populism, the radicalisation of ideologies as well as the worsening of the crisis of representation and of political parties.

The memoirs of the Leonardo Morlino Lecture Series address some of these issues and consist of three pieces. In the first, Juan Russo sets out to clarify the similarities and differences among three phenomena: polarisation, radicalisation and populism. Russo also discusses the difference between populisms in Europe and Latin America as well as the distinction between the populisms of the 1950s and contemporary populisms. Subsequently, Jaime Preciado describes the main aspects of the debate between two antagonistic conceptions of populism: the liberal democracy´s perspective and the critical theory's tradition. For Preciado, the concept of the hybrid regime is complementary to an in-depth discussion on the nature of populisms. Finally, Rafael Plancarte explores some of the causes of the consolidation of the Mexican hybrid regime through an analysis of two dimensions of the quality of democracy: political participation and the rule of law. Plancarte constructs an

Originally published in Volume 48 (March 2021), pp. 4–6. Corrected October 2026: volume and issue numbering.

analytical narrative of three cases through the use of static game theory to carry out this assessment.

Professor Leonardo Morlino (LUISS University)

The special section is followed by Marcel Nagar's article examining the phenomenon of 'developmental states', characterised by rapid central planning and regulation, in selected African countries. It identifies the reasons behind the growth of developmental states in four of these countries (Botswana, Mauritius, Ethiopia and Rwanda) and then focuses on the prospects for the rise of such a state in South Africa. Although, as the article shows, neither global nor South African domestic policy has been conducive for a developmental state, COVID-19 is altering the status quo and offers a chance for South African political leaders to embrace the developmental paradigm.

The book review of this issue is written by Nkosingiphile Mkhize on Robin Renwick's non-fiction book addressed for a wider audience that discusses the perils of corruption and state capture in South Africa. The reviewer is generally appreciative of the book's capacity to identify the key political actors in South Africa engaged in these practices since the country's democratic transition, as well as those challenging them in the effort to strengthen South Africa's democracy. The connection of corruption to a range of broader threats to democracy, among them being 'denialism, arrogance [and] abuse of power', is another advantage of the analysis. Yet, the review notes that the web of relationship between the actors could at times have benefitted from more nuance, for which the readers need to engage with other, related titles.

In this Note, we are furthermore pleased to include a brief report of the latest event in the *IAPSS Politikon* webinar series, coordinated by Senior Editor Dana Rice and Editorial Assistant Andressa Costa.[1]

In November 2020, Mark Beeson, founding editor of 'Critical Studies of the Asia-Pacific' presented in the publication workshop: How to Transform a Thesis into a Journal Article, co-hosted by *IAPSS Politikon* and IAPSS Oceania. He was also joined by *IAPSS Politikon* editorial assistant, Spyridon Parthenis. Together, Mark and Spyridon discussed the barriers to entry of writing and publishing, and the rewarding nature of journal publications. Firstly, there is significant competition upon entering the field. Overcoming this is a matter of networking with individuals and/or journals, perhaps in a voluntary or part-time context. Secondly, demonstrating your consistency is pivotal for a pathway into continual journal

[1] Due to technical complications, the recording of the event unfortunately could not be made available.

writing. One must write and contribute regularly to establish a positive reputation and contribution to the academic discourse. Further, it is important to stand out with your own unique creative flavour of writing. Persistence requires enjoying the process. From there, career prospects lay ahead.

Aiden Mocicka (Project Coordinator, IAPSS Oceania)

Last but not least, we report key changes in the editorial team: The editorial team remains the driving engine behind *IAPSS Politikon,* alongside the authors and reviewers. Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the journal continues to operate as usual, with slight delays in selected review processes. After a period of fruitful collaboration, Senior Editors Cláudia Araújo and Emmanuelle Rousseau concluded their terms in the Editorial Board. Both had started their involvement in the editorial team as Editorial Assistants and so we are particularly grateful for their commitment to take up more responsibilities as the time passed. Along these lines, the Editorial Board has been enhanced by Andrea Bregoli and Andrew Devine, both former Editorial Assistants. In this composition, we continue to aim at providing meaningful feedback to all the manuscripts submitted to the journal, the flow of which has not decreased since the outbreak of the pandemic at all. The journal continues to evaluate submissions and is also open to applications for reviewer candidates of all levels of academic seniority.

The Editorial Board

Polarisation, Radicalisation, and Populism: Definitions and Hypotheses

Juan Russo

DOI: https://doi.org/10.22151/politikon.48.1

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Abstract

Since the beginning of this century, politics has been marked by processes of radicalisation, polarisation and the resurgence of populist governments. The emergence of these processes have made both the deficits of political representation and the problems of democratic vulnerability evident. This new situation has translated into the rise of personalist leaders located throughout the right-left ideological spectrum. This has happened on both sides of the Atlantic. However, the new establishment/anti-establishment fracture is more powerful than the right/left one. Similar processes sometimes have different natures. In this article, these processes are defined conceptually, establishing the relationships among them as well as their conceptual particularities. The comparative method is adopted, and the results consist in depicting, first, the differences and similarities between polarisation, radicalisation and populism, second, between contemporary and 1950s populism, and finally, between populism in Europe and in Latin America.

Keywords

Leadership; Polarisation; Populism; Radicalisation; Radical Situation

Originally published in Volume 48 (March 2021), pp. 7–25. Corrected October 2026: volume and issue numbering.

Introduction: The new radical situation

The objective of this paper is to analyse the relationships between polarisation, radicalisation and populism, as well as the specificity of the current phenomenon. I will start by describing current politics as a radical new situation that is (a) characterized by actors, actions and speeches, which act according to (and promote) situations of polarisation/radicalisation, and (b) strong tensions between the institutions and actors in the political community, among other competing actors. This new situation in various European countries and in the Americas translates into the rise of personalist, autonomous leaders of traditional political structures (parties or unions), located on different points of the right-left ideological spectrum (ranging from Bolsonaro to Beppe Grillo, and from Le Pen to Maduro). The new establishment/anti-establishment fracture is more powerful than the right/left one. This fracture facilitates alliances, once unthinkable, between the right and left (e.g. in Italy the coalition between the Lega Nord/Cinque Stelle) or alliances of left-wing parties with right-wing parties (e.g. in Greece the coalition between Siryza/Anel). There is a predominance of radical speeches (inclusive or exclusive) that follow an adversarial logic of us versus them, in the context of a persistent loss of the esteem and confidence of the population towards State institutions and society at large. Finally, there is a concentration of political options in two large political blocks.

This new radical situation makes deficits of political representation and problems of democratic vulnerability evident. Representation deficits are reflected in the decline of leading actors of the twentieth century: parties and unions; in the emergence of new political movements and personalist parties (Calise 2000) reinforced by the forms of political communication now focused on global networks. The problems of democratic vulnerability are manifested in the enormous concentration of power of economic groups, declining controls over governments, as well as tensions that arise from the delegitimisation of pluralism and the liberal dynamics of democracy associated with tolerance to the opposition and the role of mass media and the separation of powers. In the following, I will consider some of these mentioned aspects in order to specify and define the main concepts, fundamentally point to issues that arise from these ongoing political processes, as well as differentiate the current situation with previous one.

Defining concepts

This section focuses on elucidating the phenomena of polarisation, radicalisation and populism in contemporary times, while outlining their relationship and offering some preliminary hypotheses. In some way, and in contrast to the events in the first half of the

twentieth century with the supremacy of mass parties, our contemporary times are characterized by political arenas with leaders and strategies that either dispense with party organisations (Jair Bolsonaro or Macron) or transform strongly rooted party organisations at the service of the leader (Aldrich 2011).

Polarisation is understood as the distance of political positions among citizens and elites on public policies, and relevant political issues. The distance between citizens' political positions is not necessarily determined by previous social or cultural divisions, but can respond to the dichotomic standpoints taken by political leaders in relation to certain affairs. Unlike the classical spatial scheme, in which leaders adopt strategic positions based on the positions of the voters, towards the center or towards the extremes, the radical leaders become the source of polarisation by leading voters to choose between extreme positions. Certainly, radical leaders are skilled at detecting citizens' political pre-sensitivities and find in them a fertile ground to nourish their extreme proposals. However, without the mediation of radical leaders, political polarisation would hardly arise (McCoy and Somer 2019). Thus, the principal difference between the conceptualisation proposed in the classic theorisations of Giovanni Sartori (1966, 1976, 1982) and Anthony Downs (1957) lies in the political contexts to which they refer to. While mass policy dominated in the 1950s, with parties structured as sound organisations, and as generators of strong ideology, today's polarisation finds roots in issues and radical leaders representing such issues. This is a situation of polarisation of citizens mobilized by personal parties (Calise 2000), that is, an electoral machinery created by radical leaders to compete. The above implies a reversal of the classical logic, in which political parties introduce candidates into the elections, to that in which candidates create ad hoc structures to meet the legal requirements of electoral competition. The cases of Berlusconi in Italy, Collor de Melo in Brazil, or Alberto Fujimori in Peru are good examples of personal parties. Contemporary cases are Morena, founded by Andrés Manuel Lopez Obrador in Mexico, and *Aliança pelo Brasil* created by Jair Bolsonaro. Therefore, polarisation may be the result of a set of leaders' strategies that reinforce extreme alternatives, but do not necessarily represent an 'absence of basic consensus' in the electorate (Sartori 1982, 8). For Sartori (Sartori 1966, 138-140), polarisation implies a wide ideological distance, centered on the left-right axis. When the distance is small, there is a centripetal competition, while when the distance is large, there is a centrifugal competition with three poles (center, right and left) as occurs with the polarized pluralism system.

In contrast, when radical leaders govern, as in the case of *Kirchnerism in Argentina,* the ideological distance may not appear significant among followers of polarising leaders.

However, the separation in society regarding more recent leaders such as Cristina Kirchner or Mauricio Macri assume a polarising way, even if the social policies implemented in both governments are similar. Hence, polarisation can be measured as a distance among voters' positions (Dalton 2008), without necessarily incorporating the right/left ideological dimension. Polarisation is the result of the distance of citizens and elites with respect to issues, and also the result of the "quality" of that distance, that is, of the depth of the differences between the positions assumed.

Hereof, voters can be polarised by issues involving circumstantial affairs such as economic policies, and in that case polarisation is circumstantial or, conversely, polarisation may result from divergences on positions on issues such as the national identity, or political-religious positions. In the latter cases such profound polarisation is a component of the radical political situation. Circumstantial polarisation often occurs within political competition, while deep polarisation arises from critical situations (Gurr 1970) or is promoted by radical leaders as shown by former US President Donald Trump.

There is political radicalisation when deep political polarisation and risks of violence converge. Radicalisation includes not only political competition but also a conflictive relationship between the contenders and, therefore, the possibility of causing damage to the contenders and third parties (Bartolini 1996). With regard to populism, it is a way of exercising leadership, and when it enters the government, it involves costs for the quality of democracy due to its lack of transparency and accountability (Germani 1956; Ionescu & Gellner 1969; Panizza 2009; Tarchi 2015; Rovira et. al. 2017; De la Torre 2019). Populism includes, among its salient traits, a radical leadership which transforms position issues into valence issues; thus, populist leadership it is often an important causal factor of deep polarisation.[1]

In this manner, there is a feedback circuit that might begin with a situation of political competence based on divisive issues, and that, in the hands of a populist leader becomes a

[1] The so-called agonistic vision of politics is not considered here. This vision, in Chantals Mouffe's (2013) reading, implies the inevitability of antagonistic conflicts and the quest to impose hegemonies, as the formation of a political order. The position of Mouffe concerns general problems of political order, not just the populist response to modes of liberal political representation that are relevant for this article. On the other hand, the association between liberal and consensual assumed Mouffe appears too schematic. Various liberal scholars such as Ralf Dahrendorf or Lewis Coser have paid attention to conflict in social and political life. The positive assessment of conflicts can be revisited in the works of sociologist Lewis Coser, who follows in the footsteps of Simmel and Weber, by analysing the positive effects that conflict has on social and political life. It is interesting to note that Coser founded Dissent in 1954, a magazine of liberal cut, as a reaction to the McCarthyist control. Political conflicts might even have positive consequences, in terms of the organizational strengthening of political parties, as shown in the analysis of cases of conflicting democratic consolidation as in post-war Italy and post-1983 Argentina.

competition regarding valence issues[2], which can involve the repolitisation of cleavages present in society. Thereby, repolitisation of the fracture transforms conjunctural polarisation into deep polarisation while legitimising the political leader by reinforcing its radical behavior; polarisation becomes radicalisation (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. Feedback among polarisation-radicalisation- populist leadership
Surface-Polarisation → Populist leadership → Repolitisation of cleavages → Deep Polarisation → Radicalisation → Leadership legitimacy
Source: Author

Populism implies first and foremost a proposal for change in the style of political representation by suggesting a more reflective and immediate system of representation. The disparity between political representation and responsiveness has often been a source of non-conformity in citizens, exploited by populist leaders. In this sense, populism aims to resolve conflicts between representation and democracy, in contexts in which 'representation has supplanted democracy, rather than served it' (Pitkin 2017, XLI).

Polarisation, radicalisation and populism are phenomena that can be set apart analytically as seen in the particular cases shown below in Figure 2. Hence, a radical state of affairs (polarisation/radicalisation) can take place with or without populist actors. Hereof, it can be affirmed that whenever there is a majority of populist actors, there will consequently be a radical political situation. Nevertheless, radical situations do not always imply the presence of populist actors, as shown in Figure 2.

Fig.2 Polarisation and systems with relevant and non-irrelevant populist parties		
Polarisation / radicalisation	Relevant populist parties	Irrelevant populist parties
Yes	Italy, Brazil, France	England, Chile
No	Spain, Mexico	Uruguay
Source: Author		

As shown above, Italy, Venezuela, Brazil and France have salient populist parties and therefore major polarisation/radicalisation processes. England and Chile have low-relevance populist parties, yet face issues such as Brexit or the constitutional reform in Chile, which have mobilised the population, assuming a radical adherence and attitude. Conversely, the Spanish case illustrates that there may be populist parties like *Podemos*, which before the

[2] E.g. a 'migration problem' which raises questions such as: To which conditions and restrictions shall migrants be subjected to? This becomes a matter of national identity when it begins to raise questions such as: What constitutes the identity of the citizens of the United States of America?

phantom of political recovery of the right and the growth of the far-right, joins the government with pragmatic policies. In the Uruguayan case the parties are moderate and the polarisation/radicalisation is low. That is to say, there may be polarisation/radicalisation with or without populist parties, and conversely, populist parties can be polarising and radical (Brazil, France), or moderate (Spain, Mexico).

To summarise, polarisation occurs when the distance between the positions of the voters are placed in the antipodes. There is radicalisation when polarisation is due to differentiated position issues (deep polarisation), political competition between adversaries becomes conflictive, i.e. the contender becomes an enemy, and there are risks of violence. In such a situation, the populist leader is a catalysing factor in the conflict.

Populism is a style of political representation that seeks a bond of closeness with the population while distancing itself from the "establishment" and rejecting forms of liberal-democratic representation. In this sense, populism finds examples in both left-wing politicians (Evo Morales in Bolivia, Rafael Correa in Ecuador, Chavez-Maduro in Venezuela), and right-wing ones (Donald Trump in the United States, Marie Le Pen in France, or Matteo Salvini in Italy).

Radical situation and populism

The changes that are currently occurring do not only obey a new political style (Taguieff 2003), ideology or syndrome, to repeat the terms of the pioneer work on populism[3]; on the contrary, the changes involve populist and non-populist actors, moderate actors and radical actors. These changes are about something broader like the emergence of a set of different expectations, mobilisations and reactions to the new conditions of the polity. Therefore, populism must be analysed both as generator and as generated by the new situation.

As previously stated, populism is not the only determining factor of polarisation; although, it is true that it may be an important factor in the creation of it. This can be measured, empirically, in those cases in which populist leaders take office in scenarios without strong prior polarisation and in those cases with party systems in which the populists were the predecessors of the government (e.g. Argentina pre- and post-Kirchner, as USA pre- and post-Trump).

[3] It is the work edited by Ionescu and Gellner (1969). In it, we can a find a diversity of positions that attempt to define it and range from an ideology as Mc Rae (1969) does, to a syndrome as proposed by Wiles (1969).

What follows is that the populists can initiate polarisation from the government or reinforce it from the opposition. Political polarisation is the result of a number of factors and in order to go beyond spatial representation, one needs to analyse the fractures that have become politicised. For our purposes, we can distinguish between impersonal polarisation (right/left, liberals/Catholics, liberals/conservatives, as in the USA or United Kingdom) and personalised polarisation around a leader, which is the type of fracture that populism produces and whose paradigmatic case is Argentina with Peronism/anti-Peronism. Currently, several countries are going through polarisations of a different nature from those prevailing in the second post-war, mainly characterised by the right/left ideological fracture[4]. The populist fracture is in prima facie represented by the rejection or support of a leader-movement.

Fig. 3. Radical situation and populism. Differences and similarities.	
Differences	
Radical Situation (Polarisation/radicalisation)	**Populism**
It is a process of differentiation and confrontation	It is a process of supporting a radical political actor
There is differentiation or extreme change in relation to the preceding situation	Develops a relationship, with little mediation, between leader and citizens
It is compatible with the procedural vision of democracy	Legitimacy of popular origin is privileged
It is compatible with accountability processes	It rejects or manipulates accountability
It can include a radical government actor or other actors (social, political)	It is represented by a single actor
It can be compatible with political liberalism	There is rejection of political liberalism
Similarities	
Both question the preceding situation	
Both strengthen political polarisation	
There are differentiating measures and a hero leader	
Personalist governments	
Charismatic party (Panebianco 1982) or personal party (Calise 2010)	
Both use technological means of direct communication- the web	

[4] I refer to political fracture primarily as an axis of competition.

The radical situation (polarisation/radicalisation) refers to a set of factors that have changed sharply with respect to the preceding situation, while populism is essentially a new relationship between leader and citizens. Both imply a problem of political representation and include actors who question the preceding situation. Populism, in general, implies a rejection and a negative assessment (directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously) of accountability for governmental actions; on the contrary, a radicalisation process may include actors who claim accountability, as is currently the case of Andrés Manuel López Obrador in Mexico and his fight against corruption. On the other hand, the populism usually implies positions that privilege popular sovereignty (Shils 1956), while a radical situation also includes governments with a procedural vision of democracy. The radical situation is not identical to populism and separating both concepts contributes to a better understanding of the malaises of contemporary democracies.

In ideological terms, the radical situation can include types of politically liberal governments, populist governments or mixed governments (López Obrador in México include characteristics of both). While in populism there is contempt for liberal values and behavior, a radical situation may include a claim for liberal values. Currently, there is an expansion of radical situations with populist, liberal, or mixed governments. Populism generally implies redistributive conflicts, and this does not necessarily happen in the liberal or mixed governments of a radical situation. Although current governments point in many cases towards a redistribution of resources, sometimes, as in Brazil, this is done in favor of greater concentration of them. On the contrary, the situation of radicalisation does not presuppose a redistribution dispute.

A common aspect of governments in a radical situation, be they populist, liberal or mixed, is that they reinforce polarisation. A potential difference is that because of their less liberal (if not illiberal) nature, populist governments tend to encourage an adversarial and disqualifying dynamic of opponents, while in liberal or mixed governments, there is a greater willingness to seek consensual solutions. In radical situations, a mixed or liberal government takes strong and differentiating measures, while the populist government builds its policies in adversarial terms, close to the friend-foe logic. This goes beyond the left/right positions that leaders usually assume. The disqualification of the adversary often arises from converting divisive issues (such as opting for an economic policy) into valence issues, implicating the economic policy in a matter of defense of the nation.

"The people are good and the elite are corrupt" is a defining axis of populist discourse. As Wiles (1969) pointed out, there is in populism "the conviction that virtue

resides in the simple people who are the majority and in their traditions" (Wiles 1969, 203). The emphasis on this aspect of populist discourse has reached such a point that there is a line of work of these studies that is defined by that content[5] (Canovan 1981; Mudde and Rovira 2012, 2019). This type of discourse is not necessarily present in the other types of governments in a radical situation. According to Wiles (1969), for whom populism is a syndrome, populist discourse has a moralistic and non-programmatic character; efficacy is less important than spiritual connotation, a rejection of bureaucracy, a distrust of intellectuals and financial power and the establishment's nostalgia with the past and the seeking to model the future from its reading of that past (Wiles 1969, 204-211).

In summary, radicalisation implies a situation while populism fundamentally includes a single type of actors, public policies and ideology. The radicalisation space moves towards the extremes, but it is not necessarily anti-system or anti-regime; on the contrary, the polarising actors subscribe to different aspects of democracy. Its characteristic is confrontation and a non-consensus among political actors. The competition is permanent. The governing party governs without stable agreements with opposition parties.

Polarisation sometimes finds sustenance in long-standing historical divisions which date back to the formation of nation-states and are reinterpreted for political use. Fractures are re-politicised and gain intensity by triggers such as an economic crisis when used as an instrument by leaders (McCoy and Somer 2019). The use of the divisions of the political community rests with the leaders and is installed at the grassroots level as a conscious process that provides political benefits. Leaders manage to accumulate power in which an electorate can anchor their preferences, while grassroots members find a sense of belonging and recognition of their identity (Fukuyama 2018).

On the effects of the radical situation

Among the positive effects of polarisation are that of increasing political participation and a sense of being represented in the political community. In each pole, there are ideas, feelings and leaders that represent the opposition to the other pole. In this sense, polarisation can bring parties closer to the population (Lupu 2015). In terms of the organisations involved, cohesion and discipline increase, leading to greater coherence between government programs and action (Layman, Carsey and Horowitz 2006). Among the negative effects may be limited cooperation and the time spent in confrontation, both which may have costs in

[5] This is at the base of what Mudde and Rovira call an ideational notion of populism, that is "a thin ideology, which considers society basically divided into two homogeneous and antagonistic fields, the pure people against the corrupt elite, and that maintains that politics must be the expression of the general will (*volonté générale*) of the people" (2017, 12).

effectiveness. The idea of belonging to a divided society deteriorates trust both towards institutions and toward the persons of the community; and deteriorates the effectiveness of public policies. If there is radicalisation, there may be institutional degradation and the fall of democracy. In a radical situation, the neutrality of the mass media, as well as the institutions of justice, is questioned, thereby weakening relevant actors for the maintenance of liberal democracy. This is due to the politicisation of social life and the consideration that any action by State institutions and civil society implies positive or negative effects towards any of the poles. Such a premise deteriorates the credibility of institutions and accountability processes, as they are attributed to the use of institutions as a political weapon.

A characteristic feature of this type of radical situation is the intrinsic value that polarisation assumes for actors beyond the content being debated. To be on one side is not to be on the opposite side and that has a symbolic identity value for the competing actors. The resulting trend, if each is identified with a pole, is clearly centrifugal. The dispute between the poles ends up building differentiated political cultures. Cultural fields are created with divergent codes and values. The poles have, as their axis, the differentiation from the adversary, which is the common element that ensures the difference. The part of a political community stabilized in a pole supposes to achieve a legitimisation that allows the assumed political positions to be justified. Therefore, valence issues are essential to stand "on the good side" of the dispute. Thus, one axis can be constituted by human rights and, on the other pole, public security. One pole privileges the social justice and another the freedom. Often one axis will be constituted by the fight against the manipulation of the press and the other in favor of pluralism, nationalism, and universal and individual values. One pole cries out for social justice and another for freedom. One pole cries out for the democracy of majority decisions and changes and the other cries out for the democracy of deliberation and consensus.

The polarisation actors will seek political invulnerability through the conversion of divisive issues into valence issues. Populist actors, in the search for invulnerability, are prone to advance institutional rules due to their low acceptance of the division of powers. On the other hand, they will seek invulnerability by appropriating issues that are coming from their followers and guarantors of the defense as shared values. In this sense, the populists have efficacy in the appropriation of valence issues and in the conversion of position issues into valence issues. This strategy contributes to the political competition assuming fundamentalist values, and the political community are culturally fractured to such a point of immeasurable communication (at the grassroots and elite levels) between competitors that supporters of

different values are unable to negotiate intermediate positions. Thus, a debate on economic policy becomes a debate on the defense of the country instead of on human rights, security or corruption. Populists turn the media into the adversary or contrary judicial measures into a negative power. In Argentina, the followers of former President Cristina Kirchner label President Mauricio Macri as a traitor to the homeland and Macri's followers label Cristina Kirchner as contrary to the values of democracy. As I have previously shown (Russo 2008), this capacity for appropriation of valence issues can grant a greater invulnerability to radical populist governments than to moderate ones. In what follows I will identify some differences between polarisation/radicalisation of the past with present situations and address some open questions.

Open questions about the new radical situation

The key questions are: 1. Does the new situation involve new fractures, and what is the nature of these fractures? Does the radical situation imply situations of ideological polarisation, which presuppose fractures of a globalising/nationalist territorial types that are reflected in trust/distrust and security/insecurity in the population? How strong is the establishment/anti-establishment polarisation corresponding to the political competition between populist forces and traditional organisations, setting aside the right-wing polarisation? Is this new fracture more important than the left-right fracture, as in Italy (Cinque stelle and La lega) and Greece (Syriza and Anel), where inclusive and exclusionary populisms (Graziano 2018) converge in a government alliance to compete with the "establishment" representatives? Are we facing a new voter freeze or is it a passing alignment? Cases like Argentina, with an electorate of around 30% support for Cristina Kirchner after two governments, show that it can be a new freezing, and a cycle destined to last.

2. Are democracies mutating? Do democracies, in times of globalisation, impact on the organisations of democratic representation? The situation of polarisation/radicalisation is part of a new dynamic of democracy. It is not just a new orientation of solo parties, but the formation of new party blocks. In this regard, a characteristic feature is that personal leadership replaces party devices. The politics parties, large vehicles of incorporation of mass of the twentieth century, appear today to citizens as structures of abuse, corruption and oligarchic exercise. Also, the forms of communication in the social networks favor leadership of more direct communication. Today's leaders have taken another step in relation to communication with citizens by communicating directly on the internet, overcoming the old

"politically correct" style, and proposing a new form of representation: the sincerity of the street (Mudde and Karlwasser 2017).

From the non-populist pole, populism is criticised for acting without limits, for rejecting controls and for its tendency towards intolerance, delegitimisation of opponents, lack of pluralism, and in some cases, corruption and lack of respect for established norms. In part, the competition between populist and non-populist actors translates into a competition of two antagonistic conceptions of democracy, which goes back to a long-standing history. That is, on the one hand, the conception that unites democracy with popular representation, that respects minorities and protects individual freedoms; and on the other, democracy against the oligarchies, and in favor of the excluded people.

3. How does the cycle of the radical situation begin and unfold? The following scheme can be proposed provisionally. The sequence of the radicaliation process seems to start with a political crisis caused by an extreme situation of lack of political resources. Economic, social and political crises that end in discredit, disaffection and a strong turn of the electors. A good example of an economic crisis that produces a political crisis and a break with the modus vivendi up to that moment was in 2001 in Argentina, which ended in the resignation of four presidents within a few weeks and the beginning of a Caesarist stage of Nestor Kirchner and Cristina Fernandez, which gave rise to what is known in that country as "*la grieta*" (the division) between Kirchnerists and anti- Kirchnerists. An example of a social crisis that resulted in a "presidential election of change" occurred in Mexico with the death of hundreds of thousands of Mexicans in drug warfare, and the disappearance of the 43 young people at the Ayotzinapa Teachers School.

The contemporary "crisis" is built on a foundation of very low public confidence towards state institutions and among the people. In Latin America, for more than two decades (Latinobarómetro 1995-2015) trust towards representative state institutions (Congress, the judiciary) has not surpassed 40 % and interpersonal trust has practically disappeared, while in Brazil only four percent has interpersonal trust (Latinobarómetro 2018, 46). In this sense, distrust translates into a change in political loyalties (as representation implies trust), the search for a leader to trust, by whom one feels represented, making a difference with the traditional political class and impersonal representation of state bureaucracies (Figure 4).

Fig. 4. Political cycle of radical situation
1. Crisis of legitimacy of the party system (economic crisis, scandals, *mani pulite*) including a. Representation crisis (2001 in Argentina with the protests "that all leave"); and b. Participation crisis (Chile) 2. Social mobilisation → Uprooted community → representation search 3. Founding leader; 4. Delegitimisation process of the previous representation- → establishment / anti - establishment fracture.
Source: Author

Conclusion: radical situation, new and old era

Finally, it is useful to distinguish the new radical situation of polarisation/radicalisation in respect to that which occurred in 1930s-50s in Latin America, as well as to point out some similarities and differences between the region and Europe.

1. The ISI model (industrialisation by substitution of imports) versus the global production model. The polarisation processes of the first half of the last century, arose in the stage of the ISI model, and corresponds to an expansive strategy of the political system with modes of populist representation of mass integration to political recognition. This stage implied a closing of borders with the emergence of national economic actors and social actors governed by the state for Latin American countries. On the contrary, the current polarisation/radicalisation processes are responses to globalisation and the collective experiences of regional integration and decisions taken by extraterritorial actors on issues of impact on national communities. The latter corresponds to a global stage of neoliberal policies with unemployment and public security problems. Therefore, it is a defensive strategy of actors of national political systems that gives rise to a model of populist representation of protection of the national community.

2. Incorporation of new actors versus new representation. In the populist representation processes of the first half of the last century, the stage of crisis and social mobilisation occurred as a result of a process of social mobilisation in which citizens were incorporated into a mode of political representation that offered them root citizenship

(Rokkan 2002) and social citizenship[6]. The ISI populism stage corresponds to citizens who abandon their political loyalties and assume a new political identity. On the contrary, the stage of contemporary populisms starts with voters who have left or maintained party loyalty in a tenuous way. In some Latin American countries, voters began to free themselves from party preferences since the beginning of democratization. Evidence of this is the unprecedented radical triumph over Peronism in 1983 in Argentina as well as the defeat of the radicals from 1987 to 1999. That is, this distancing from political parties is about free voters with party loyalties that opt for different alternatives according to the results of the public policies implemented.

The crisis and social mobilisation indicate not a breakdown of loyalties to previous parties, but the search for new loyalties with actors that represent an alternative way of doing politics. The freedom of voters is not to choose between existing options, but to choose new options. Not only new parties, but a new party system is demanded. This has happened in most of the countries in Latin America and in some European ones as well, in which a new system has been created where traditional parties begin to occupy peripheral positions and where centrality begins to be among the new political formations. The new party system does not involve new political personnel. In Latin American cases, in general, the new actors with personalist representation (not necessarily populist) of politics display a long political trajectory. This is the case with Nestor and Cristina Kirchner and Mauricio Macri of Argentina, Andrés Manuel López Obrador in Mexico, or Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil. In other words, the population finds, in these leaders, the possibility of a representation that demands the change of agenda to privilege contemporary pressing issues.

3. Alternative models vs. democratic models. The third historical difference is that the models of populist representation of the last century are built amid political alternatives to liberal democracy. The affiliations of Peronism with fascism, as well as the affiliations of Peronist factions with alternatives to national socialism are not accidental. The priority in these models of representation is not to improve liberal democracy, but to strengthen and give autonomy to the nation state over the political powers of the time. On the contrary, contemporary populist models have been built within the framework of the disappointment produced by the democracies of the third wave, but, at the same time, they stretch, as much as possible, decision-making processes in democracy without proposing a new political order

[6] The rights to roots are "the right for the origin community to be respected, such as language and ethnic composition" (Rokkan 2002, 230) and the social rights are related to health protection and opportunities for public education and housing.

to replace the old system. It is, ultimately, about governments that propose radical reforms to existing democracy.

4. Differences in approach in current studies. In addition to substantive differences, there are differences in the types of analysis carried out. During the mid-twentieth century, the study of populism was dominated by historical sociology approaches. Currently, political science approaches prevail. Thus, populism was analysed, in Latin America, as a crucial historical stage of the first half of the twentieth century and associated with structural transformations such as the ISI industrialisation model (Delich 2004). On the contrary, contemporary populisms are analysed as an epiphenomenon related to a drastic change of the party system. In the populisms of the mid-twentieth century, populism was studied as part of mass politics, while in contemporary populism, it is a post-mass democracy phenomenon. In both types of analysis, populisms pose a problem of political representation, but governments represent opposite categories. In the former, populisms represent a process of incorporation of actors, while current populisms represent citizens already incorporated and in fear of disincorporation, some of them outsiders (non-voters) in search of outsider leaders. The new system may contain new organisations in competition with traditional formations, such as in the case of Italy, or incorporate traditional formations into alliances that have new formations as protagonists, as in the Argentinian case. Therefore, although the concepts of crisis and mobilisation or electoral availability proposed by Gino Germani (1971) are useful today, their meaning must be differentiated when used to describe present phenomena.

5. Differences between Latin America and Europe. The political scientists Cas Mudde and Cristobal Rovira (2011) in their comparison of populisms in Latin America and Europe, based on the analysis of the cases of Austria, France, Bolivia and Venezuela, highlight (a.) a more inclusive and ethnic character of Latin American populisms versus the exclusionary character of European populisms (Mudde and Rovira 2011); in addition to, (b.) a greater electoral, political and ideological character of Latin American populisms. These conclusions are conditioned by historical evolution and must be qualified in (a.) light of the advance of populisms in Europe, as well as, in (b.), with the triumph of an exclusionary discourse of the right-wing populist leader in Brazil, the most powerful country in Latin America.

The differences between populism in Europe and the United States versus Latin America lie not so much in the positioning of the right and left space but in the weakness or strength of their institutions. In the cases of Europe, there is a tradition of strong institutions,

while in Latin America, the institutions are relatively weaker. There are clear differences in the weight of the state as a mediator with limits to executive decision making. Also, at the civil society level, the forces of social organisations are greater in Europe in general than in Latin American countries. Finally, there are processes that acquire very different meanings, as with migration. In the classic works of Germani (1956, 1973) on migration and populist representation, immigration is part of the genesis of the Peronist national popular movement, in the sense that migrants find their form of representation in this movement. On the contrary, in contemporary European context, populist governments in Europe grow in elections with proposals that defend residents against migrants.

6. Some of the common features of the new radical situation include the personalisation of politics as a trigger for the creation of new organisations. Unlike in the first half of the twentieth century, party-less leaders rule in most countries. Macri and Kirchner, López Obrador, Bolsonaro and Evo Morales are all leaders who founded their organisations, and in those cases in which the organisation tried to set limits, they were abandoned by their leaders to create a new organisation, as was the case of Andrés Manuel López Obrador in Mexico. What are the roots of the current polarisation? Can a common answer be given for the various cases? The new situation of current polarisation/radicalisation is not only constructed with divergent (polar) positions of citizens regarding some issues. It is possible that it is a type of polarisation that is based, not on issues, but on fractures and, therefore, compromises the identity and culture of citizens. In that sense, a multi-disciplinary approach is required for a better analysis of this phenomenon. Some sociological or economic issues seem worthy of being taken into consideration. Three are of key importance to be mentioned here.

The first one is the question of the recognition mentioned by Germani in his analysis of Peronism (Germani 1971), based on the notion of populations willing to follow populist leaders. This study coincides with the recent statement of Francis Fukuyama (2018), who hypothesises that populism arises in segments of the population that feel ignored and demand recognition. Secondly, there is the question related to unemployment, that is, whether unemployment is a basis that enhances the willingness of citizens in being represented by populist leaders. The relationship between unemployment and politics has been the subject of interesting work by Delich (1997). The unemployed were an important segment which supported Kirchner governments in Argentina, and fear of unemployment currently appears as an important factor in both Europe and the United States. The unemployed loses responsibility because they cannot answer to their family or dependents,

nor to the state, because they cannot pay taxes. In addition to being financially unsupportive, the unemployed tend to be marginalised. In that sense, it can be an available base for populist leaders who challenge the establishment and propose policies that break the current structures. Finally, the nation-security vs. global security-security fracture implies loss of community cohesion, as Germani (1978) pointed out, that is, a weakening of the prescriptive nuclei of society. The decreasing rates of interpersonal trust in Latin America are arguably a reflection of this phenomenon.

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Populisms: Inherently Illiberal or Plausibly Democratic? Hybrid Regimes May Offer a Complementary Approach

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.22151/politikon.48.2

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Abstract

The central question of this paper is whether a constructive relationship between populism and democratisation may exist, or whether all types of populism inevitably lead to illiberal regimes. Anglo-Saxon and Eurocentric traditions tend to identify populism with fascism, as in the case of authoritarian right-wing regimes, or with left-wing politics as in the case of socialist or communist systems that produce totalitarian regimes. Critical theorists consider populism to be a reaction to a perceived gap separating democratic institutions from the popular sovereignty from which political regimes derive their legitimacy. This paper examines populisms from three main perspectives: (1) negative views of populism from a liberal democracy perspective; (2) positive views from theorists who see populism as a legitimate expression of popular sovereignty; and (3) some ways in which populism may be viewed based on Leonardo Morlino's definition of a hybrid regime and the experiences of several Latin American countries.

Keywords

Democratisation; Hybrid Regime; Illiberal Regimes; Political Theory; Populism

Originally published in Volume 48 (March 2021), pp. 26–46. Corrected October 2026: volume and issue numbering.

Introduction[1]

The causes and results of populist movements vary widely depending on the contexts in which they come into being and progress. In European countries, populism has been associated with fascist, authoritarian and far-right politics as well as with leftist, socialist or communist regimes of a totalitarian nature. In such contexts, political parties and leaders essentially hijack the concept of "the people" and attempt to monopolize it as a way of legitimizing the illiberal nature of their regimes.

Should populism be given serious consideration within the field of political science? According to Margaret Canovan (1999), populisms, as phenomena that call upon social sectors against dominant power structures and ideas, are more than pathological forms of politics, and, thus, require a closer attention from the researcher. In this sense, Ernesto Laclau (2005) considers populism as a possible reaction to the perceived distancing of democratic systems and institutions from the popular sovereignty that is the source of their legitimacy. This may occur due to challenges that are inherent to "popular" representation, which necessarily entails the delegation of public power to professional politicians. The gap between "popular" representation and "the people" as a collective social body is thus filled by populism, which offers discursive solutions that appear to support the aspirations of "the people" with respect to the political system under which they live.

Modern liberal democracies for which the nation state is the authentic and legitimate expression of popular and national sovereignty must balance the individual rights of every citizen against popular sovereignty, the latter of which is an expression of the general interest and common good. Under populism, a political regime may deem that the interests of one part of society represent the general interest and by extension popular sovereignty.

Nonetheless, critical views of populism do not account for situations in which certain populist movements exist as a legitimate expression of popular sovereignty that might have otherwise gone unexpressed. This can be claimed in the case of a number of left-leaning movements such as the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela, the rise of Evo Morales in Bolivia and Spain's *Podemos* political party.

In view of the foregoing, I will discuss populism from three perspectives: (1) liberal democratic views of populism put forward by theorists such as Gianfranco Pasquino, Pippa Norris and Giovanni Sartori that point to the negative effects it may have on democratic processes, including the promotion of illiberal regimes; (2) more supportive multidimensional views of populism from writers such as Ernesto Laclau, Enrique Dussel,

[1] The author appreciates the support of Minerva Araceli Cortés Acevedo.

Jacques Rancière and Chantal Mouffe; and (3) an examination of Morlino's model of hybrid regimes vis-à-vis some Latin-American populist experiences, and how his typology may offer a useful perspective on populism and its possible roles in democratic systems.

Liberal democracy's critiques of populism

Even though there is not necessarily a clear distinction between approaches to populism that adopt favorable or critical stances, I suggest that a conceptual distinction can be made between Anglo-Eurocentric democratic liberal theories and political theories with epistemological origins in the Global South. To examine perspectives of a more critical nature, I have chosen three respected political authors: Gianfranco Pasquino, Giovanni Sartori and Pippa Norris[2].

Gianfranco Pasquino: populism is at odds with democracy

Rejective characterisations of populism can be found in a number of Gianfranco Pasquino's writings. In *Populism and Democracy* (2008), he differentiates between liberal democracy and populism, with a particular focus on how power is sought and accessed: "In liberal democracy, the mode of access tends to be controlled by institutional procedures and intermediate associations, while in populist democracy the mode of access tends to be more direct and rampant" (Kornhauser 1959, 131, in Pasquino 2008, 20).

Pasquino (2008, 20) prefers the notion of mentalities over that of ideologies in reference to populism, by establishing that the populist mentality embodies the idea that "the people are always far better than their rulers and that rulers often betray the interests and preferences of the people." An adversarial dichotomy is thus described between elite ruling classes and the people. In association with this conflict, there are two aspects of political culture linked with populist mentalities: the rejection of politics and of political parties (Pasquino 2008, 21).

While populists may not oppose representative politics, their mind set assumes the elimination of intermediary actors and institutions, and the constitution of stronger links between the people and political leaders. According to Pasquino (2008), populisms expect to erase all agreements, struggles, alliances and commitments that are characteristic to traditional politics, promoting a direct relationship between politicians and the people; thus, adding legitimacy and strength to their decision-making powers.

What variables explain the ascent of populism? Pasquino (2008) observes the anomie and despair often present in mass society as a fertile breeding ground. In the face of non-

[2] I do not intend to present a state-of-the-art assessment of literature on the topic of populism, but to highlight three proposals of liberal democratic views given the authors' influence on political science thought.

existent sturdy horizontal ties between peers, charismatic leaders emerge and exploit the tendency to trust vertical ties with a leader who offers a sense of belonging within a community of meaning.

Other factors that contribute to the flourishing of populism are socioeconomic crises and the anxiety of identity loss that such crises may trigger. Job instability, apparent threats from foreign immigrants, or the perspective of an uncertain future can nourish fidelity to a populist leader who offers social stability and whose remedies seem to provide "certainty". These leaders identify those they hold to be enemies as "scapegoats" and blame them for whatever hardships the people experience.

Pasquino's (2008, 28) negative view of populism becomes clear when he depicts a political culture whose discourse, while claiming to defend the principles of democracy, can lead "under some circumstances and through a distorted manipulated implementation, to populist recipes, claims, outcomes." As Pasquino (2008, 28) states, populisms produce negative consequences in democracy:

> The followers of populist leaders put an exaggerated amount of faith in them and will often continue to believe that any and all improvements of their plight may only come from the action of a leader endowed with extraordinary qualities. Second, the cohesion of the populist movement is essentially granted, and consolidated, by the identification, opposition and, in most cases, hostility directed against particular enemies: the Establishment, the politicians, the financiers of globalization, the technocrats, the immigrants, i.e. 'those who are not like us.'

Pasquino (2008, 29) does not shut the door tothe possibility that populism may aid to democratisation when it happens withinhybrid political regimes. However, he warns that this "requires time, patience and a great deal of institutional wisdom." Furthermore, he concludes that there are no recorded cases of successful institutionalisation of a populist movement or experiment.

Giovanni Sartori: populism is antithetical to democracy

Although there is no systematic treatment of populism in Giovanni Sartori's work, some of his writings can be interpreted as casting populism in a negative light. One example is his book *Il Sultanato* (Sartori 2009), a collection of articles printed in the Italian newspaper *Il Corriere della Sera*, in which he is openly critical of the government of Silvio Berlusconi and calls out the Italian president's populist contempt for representative democracy.

In spite of concurrent democratic crises that signal an erosion of the public sphere of trust between the government and the population, and a perceived deterioration of the legitimacy of the government's decisions if they are taken without any consultation of the

public will, Sartori (2009) distrusts using popular consultations to resolve matters normally handled through parliamentary channels and doubts that such consultations lead to more effective democracy.

Sartori (2009) is concerned with preserving political pluralism within the framework of a democracy that represents popular sovereignty and does not recognise distinctions based on cultural differences for which some groups may demand recognition. He believes that democracy should not opt for a self-destructive path where the principle of majority rule in parliamentary and presidential elections may be compromised by means of plebiscitary consultations.

Such ideas are part of the debate between the ideals of representative liberal democracy and populist policy schemes that favor direct democracy, which Sartori distrusts. He is particularly concerned about situations in which majorities may enact policies that are abusive towards minorities and do not respect cultural diversity. He believes that in order to generate a climate of certainty and political stability, democracy requires the existence of a virtuous relationship between elites and ordinary citizens that involves checks and balances on power.

However, some criticism of the simplification of populism as an external threat can be found in Sartori (2009), who argued that, despite the triumph of liberal democracy over totalitarian or authoritarian regimes, populism is rooted within sub-national regions whose states are categorised as liberal democracies. This is the case of Italy's Lombardy region, where the hegemony of the conservative populist movement led by the Lombard League has influenced the sporadic formation of a populist national government for more than 25 years. Yet overall, Sartori sees populism as being naturally opposed to liberal democracy, and he envisions no role for populism in democratic processes. For him populism represents an institutional breakdown of representative democracy and tends to rely on rhetoric that ultimately establishes binary polarisations (friend/enemy; people/elite) in society that are not conducive to democratic coexistence.

Pippa Norris: democracy under threat

Pippa Norris, a leading political analyst of electoral processes worldwide, characterises populism as having three main dimensions (Norris, in Illing 2017). Firstly, it endeavors to "appeal to popular sovereignty over and above liberal democracy" on the grounds that "moral virtue and power should be with the ordinary people and not the elites". Secondly, it is inherently anti-establishment, which entails opposition not only to political and economic elites, but also to "intellectuals or journalists or other groups at the top of

society." Thirdly, Norris highlights the tendency for populist power to "reside in the individual leader, the charismatic leader who represents the voice of the ordinary people."

She acknowledges that while these three elements operate in unison, they do not provide a clear picture of what policies populists will enact. This lack of any predominant ideological categorisation "opens the door for a variety of leaders who have different ideologies, whether we're talking Hugo Chavez in Venezuela or Donald Trump in America." Norris (in Illing 2017). She characterises Trump's political leanings as being more authoritarian than right-wing, adding that authoritarian values include a "belief in a strong leader, in a strong state, and in robust law and order." (In Illing 2017). Authoritarianism also emphasises national unity and the protection of one's national community from those considered as outsiders based on nationality, ethnicity, or race. Populist progressives, like US senator and former presidential candidate Bernie Sanders, "employ similar rhetoric but they work out of a progressive agenda, not just in taxation like in Chavez in Venezuela, but also on other economic issues as well." (in Illing 2017).

She asserts that these populisms transcend the ideological dichotomy and may include economic redistribution via a strong welfare state and Keynesian economic prescriptions on the left, and the low-tax, free market and laissez-faire economic views of classical liberalism (neoliberalism) on the right.

Populist discourse, according to Norris (in Illing 2017), is succinct, direct and unafraid of being offensive or using "language that is seen as unacceptable by traditional politicians, and that's an appeal again that the leader is part of the everyman." This discourse does not focus on material needs, appealing instead "to a different set of values, equality, participation, democracy and a whole series of other post-material values" (in Illing 2017). This focus mirrors generational shifts in values in accordance with the more heterogeneous nature of the educational, cultural, gender and racial milieu found in many nation states. However, Fukuyama (2018) posits that negative perceptions of social changes may lead to a rise in identity politics, setting the stage for increased populism and doubts about the values inherent to liberal democracy.

Unlike Sartori, Norris (in Illing 2017) notes that the populist reaction against multiculturalism is a product of the widespread prevalence and inevitability of multiculturalism in an increasingly cosmopolitan world: "Social changes have accelerated multiculturalism, and that is perceived as threatening to those opposed to it. There are immense pressures to adapt and adopt."

According to her, there are three factors that may govern the impact of multiculturalism: 1) the degree of public attachment to or detachment from institutional rules and norms; 2) how political parties respond to institutional challenges among themselves; and 3) public acceptance or rejection of social and cultural changes (in Illing 2017).

Norris (in Illing 2017) believes that the greatest threats to western democracy come from populism and terrorism: "The two things go hand in hand and they feed on each other. They're mutually parasitic in some ways." She is nonetheless optimistic given the observation that some news organisations and legal systems have proven themselves capable of conferring resistance to populist excesses.

Positive perspectives on populism

Laclau and Mouffe: the utility of leftist populism

The writings of Ernesto Laclau offer a more optimistic view of populism. He holds that populism "is not an ideology, but a practical way of constructing the political" (Laclau 2014, 253). His model, based on a view of society as consisting of two main groups, calls on "those below" to mobilise against existing power holders. According to Laclau (2014), populism appears whenever the current social order is perceived as unjust, and the people take collective action to reconfigure the present order from the ground up.

For Laclau (2014), populism is a useful political tool not only for ordinary governance but also for defending the interests of those below. Under his populist theory, the people as a collective are opposed to the concept of elitist democracy as the political expression of a hegemonic majority.

Both Laclau and Mouffe (2015) insist that populism can be used by both the left and the right. While in Latin America, populist experiences have long existed in leftist movements, European populist experiences often have their origins in right-wing movements promoting forms of nationalism that include culturally exclusive and often xenophobic ideologies. These movements can be considered anti-democratic to the extent that such ideologies run contrary to the principle of popular sovereignty.

Regarding the relationship between leftist populism and socialism, Atilio Boron states that:

> Socialism is not populism insofar as, unlike the latter, it must stimulate and favor the autonomous organisation of the popular classes and layers as well as the development of their revolutionary consciousness. We must not lose sight of the fact that promoting human capacities is not something that can be done overnight. What must be avoided is the appearance and crystallisation of passive and non-participatory attitudes, in such a way that

the population does not expect that all their problems to be resolved by the state (Boron 2014, 243).

As for right-wing populism, the recognised expert on fascism, Federico Finchelstein (2018), sees populism and fascism as two sides of the same coin. Laclau, however, draws a distinction between populism and fascism based on the writing of the political theorist (and former German Nazi Party member) Carl Schmitt, an author that Laclau cites to build his critical theory of populism. For Laclau, Schmitt's friend-enemy dichotomy, in which the enemy is "existentially something different and alien, so that in the extreme case conflicts with him are possible" (Schmitt 1996, 27) can be a prelude to acts of deadly violence. For Laclau, Schmitt's characterisation of the "enemy" is patently fascist and undemocratic.

Chantal Mouffe, in her recent book (2019) points to European cases in which left-leaning populist politics has made inroads as in the case of Latin America. In this regard, she cites the examples of *Podemos* in Spain, France insoumise in France and the Labour Party under the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn in the United Kingdom. All of them have adopted new forms of dialogue between parties and the electorate based on a criticism of elitist democracy, a rejection of social inequality and criticism of all forms of authoritarian, socially exclusive and racist nationalism.

For his part, Coraggio and Laville (2014, 26) points out that "(t)he notion of populism is symptomatic. Accused of demagoguery, this call to the people without mediation is seen in Europe as a temptation (Ihl et al. 2003) or as an illusion (Taguieff 2002), often invoked to study the growth of the extreme right. Without a doubt accompanied by a recurring danger of Caesarism in Latin America, populism cannot, however, be separated from popular national processes and leftist governments (Laclau 2005)."

Faced with the threat of Caesarism or *caudillismo*, populism has the potential to make a positive contribution by encouraging the mass integration of people into the political arena. This is not to make the reductionist claim that populism produces genuine leaders and a democracy supported by the masses without taking into account the intermediary role of political parties and social movements.

Both Laclau and Mouffe (2015) consider that populism carries the risk of excessively centralising the power of the institutions in a way that diminishes the legitimate autonomous powers of national regions. It is not enough to establish institutional divisions of power or rules; they must be exercised in a way that fosters a virtuous relationship between parties, grassroots movements and government. It is a matter of analysing whether there is a sensible populist argument and enough people qualified to fill the political vacuum left by representative liberal democracy (Laclau 2005; Mouffe 2019).

Rancière and Dussel: liberation politics and criticism of populism

Rancière (2016) asserts that populism has the potential to generate a discourse that questions the insufficiencies of partisan representation and the dominance of de facto powers in liberal democracy. Populism thus contributes useful criticisms of elitist democracy by affirming that "governments and ruling elites are more concerned with their interests than with public affairs," while also admitting that certain authoritarian types of populism take refuge in an exclusive nationalism that is constructed through "an identity rhetoric that expresses the fear and rejection of foreigners."

This author (2016) does not believe that populism adheres to any particular political ideology or formal quality: "The term 'populism' cannot be tied to a specific political group [because it embodies] political forces that go from the extreme right to the radical left. Nor does it designate an ideology or even a coherent political style. It simply serves to create a representative image of a certain people." This author's views on populism include a critical perspective: that populism has both the potential to increase the power of the people given the massive numbers it can involve or to weaken it due to the collective ignorance that can come with such numbers.

Rancière (2016) questions the ability of populism to deliver popular sovereignty when majorities elect representative and autonomous governments that may use racist cultural and ideological devices to achieve authoritarian and nationalist ends. Under such scenarios, the "good" people justify their positions with appeals to nativism and white as well as to patriarchal supremacism. This racist identity feels threatened by ordinary people and sees the ruling class as traitors, as they do not understand the complexity of political mechanisms. Such people also view foreigners and the demographic, economic and social evolution they imply as a threat: populism easily combines feelings of hostility to rulers and animosity towards those considered as "others".

While Rancière's criticism focuses on the nationalist and racist authoritarian populist movements that are gaining traction in Europe, Dussel (2012) brings to light the positive potential of populist experiences in Latin America. His paper "Cinco tesis sobre el populismo" (*Five theses on populism)* defends the legacy left by major social movements in the region with regards to shaping a popular national agenda, the contribution of these movements to democratic governance through representative means of defending popular interests that exceed the traditional formats of liberal democracy, and their focus on the principle of majority rule.

Under his approach to politics based on the ideal of liberation, his first thesis (2012) emphasises anti-imperialist movements operating on the national level and seeks to legitimise the role of the left in the formation of new parties and leadership paradigms that meet popular demands to redress inequalities originating from the elitist forces that dominate liberal democracies. Dussel defends the legitimacy of populism to the extent that it has contributed to merging the ideal of popular sovereignty with actual government practices. He does not limit himself to analysing results achieved through democratic regimes, as he also highlights the contributions made by social movements that can be characterised as "popular" in nature.

In his second thesis, Dussel (2012, 178) denounces "the pejorative epithet of 'populism' that is used to denigrate opponents to the 'Washington Consensus', to neoliberalism, and that refers to popular, neo-nationalist Latin American governments that protect national wealth, which has been taking place since the late 20th century", with the so-called progressive governments.

The third thesis in his paper points out the differences and nuances that can be drawn between the concepts of "populism" and "popular", and where a horizon of meaning that regroups and creates the social dimension of populism can be found. Regarding "the people" as a collective term, Dussel includes a critical point of view of the narratives put forward by governments and social movements that evoke deliberative notions (constituents, popular consultations, plebiscites, referendums); these categories "must be constructed with greater precision, but not abandoned as being too complex" (Dussel 2012, 178).

Dussel's (2012) fourth thesis, points out some of the complex aspects of populism that challenge the prevailing political thought about it. The concept of "the people" is linked to the exercise of popular power through a political system that "creates new institutions of participation at all levels of political structures, in civil society and state politics, and constitutionally" (2012, 178). Real democracy is linked to the effective organisation of popular-political participation.

Lastly, his fifth thesis calls for reflection on and the theoretical integration of the controversial debate on leadership "to avoid traditional avant-garde or charismatic dictatorships, but also [to avoid] a certain kind of spontaneous populism, by demonstrating its importance and need, while at the same time explaining the democratic demands of its exercise" (Dussel 2012, 178). These five theses open a debate in which truth is not sought in absolute terms. Their aim is to contribute towards a discussion on the validity of positive perspectives on populism.

Populism and hybrid regimes

What remains is to examine the usefulness of Leonardo Morlino's concept of hybrid regimes in the interpretation of the types of populism mentioned above. Morlino's typology is suitable for the analysis of nation states with democratic regimes, but it does not deal with the influence of heterogeneous political cultures that have inspired the range of populisms present in the Latin American political history. Conservative populisms emerged as a reaction against progressive populisms which appeared around 1990 and were in a state of decay by 2015. According to Wilkin (2018, 316), in the case of progressive populism "the goals are broadly ones that promote universality in the form of a general improvement in the quality of people's lives. (…) has its intellectual antecedents in the legacy of Enlightenment thought. By reactionary I mean the tradition that emerged as the Anti-Enlightenment, which sought to promote the ideas of separation, particularism and ultimately ethno-nationalism as the basis for a social order and a political system." *The Guardian* (2019) published a study which identified the most prominent populist figures worldwide over the last 20 years. The Latin American leaders appearing in the study included Hugo Chávez (Venezuela, 1999-2007 and 2007-2013); Nicolás Maduro (Venezuela, 2013-2018); Evo Morales (Bolivia, 2006-2019); Rafael Correa (Ecuador, 2007-2017); Daniel Ortega (Nicaragua, 2007-2021); Alan García (Peru, 2006-2011); Jair Bolsonaro (Brazil, 2019-2023); and Andrés Manuel López Obrador (Mexico, 2018-2024). Not included were former Brazilian presidents Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva nor Dilma Rousseff. Leaders were chosen for inclusion in the study based on the number of times populist ideas were mentioned in their official speeches.

According to Morlino's hybrid regime model, in the Latin American context 22 profiles can be identified between 1911 and 2019. Among the populist regimes that governed for more than ten years, eight cases can be found in Latin America (not including Cuba, given the highly exceptional nature of its regime): Getúlio Vargas (Brazil, 1930-1954); Víctor Paz Estenssoro (Bolivia, 1952-1964); Omar Torrijos (Panama, 1969-1981); Daniel Ortega (Nicaragua, 1979-1988 and 2017-2025); Hugo Chávez (Venezuela, 1999-2013); and Nicolás Maduro (Venezuela, 2013-2018 and 2018-2023). In Bolivia, Evo Morales was elected in 2006 and following his 2019 re-election he was deposed due to an electoral result dispute. Rafael Correa was the president of Ecuador between 2007 and 2017.

Morlino's theory would assume that these governments, after a period of more than ten years, could have transitioned to hybrids regimes. However, this analysis cannot ignore the fact that these countries' efforts to make liberal democracy and populism coexist have

been affected by the influence of American policies, economic pressures and even intervention.

A hybrid regime is "a set of institutions that have been persistent, stable or unstable, for around a decade, have been preceded by authoritarianism, a traditional regime (possibly of a colonial nature) or even a minimal democracy; they are characterized by the emergence of pluralism and limited forms of independent and autonomous participation, but they lack at least one of the four characteristics of a minimal democracy" (Morlino 2019, 102). The stability of hybrid regimes can be attributed to factors such as the discontent, dissatisfaction, fear of poverty, and general democratic malaise that contribute to the delegitimisation of democratic systems and to the rise of populist systems. In these scenarios, the hybrid regime emerges as an acceptable institutional configuration that is characterised by being midway between authoritarianism and democracy.

The value of Morlino's model for Latin America "[…] is that it does not impose a rigid democratisation model – a situation that has led some authors to focus primarily on the gaps in the region's processes with respect to the models, which ends up not being highly explanatory – but a flexible framework in which the variables acquire their explanatory value based on their conceptual and empirical relevance" (Plancarte et al. 2019, 17).

The populist institutional configurations that arose in the 20th century were preceded by authoritarian and/or dictatorial regimes that gained power by means of military coups inspired by the US National Security Doctrine of the Cold War era. These populist movements have participated in presidential elections and promoted broad processes of peaceful political activity. They are critical of both elitist and minimal democratic systems, yet allow political pluralism and limited forms of independent and autonomous participation. However, these populist regimes experience issues related to the stability of government due to the atmosphere created around the frequent re-election campaigns of populist presidents and attempts by political and economic elites to vie for power. Another factor that has weakened Latin America's "progressive pink tide" in the 21st century is the rise of nationalist and authoritarian right-wing populisms that have obtained a degree of social support through legal maneuvers (lawfare) against presidential institutions, and through questionable electoral processes after which they gain institutional legitimacy.

Background to and current scenarios in the Latin American populist debate

The Getulio Vargas government ended in 1954 when the president committed suicide under pressure from the Brazilian Armed Forces, which were aligned with the US Cold War doctrine that played a role in the overthrow of democratically elected governments.

An unfortunate fate also befell Guatemalan president Jacobo Árbenz, who was deposed that same year by a military coalition supported by the CIA. Another center-left movement led by João Goulart, who governed Brazil between 1961 and 1964, could be classified as populist. As in the case of the two previously cited governments, his was ousted by the country's military with support from the US State Department. After 24 years of military dictatorship, a constitutional reform in 1988 finally opened the door to Brazilian democratisation, ushering in a period of frequent, transparent elections under the leadership of credible electoral bodies and with acceptance of the legitimacy of presidential election results.

The recent judicialisation of Brazilian politics (2017-2019), a phenomenon which had previously taken place in Paraguay (2012) and Honduras (2009), consisted of using the courts as means to carry out the persecution of or exact vengeance against political adversaries. These actions represented a perversion of constitutional mandates. Legitimate electoral processes were desecrated by a legal war that produced court cases aimed at resolving conflicts between elected political authorities and elites. Although the Labor Party had ruled for 14 consecutive years in Brazil, characterising that period as populist is dubious at best, given the existence of the 1988 constitution that brought the country more in line with a liberal democratic regime that bore little resemblance to Leonardo Morlino's definition of hybrid regimes.

On 4 November 1964, within the framework of the Cold War and the US National Security Doctrine, a *coup d'état* that imposed a military junta led by Air Force commander René Barrientos Ortuño took place in Bolivia. President Víctor Paz Estenssoro, who had been elected in May of that year for a third term, went into exile to Lima, Peru, although he returned to the presidency in 1985 and remained in office until 1989. Elected by a parliament dominated by center-left parties, and despite not having been the most-voted candidate, Paz took on the challenge of ruling during the "lost decade" (period of the Latin American debt crisis of the 1980s) by implementing a populist program aimed at implementing stabilisation and pacification measures in a country where military juntas had often ruled via de facto regimes. It would not be until 2010 with the election of Evo Morales that the transition to a democratic regime in Bolivia would be consolidated. In 2019, the democratisation of the country was interrupted when the reelection of Evo Morales was disputed by established political groups. In November 2019, a de facto government was set up and subsequently organised the presidential elections of 2020. The victory of the *Movimiento al Socialismo* party, in October, marked a return to democracy and the reestablishment of a populist project whose political characteristics do not easily conform to Morlino's hybrid regime typology.

General Omar Torrijos took over the Panamanian government in 1969 following a military coup and established a regime in which the presidency was controlled by the country's army and national guard. This populist government was interrupted in 1981 when Torrijos died in a plane crash. The involvement of the CIA was suspected as a reaction to the Panamanian government's links with national liberation movements in Central America. Unlike former US president Jimmy Carter, who recognised the democratising drive of national liberation movements in some Central American countries, his successor, Ronald Reagan encouraged military interventionism in that region and imposed military juntas that would be friendly to then-nascent neoliberal aspirations. It was not until 1984, three years after Torrijos' death, that a democratic political regime with civilian control was established in Panama.

In 1979 the triumph of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) in Nicaragua instituted a military junta, which later established a democratic transition, normalised electoral processes and guaranteed the peaceful transfer of power after elections. This process went on for nine years until the FSLN lost for three consecutive elections over a period covering 18 years, although it regained the presidency in 2007. Since then, a competitive party-based regime, under which Daniel Ortega has occupied the Nicaraguan presidency since 2007, has been implemented. His re-election for a third consecutive term on 6 November 2016 with 72.4 % of the votes, according to official figures from the Supreme Electoral Council, has been called into question due to an abstention rate of approximately 70 %. Indefinite consecutive reelection is a controversial issue in Latin American populist regimes. In Nicaragua, Ortega lowered the percentage necessary to win a presidential election in the first round from 45 % to 35 % of the votes, a move that many believe has helped him win reelection, particularly in 2006. Social discontent against what the opposition to Ortega has called his "populist authoritarianism" has risen since 2018. Recent repression against dissidents has resulted in more than 500 fatalities, an ominous figure that weighs heavily on the prospects for the continuance of Ortega's democratic governance. Accusations of nepotism were also leveled at him after his wife, Rosario Murillo, ran as a vice-presidential candidate in his most recent reelection campaign.

Populism, beyond hybrid regimes

The terms "regime", "authoritarianism" and "democracy" frame Morlino's (2019, 89-90) vision of the hybrid regime, which "is intimately linked with the prospects for change in the nations that have such ambiguous forms of organisation and, more generally, with the spread of democratisation." According to the 2007 Freedom House Report on which

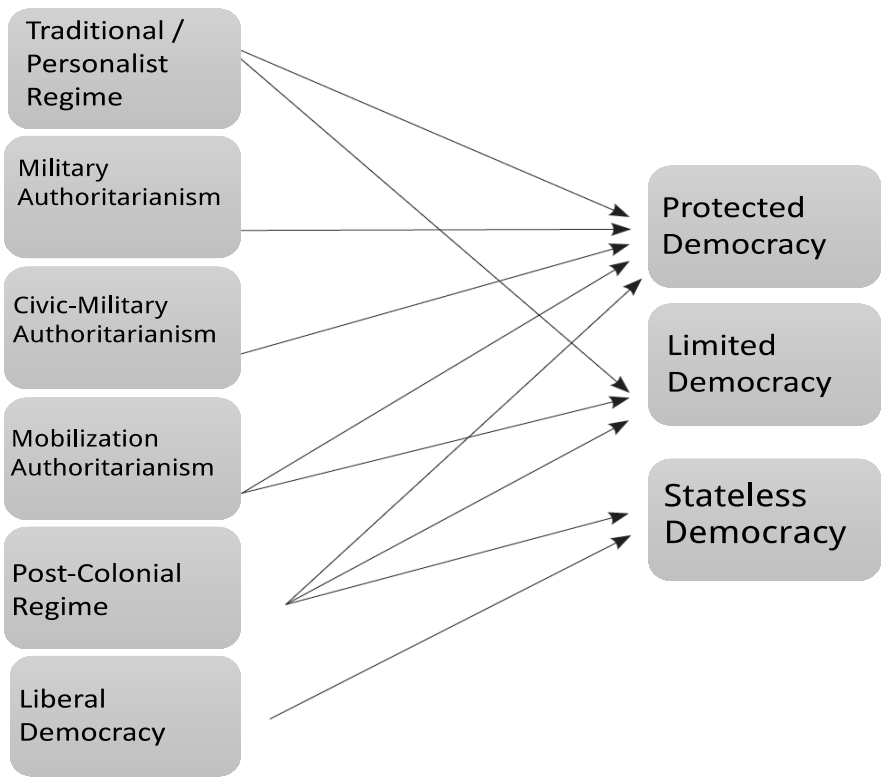
Morlino (2019) bases his analysis, 60 of the world's 193 independent countries, accounting for 30 % of global population, have "political configurations that can be defined as partially free, the criterion most closely tied to the notion of hybrid regimes". While the 2007 report focused on medium- and small-sized nations, in 2020 some populist governments in large countries such as India and Brazil, and even the United States, could also fit into the "partially free" category, as they were all home to forms of populism with increasingly authoritarian features. Furthermore, if we widen the perspective to include populist sociopolitical movements that are non-governmental, in the sense that they operate as advocacy groups in legislative or civil society contexts, the topic of hybrid regimes begins to appear more complex.

Populism cannot easily be slotted into Morlino's typology of hybrid regimes. While some countries may definitely be categorised within this typology, the reach of populism as a political and cultural phenomenon goes beyond the concept of a political regime. According to *The Guardian* (2019), "(i)n the early 2000s, Venezuela, Argentina, and Italy were the only countries with populations over 20 million with populist leaders. The populist club increased significantly between 2006 and 2009, when Ecuador's Rafael Correa, Bolivia's Evo Morales, and the Czech Republic's Mirek Topolánek came to power – and Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Russia's Vladimir Putin began using populist rhetoric". *The Guardian's* (2019) study of populist rhetoric and discourse found that the most significant expansion of populism has occurred over the past five years, "when more populists came to power in central and eastern Europe, and the elections of Donald Trump, India's Narendra Modi, Mexico's Andrés Manuel López Obrador and Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro put populists in power in some of the world's most populous countries." As a result, the study states that the number of people living in a country led by a leader who is at least "somewhat populist" increased from 120 million in 2002 to more than 2 billion in 2019.

Morlino's (2109, 92-93) conception of the hybrid regime envisages something between a "non-democratic arrangement (particularly of a traditional, authoritarian or post-totalitarian nature) and a democratic one". His analysis focuses on institutions, "even if they are not formal, which exist at a given time and in a given nation; such institutions continue to have remnants of previous political scenarios. [A hybrid regime] may not meet the minimalist requirements of a democracy [nor] satisfy all the immediately controllable and empirically essential conditions that make it possible to establish a limit beyond which a regime cannot be considered to be democratic".

In Figure 1, Morlino (2019, 112) identifies six types of hybrid regimes: 1) Traditional, personalistic; 2) Military authoritarianism; 3) Civil-military authoritarianism; 4) Mobilising authoritarianism; 5) Postcolonial regime; and 6) Liberal democracy. These regimes interact with three types of democracy: 1) Protected democracy; 2) Limited democracy; and 3) Stateless democracy. Given the length of this article, it is not possible to cover all the concepts that are included in the typology that this author proposes. However, the typologies of authoritarian regimes and democracies cited above allow me to emphasise those factors that make democratic change possible or difficult, within the framework of the six hybrid regimes and the way they interrelate with the three types of democracy. Positioning populist regimes within this typology is no easy task. Despite the risk of simplification, Morlino's work aims to reflect on this typology as it relates to populist experiences in Latin America.

Figure 1 What type of Hybrid Regime?



Source: Morlino (2019, 112)

A *protected democracy* is defined by its ability to continue operating for a considerable or for a very long period of time. To have any chance of permanence, such a political hybrid must be able to rely on both political and social institutional elites, and be capable of taking measures that limit mass participation. However, a populist regime cannot be considered a *protected democracy*, since their representation of the people corresponds to an elitist conception of democracy that privileges and protects their interests. Furthermore, we must not lose sight

of the "significant void" (Laclau 2005) which populism aims to fill in either of its two iterations: the authoritarian one, with an appeal to nativist nationalism and white, patriarchal supremacy; and the progressive one, with an appeal to nationalism that favors an inclusive *us,* devoid of racism and supportive of feminist and gender equality ideals.

A *limited democracy* is associated to a "rupture of authoritarianism as a result of popular mobilisation of groups in society or of the armed forces, or due to foreign intervention. […] The presence of undemocratic veto players [may lead to] a more or less enduring situation, characterised by the lack of guarantees of order and basic rights" (Morlino 2019, 114). Latin American populisms are anchored in popular mobilisations, within which the degree of participation of the armed forces has varied considerably: Hugo Chávez in Venezuela and Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua arose from military backgrounds, while Evo Morales in Bolivia and Rafael Correa in Ecuador entered politics as civilians and later gained the support of the armed forces.

All progressive populist leaders come from social movements, and the dominant tendency is for them to strengthen a civilian presidential regime supported by a more or less pluralistic party system. Jair Bolsonaro, who has a military background, is an example of an authoritarian populist elected with the help of Brazil's liberal democratic sectors. At the same time, his close ties to the country's armed forces afford him a considerable degree of political stability, although this situation creates a scenario where the military ends up having undemocratic veto power. In Latin America, the existence of military or civil-military authoritarian regimes has often gone hand in hand with foreign interventionism. In the cases of Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil, authoritarian regimes eventually led to liberal democratic transitions. On the other hand, in countries such as Bolivia, Evo Morales led to a populist democratic transition with the capacity to hold the political influence of the armed forces in check for more than 10 years, until 2019 when the army became a veto player who failed to accept the results of that year's presidential election.

The third type of regime is the *stateless democracy* (Morlino 2019, 114), which "does not even imply the liberalisation or disintegration of limited pluralism as such, since there is no previously existing stable regime or a functioning state institution." According to Morlino, the democracies without law (in which there is neither personal autonomy nor individual liberties), as well as the inefficient democracies, can be grouped into the category of stateless democracies (Morlino 2019, 114-117). The majority of such systems are in Africa and Asia; there are none in Latin America. However, populisms do not fit this definition since this

hybrid regime is characterised by the absence of the rule of law and by the denial of personal autonomy and individual liberties.

Morlino's asserts that "hybrid regimes are a substantial reality and can be considered an autonomous model of regime with respect to democracy, authoritarianism and the traditional regime" (2019, 20-21). Morlino's typology offers an empirical classification of hybrid regimes which is based on Weberian ideal types, useful for testing the empirical establishment of minimum indicators of effective democracy, and, thus, discerning the extent to which both authoritarian and democratic aspects prevail in hybrid regimes.

All hybrid regimes are challenged politically by conflicts in four main areas: electoral systems, legislative bodies, the courts and mass media. The extent to which they may be successful in meeting these challenges will depend on their capacity to process these conflicts within democratic parameters. Latin American populisms suggest heterogeneous interpretations for which Morlino's typology could complement a critical political framework of analysis. However, as Morlino (2019, 122-123) concludes, "it is impossible to find a 'recipe' that can be applied in a wide range of cases: there is no set of recommendations that 'fits everyone'."

Conclusions

Among the political theories that embody negative views of populism, the institutionalist approach championed by Anglo-Saxon and European scholars that tend to classify regimes based on the ideal of liberal democracy is predominant. However, these approaches often fail to integrate social history with the system of actors and their strategies for exercising political power in the realms of state and society. Canovan (1999, 2) warns against oversimplification when analysing the political roots of populism: "(T)he sources of populism lie not only in the social context that supplies the grievances of any particular movement, but are to be found in tensions at the heart of [a complex] democracy."

According to the liberal tradition of democracy, democracies seek to form legitimate governments through elections and defend the interests of republican institutions through the party system. This approach leads to two paradigms put forward by the dominant democratic theory: minimalist democracy, which meets the essential basic criteria of the liberal democratic model; and elitist democracy, which highlights the technical, educational, and professional quality of the popular representatives. Both paradigms defy any categorisation that encompasses democratic ideals, such as "popular democracy" or "participatory democracy".

The Anglo-Eurocentric approach mainly focuses on the negative effects produced by conservative populism on a global scale. Jan-Werner Müller (2016, 101) argues that populism is at its core a rejection of pluralism. "[Populists] claim that they and they alone represent the people and their true interests […] through a moral representation of the people, creating an authoritarian state that excludes all those not considered part of the proper 'people'". In other words, they claim to speak exclusively for "the silent majority" or "real people", but their analysis is ambiguous vis-à-vis the theoretical challenges posed by progressive populisms.

More positive perspectives on progressive populism are inspired by unorthodox theories and modes of critical thinking that are based on a complex vision of democracy in the Global South that transcends the more traditional model of liberal democracy. Latin American populisms invent original political practices to democratize national governments, and they redefine the fundamental categories on which democratic regimes are based: popular sovereignty; the imaginary of the nation-state; the participation of actors in diverse gender categories in the construction of public space; and the role of the state in regulating conflicts between private and public interests.

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Quality of Democracy and Game Theory: Explaining the Consolidation of the Mexican Hybrid Regime

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.22151/politikon.48.3

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Abstract

This article presents several mechanisms that explain the fragility of some dimensions of Mexican democracy. Three empirical problems that constitute challenges to the Mexican democratisation process are explored using game theory: a) the 2006 post-electoral context; b) the fight against drug cartels; and c) the collaboration between citizens and cartels. Each case is linked to a dimension of the quality of democracy: political participation for the first case, and rule of law for the second and third cases. The main argument is that these institutional challenges contribute to the consolidation of a hybrid regime. The article deploys three distinct applications of game theory: to show how the incompatibility between observable behavior and the logic of a game helps to infer types of rationality; to describe how the situational logic determines the interaction between actors; and to display how the interaction of different preferences causes distinct outcomes.

Keywords

Game Theory; Hybrid Regimes; Political Participation; Qualities of Democracy; Rule of Law

[1] Dr. Plancarte Escobar also acted as a Deputy Editor-in-Chief of *IAPSS Politikon*. He had no role in the assessment of his manuscript, and no knowledge of the identity of the external reviewers who evaluated the manuscript following the usual standards of the journal.

Originally published in Volume 48 (March 2021), pp. 47–69. Corrected October 2026: volume and issue numbering.

Introduction

A quality democracy is one that guarantees adequate levels of freedom and equality (Morlino 2012, 195). The deepening of democracy constitutes the sub-process following transition and consolidation. Its relevance lies not only in its novelty for Latin America, but in the fact that, as Leonardo Morlino (2012, 191) suggests, regimes with democratic deficits, such as hybrids, can become democratic through the improvement of the dimensions that make up the quality of democracy. As Bermeo (2016, 14) states, coups d'état are not the norm in democratic regressions today: the form these regressions take in many countries is through gradual changes. These gradual changes can produce hybrid or ambiguously democratic institutional arrangements (Bermeo 2016, 6). Hybrid regimes are a real empirical possibility since, as Morlino (2012, 49) has stated, democratisation is not a linear process, but can lead to diverse outcomes, including arrangements marked by institutional uncertainty and ambiguity. A similar insight is offered by Diamond (2002, 24) when he states, following O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986), that transition processes are accompanied by different degrees of uncertainty, the results of which may lead to various types of hybrid regimes. These regimes are deviations from their predecessors but, at the same time, they are neither fully authoritarian, nor totally democratic (Morlino 2012, 55); rather, they combine authoritarian and democratic features. Morlino defines hybrid regimes as a "set of ambiguous institutions that maintain aspects of the past" (2012, 55), a past that could have been authoritarian, traditional, or even democratic (2012, 55).

However, one of the conceptual challenges is to specify whether we are facing a singular type of regime in a strict sense, or a transitional process towards another type of regime (Morlino, 2012, 49). One way, although not the only one, in which a hybrid regime can be differentiated from a transitional phase is by analyzing the number of years a country has been partially free (Morlino, 2012, 57-59). If a country has been partially free for at least two years, but less than ten, we are in the presence of a transitional period. If the country has been partially free for at least ten years, we are facing a case of a hybrid regime (Morlino 2012, 57). Based on data from Freedom House, Morlino (2012) classified Mexico as a hybrid regime in transition to democracy, since, by the year 2010, Mexico had already experienced a transitional period for 11 years. However, the data considered only reaches 2010, so, based on this approach, Mexico would have gone from being a regime in transition to democracy towards a case of a more persistent hybrid regime: 20 partially free years in total by the beginning of 2020. Freedom House data confirm that by 2020 Mexico would still be partially

free. Additionally, it has been labelled an electoral democracy[2] since 2000 (Freedom House 2020).

The perpetuation of a hybrid regime and the challenges to the Mexican democratisation process require an explanation. What mechanisms explain the weakness of the quality of Mexican democracy and the consequent perpetuation of a hybrid regime? The objective of this article is to offer only some mechanisms that explain the weakness of two dimensions of the quality of democracy: political participation and the rule of law. It addresses three empirical problems associated with these dimensions: post-electoral instability, the strengthening of drug cartels, and the collaboration between drug cartels and citizens. The emphasis is on the political landscape since 2006, when former President Felipe Calderón came to power after a controversial election and initiated the "War on Drugs". I address the three cases from static Game Theory (GT). Each case aims to answer a specific question: 1) why did the uncertain post-electoral scenario in 2006 did not result in violence? 2) why is it so difficult to combat drug cartels? and 3) why do citizens collaborate with drug cartels? Each of these cases displays three different modalities of GT: 1) the inference of the type of rationality that drives actors and how this mechanism is useful to explain the outcome of political processes (first case); 2) the description of the situational logic that involves actors and how its deviation can have deleterious consequences (second case); and 3) the description of how different configurations of preferences aid to the understanding of types of interactions and types of actors (third case). One novelty of this article is the link between analytical narratives and the field of the quality of democracy.

Game theory, processes, analytical narratives

A question that emerges when evaluating democratic deepening is what the most adequate methodological tool is to achieve this (Morlino 2012, 191). Although Leonardo Morlino (2012) has favored research designs aimed at comparing countries through the study of their qualities, analytical narratives (Bates et al. 2000) – as an approach that uses case studies to identify causal mechanisms – constitute an area of opportunity that remains insufficiently explored in terms of studying democratic quality, particularly in the Latin American region. The use of rational choice models is not a novelty in social sciences. Representative works by authors such as Buchanan and Tullock (1993), Coleman (1994), Axelrod (1986), Ostrom (2011), Kuran (1997), Goldstone (1997), to name just a few, can be cited in this respect. Some authors have gone as far as systematising the positive study of

[2] I.e. democracies in which there is effective political competition, but are not minimally liberal in terms of civil liberties.

politics (see Hinich and Munger, 2003; and Shepsle, 2016). While a select group of rationalist authors have focused on understanding political transition through GT – namely, Josep Colomer (1998), in the case of Spain, or in a more theoretical level, Adam Przeworski (1995), focusing on the different results that a process of democratic opening can go through – there has been little discussion in the Latin American region on the methodological and theoretical links between the study of the quality of democracy and GT.

One of the reasons for this reluctance lies in the fact that rational choice theory – as the theory from which analytical narratives stem – is rooted on Methodological Individualism (MI) and causal mechanisms, whereas studies on the quality of democracy have implicitly remained at the level of systemic analysis, centered on units such as groups, functions, structures, systems and subsystems. Moreover, authors such as Laurence Whitehead (2011) have argued that physical metaphors – and certainly GT could fall into this category – are insufficient for an understanding of democratisation, and that the study of this phenomenon should be approached from biological metaphors and an interpretative perspective. This displays that not only the concept of democracy is a contentious one, but also that there is a dispute over which the best approach to democratization processes is. However, one of the advantages GT analysis provides is that it allows us to "break down" the great questions of comparative politics into their procedural elements (Geddes, 2003). What do analytical narratives have to offer for an understanding of the quality of democracy, and in particular, for institutional contexts that can be categorised as hybrid? GT and analytical narratives are useful tools to unveil the logic behind several empirical problems peculiar to the eight qualities (Morlino, 2012) that constitute the study of the quality of democracy (rule of law, electoral accountability, inter-institutional accountability, participation, competition, freedom, equality, and responsiveness). It, consequently, aims to elucidate why it is so difficult to strengthen the different qualities in hybrid contexts such as México, i.e., in institutional arrangements marked by profound democratic challenges, not through measurement, but through a qualitative methodology focused on processes.

GT is a suitable tool for addressing political and social phenomena that involve strategic interactions. This tool, associated with MI and positivism, is part of the arsenal of both quantitative and qualitative methods. As a qualitative tool, GT calls upon interpretation to reconstruct the mechanisms that constitute strategic interaction analysis: preferences, strategies and equilibria. The reconstruction of processes occurs through the interpretation of behaviors and situational logics, as well as through a deep knowledge of the cases' history. Causal mechanisms (Elster 2003; 2010) are at the core of GT, but this approach has been

criticised by authors such as Morlino (2012) due to the determinism to which it leads. For Morlino (2012, 20), democratisation processes are always uncertain open processes, and we should, in case we make use of the mechanisms approach, "(…) embed the mechanism/s we are able to find into a meaningful 'process', where time, timing, and sequencing, when singled out, are essential components" (2012, 20). However, the causal mechanisms approach is far from being deterministic, at least for authors such as Jon Elster (2003, 18), for whom prediction does not constitute the aim of mechanisms. For Elster (1997, first part), the adequate type of explanation for social sciences, is not a causal one, – prone to determinism – or a functionalist one, but rather an intentional one. The intentional explanation involves the study of the various mechanisms and motivations that guide the individual actors' behavior. It also focuses on how the interaction of mechanisms and motivations results in aggregate phenomena, both intentional and unintentional. Consequently, this approach can shed light on an aggregate phenomenon such as democratization.

Following Geddes (2003, 53-57), GT is useful to understand the phenomena associated with the sub-processes that make up a larger process: democratization. Although GT models have the disadvantage of leaving out many contextual and historical characteristics, they manage to simplify the main elements of a process well, emphasising the components that provide a process with dynamism, namely the actors. A game, as any model, serves to simplify the main components of a process – and therefore, it is also a process – as well as to reveal the underlying logic of the interaction between two or more actors. It also serves to describe the sub-processes in an empirical situation, as when each of the outcomes of a static game represents a different interaction, i.e., a sub-process. If GT – as an approach that resorts to mechanisms – is not deterministic, and is compatible with the concept of process, we can state that it is a useful methodological tool for the understanding of the processes that comprise the study of democratic quality.

The eight dimensions to study the quality of democracy mentioned above contain specific puzzles and empirical problems that take the form of processes whose logic must be revealed through the identification of causal mechanisms. This article applies the static version of GT to all three cases. In this version, a Nash equilibrium means a real or hypothetical situation in which none of the players has an incentive to change strategy without at least one losing by doing so. In turn, a dominant strategy refers to the best response each player has to any of the opposing player's decision. I reconstruct the three aforementioned conflicts as processes with these concepts in mind. The final aim is to answer the above questions associated with the dimensions of the rule of law and political

participation. Conversely, this article falls within the tradition of analytical narratives (Bates et al. 2000). Analytical narratives are part of those methodological efforts aimed at making explanatory, rather than descriptive, case studies, and in general, qualitative methods.

Mexico as a hybrid regime

The discussion about which subtype of hybrid regime would best characterise the Mexican case is not fully resolved, but this analysis would have to take into account the country's institutional past, and the institutional arrangements that remain as a legacy of authoritarianism, as well as the political and social effects of the democratisation process. Furthermore, the presence of actors without clear nor direct political pretensions, but financial motivations, namely drug cartels, seriously threaten individual freedoms, the rule of law, and the functioning of government. Thus, a pending research agenda would have to reflect on the usefulness of the concept of a hybrid regime within a context in which violence is mainly promoted by drug cartels, and the way in which this influences the democratisation process.

Conversely, the perpetuation of Mexico's profound institutional challenges stems from the type of democratisation process it has experienced. The literature on political change and transition in Mexico displays a certain consensus that this type of transition occurred through a gradual process of negotiating the rules of the game (Becerra, Salazar and Woldenberg 2000), in particular, electoral reforms (Merino 2003). Unlike other transitions resulting from an explicit institutional agreement (Sartori 2003, 222), the Mexican case, as Merino (2003 18-29) has stated, was a voted, gradual transition that still carries institutional atavisms from the past, which were not founded according to democratic prescriptions. In the absence of a founding moment (Woldenberg 2012, 14) that would give way to a new political order, the transition process inaugurated in 2000 (with the triumph of the National Action Party [PAN]) perpetuated an institutional logic that hinders democratic deepening. In the electoral sphere, the accusations of electoral fraud and manipulation at both the local and federal levels have never disappeared, although not to the extent that prevailed when the hegemonic party system (Institutional Revolutionary Party [PRI]) dominated. The conflict following the 2006 presidential elections showed that, in the context of very closed electoral processes, the institutions in charge of organising elections have difficulty in providing electoral certainty and generating confidence. Post-electoral political participation is one of the dimensions of the quality of democracy affected by this institutional fragility, especially as the possibility of political violence emerges.

The analysis of the strengthening of drug cartels – a phenomenon that became a major issue on the public agenda at the end of 2006[3] – as an indication of the weakness of the rule of law is equally important. The 2000 transition reduced neither the levels of corruption, nor the weakness of the rule of law. As Astorga and Shirk (2010, 7) have stated, democratic pluralism and decentralization of power resulted in the reconfiguration of previously forged equilibria between the state and criminal groups. This result is not surprising, since, following Ugalde (2011), democracy was established in a context covered by institutional arrangements that allow corruption and clientelism, which grant state and non-state actors greater independence. As Ugalde (2012, 68) recounts, while Mexico's independence had the consequence of freeing the military and *caciques* – actors who then acted with impunity – from the vice-royal control, something similar occurred when the hegemonic party system dissolved. The institutional equilibria that kept social violence at tolerable levels disappeared, and actors with the capacity to openly challenge the state emerged. The drug cartels' strength and violent methods are an indirect legacy of the past: they are not a legacy of the hegemonic party system, but of the effects of its absence.

Although the emphasis placed on these two dimensions of the quality of democracy is not sufficient to outline a general view of the institutional challenges whose interaction perpetuates a hybrid regime in Mexico (which would require an assessment of the eight dimensions of the quality of democracy), it does provide a preliminary analysis to this case.

The Post-Electoral Context of the 2006 Presidential Elections

In July 2006, the difference between the winning candidate, Felipe Calderón (PAN, political right), and the second place, the left-wing leader, Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) (Coalición por el Bien de Todos [CPBT]), was only 0.56 % of the total vote, even though by March AMLO was 10 points ahead of Calderón in the polls preceding the election (Crespo 2008, 21-22). As José Antonio Crespo (2008, 21) points out, closed election results are a breeding ground for uncertainty and mistrust in electoral institutions. In some cases, for instance, in Kenya in 2007, the results led to political violence (Crespo 2008, 27). However, the effect of closed elections depends mainly on the prevailing institutional arrangement (Crespo 2008, 25). Following Crespo (2008), it is in presidential systems (as zero-sum games) where a closed result creates incentives for the runner up not to accept the electoral count and denouncing "(...) any anomaly, irregularity, inequity or act of partiality of

[3] Mainly due to the war against drug cartels initiated in 2006 by former president Felipe Caldéron. 2006 marks the tipping point in the escalation of violence.

the electoral authorities that could have been decisive in the final verdict" (Crespo 2008, 25), augmenting the suspicion of fraud among the loser's supporters.

The closeness of the election's results, the accusations of irregularities during the electoral process, the intrusion of former president Vicente Fox (PAN, 2000-2006) in it, and AMLO's impeachment process, also promoted by Fox in 2005, resulted in the wide dissemination of the idea of fraud held by AMLO's followers (Crespo 2008, 21). The post-election scenario did not lead to violence, but was marked by deep polarisation (Crespo 2008, 27). The main demand of AMLO and the CPBT was a thorough recount of all the ballot boxes. For two months, until September 5, when the Electoral Court of the Judicial Power of the Federation (TEPJF) gave its final resolution, in which it declared Felipe Calderón as President Elect (Crespo 2008, 71), there were a series of mobilisations and actions promoted by AMLO – who had reiterated being in favor of "peaceful civil resistance" – and his supporters, mainly in downtown Mexico City, with the purpose of making their discontent visible. The result of the sense of aggravation stemming from the decisions of the electoral institutions consisted of taking over avenues and setting up camps blocking them. In the documentary "EL FRAUDE DEL 2006" AMLO stated that anger and indignation were shared feelings in the social movement created after July 2 –and he includes himself as a participant in this movement. According to AMLO, these feelings were channeled through the aforementioned mobilisations and takeovers, and violence was, thus, avoided (peaceful civil resistance). In addition to the effects that these actions had on transportation and trade, AMLO's supporters' unconditional backing, and the emergence of solidarity and decentralised forms of organisation became the defining characteristics of this social movement, as Elena Poniatowska (2007, first chapter) recounts. These features reinforce what Morlino (2012, 202) and Elster (2010, 432) state: in social movements arise not only instrumental motivations, but also others aimed at strengthening identities as well as the search for benefits obtained during the process.

Crespo (2008, 22-23) posits that, although one of AMLO's mistakes during this electoral process was the construction of a confrontational anti-business discourse, which gave the opposition a resource to label him as "a danger for Mexico", and drove away the moderate electorate that supported him, this same discourse strengthened his hardline voters' support. One sector of those hard-liners was willing to drive the movement to its ultimate consequences, resorting to radical actions, but AMLO always tried to frame his followers' behaviors in a way that, although disruptive to the daily routine of Mexico City, could not be typecast as violent. Various accounts in Poniatowska's (2007) chronicle show that one sector

of this movement not only declared a categorical commitment to AMLO (2007, 42), but also preferred, unlike AMLO, more radical actions (2007, 44, 54). The social discontent and preference for more belligerent actions, which were beyond AMLO's capacity to control, increased after September 5, when the TEPJF declared Felipe Calderón President Elect (Poniatowska 2007, 290-291, 304-305). According to the documentary "EL FRAUDE DEL 2006" Mitofsky, a pollster, conducted a national survey after the election to find out the percentage of Mexicans who would support an armed rebellion led by AMLO. The result was that 13.2 % citizens (approximately 10 million Mexicans in 2006) were in favor of that option. While political competition and the rule of law are dimensions of the quality of democracy that could be affected by such a conflict, the focus of this analysis is on finding out why despite this polarised result, this conflict did not lead to a process of collective action that resorted to violence.

Although violence has been described as a type of resource used by contentious collective action (Tarrow 2011, 99), for Morlino (2012, 202), quality political participation, be it conventional or unconventional, is only non-violent, given that for him violence is against the law and can lead to more violence. However, what defines political participation as violent or non-violent? One of the variables that helps us define this, although not the only one, is the type of rationality that governs actors. The interaction between one political leader and their supporters, in the context of electoral fraud accusations, is a way of discerning the type of a political leader's rationality and how it could be a determining factor triggering political violence or not. In order to infer AMLO's type of rationality, I will compare his behavior against GT model prescriptions.

After September 5, AMLO had two options: not to accept the results and stay within the Peaceful Civil Resistance (P), or not to accept the results by taking a more disruptive position (R). AMLO showed a preference for staying in (P) while his sympathisers did the same, but the difference between a strategy of peaceful civil resistance and more forceful actions is not so great, so his second preference is that both he and his sympathizers go for more forceful actions (R, R). In reality, a collective disruptive action led by him was part of the set of options that AMLO considered effective in reversing the electoral result. In the documentary "EL FRAUDE DEL 2006" the interviewer asks AMLO if he would agree that there was another "dangerous" (i.e. violent) way that AMLO preferred in order to "stop the fraud", even if AMLO's preferred option (peaceful civil resistance) did not work. AMLO nods to the interviewer's question and wonders whether not choosing the disruptive option turned out to be more costly in the end. Third, AMLO prefers to remain in (P), regardless

of what his sympathisers do, which is (R). The last option AMLO prefers is to opt for a disruptive position (R), while his supporters go for (P), given that this is contradictory.

Similarly, an important sector of AMLO's supporters, the hard-liners, faced two options: opting for a position of political moderation, following the example of "peaceful civil resistance" proposed by AMLO (P), or for a radical position (R). As previously stated, an important sector of AMLO's sympathisers preferred that both they and he choose (R). The perseverance of those who participated in the encampments and street-taking in Mexico City during July, August, and September, demonstrates his sympathisers' deep dissatisfaction, and their choice to remain within (R), despite AMLO's preference (P) (second preference). If this is not possible, and if they have to opt for the peaceful way, they prefer that both they and AMLO opt for (P). Their last preference, which is a contradiction for both, is opting for (P) while AMLO chooses (R).

Figure 1: AMLO's preferences

AMLO	Hard-liners	Payments
P	P	4
R	R	3
P	R	2
R	P	1

Figure 2: Hard-liners' preferences

AMLO	Hard-liners	Payments
R	R	4
P	R	3
P	P	2
R	P	1

Figure 3: Game between AMLO and hard-liners

AMLO/Hard-liners	P	R
P	4, 2	2, 3
R	1, 1	3, 4

Source (Figures 1 to 3): author

The only equilibrium in the payment matrix is (3, 4), in which both AMLO, and his hard-line sector, opt for (R). However, in practical terms, AMLO decided to remain in (P), and with this choice, he oriented his supporters towards the same option. The climate of post-electoral polarisation was contained during the following months, but the episode put in evidence the low credibility of the institutions in charge of organising elections in the contexts of closed results, as well as the predisposition for disruptive behavior that can jeopardize the quality of democracy via using violence as a political resource. Diverse mechanisms may be involved in this outcome, so their understanding would require further exploration. AMLO's behavior could have resulted from what Robert Axelrod (1986) understands as "the shadow of the future"; that is, the certainty of finding himself again in cooperation dilemmas with opponents in the future. According to this concept, respect for the adverse election results can be seen as cooperative behavior in the part of AMLO. This

outcome could also be the product of the burnout experienced by this social movement. However, the logical inference that results from modeling these preferences is that a behavior deviating from the situational logic of the game would indicate another type of rationality: a rationality that does not align with the prescriptions of the game and that reflects a concern for the well-being of others (avoiding violence). As AMLO himself relates in the documentary "EL FRAUDE DEL 2006", he found himself in a dilemma: while he did not consider it fair to accept the results, he was concerned that the social movement he led would become radicalised and lead to violence. AMLO's decision to remain in (P), despite an important sector of his sympathisers' willingness to follow radical actions, would provide evidence of a non-instrumental rationality. This outcome also reveals that GT, as an approach anchored in assumptions of instrumental rationality, may be compatible with the internalist tradition of rational choice (Elster 2010), by allowing us to observe that actors who do not behave according to the situational logic prescribed by the model may be guided by a different rationality, as opposed to the logic of the game.

Drug cartels and the Chicken Game: the state's defeat?

Morlino (2012, 197-198) states that the rule of law comprises sub-dimensions such as the effective fight against illegality and the maintenance of order. Why is it so difficult to fight illegality, specifically drug cartels in Mexico? By emphasizing how past decisions and opportunities define the present, the notion of Path Dependence is an adequate tool to approach this question by focusing on the options available to the government to fight drug cartels. In Mexico, drug cartels act as informal enterprises that mainly seek economic benefits and resort to violence to confront other competitors. Although criminal organizations have long existed in Mexico, it was not until 2006 that they reappeared in the form of strong drug cartels, and, mainly due to the increase in violence between them, became a priority issue in public opinion. Within months of becoming president, partially due to his need to gain legitimacy after a questionable election, Felipe Calderón (PAN, 2006-2012) launched a policy of direct combat that had the effect of escalating confrontations between cartels and displacing violence between states (Chabat 2010, 30). However, as Valdés posits (2016, 364), the fragmentation and proliferation of cartels did not begin in 2006, but in the late 1980s, when the government arrested the heads of the Pacific Cartel. Similarly, the firepower and organizational sophistication of these criminal groups began in the late 1990s (Valdés 2016, 367), with the emergence Los Zetas Cartel, as the armed wing of The Gulf Cartel, as a symptomatic example soon emulated by the other cartels. Apparently, Calderón's strategy was the mechanism that unleashed a logic that had been latent.

For Chabat (2016), Calderón faced a narrow array of options regarding drug cartels: tolerate them, the preferred option of previous governments, or face them openly. By preferring the latter, Calderón's administration triggered a logic of open confrontation between the federal government and drug cartels, in which the latter have become opponents with the zeal to take this game to its ultimate consequences. What kind of game is it? By looking at the two actors' behavior, it can be best described as a Chicken Game. This is characterized by a situation in which two actors compete until one of them, "the chicken", desists first (Colomer 2009, 66), and gives up. Since each actor seeks to force the other to cooperate, defined as giving up, this game has two equilibria (Colomer 2009, 66). In each of them, one player wins and the other one behaves as the chicken. According to the description above, since 2006, the federal government has had two options: direct military-style confrontation (C), or a strategy of tolerance that may involve an explicit or tacit agreement (T). While both, Felipe Calderón and Enrique Peña Nieto (PRI, 2012-2018) privileged (C), AMLO (MORENA [National Regeneration Movement], 2018-2024), at least discursively, has emphasized that he opposes this strategy. Similarly, the drug cartels' two options which result from the set-up of the Chicken Game are: to take a violent position (V), or to consider the possibility of some kind of agreement with the federal government (A) – a position in which their violence decreases.

The preferences for the federal government would look as follows. Its first option is to fight drug cartels (C) while drug cartels take a non-violent position that here takes the form of some possible agreement (A). The federal government's second option is the possibility of an agreement (T), and if it has to do so, it prefers not to be the "fool of the game", that is, that drug cartels also promote some agreement (A). Thirdly, the government prefers a non-confrontational position, which here takes the form of tolerance (T), while drug cartels remain in their aggressive position (V). The last thing the federal government prefers is a situation of open confrontation with drug cartels, that is, a situation in which it chooses (C) and drug cartels (V). Drug cartels have the following preferences. Their first preference is to choose a position of aggressiveness (V), and if they do so, they prefer that it be in front of a non-defiant federal government, that is (T). Secondly, they prefer to reach a non-confrontational arrangement (A), as long as the government goes for (T). Thirdly, cartels prefer an agreement (A), while the federal government goes for (C), this is so because the last option they prefer is to embark in a direct confrontation (V) while the federal government responds in kind with (C).

Figure 4: Government preferences

Government	Drug cartels	Payments
C	A	4
T	A	3
T	V	2
C	V	1

Figure 5: Cartels' preferences

Government	Drug cartels	Payments
T	V	4
T	A	3
C	A	2
C	V	1

Figure 6: Game between government and cartels

Government/Cartels	V	A
C	1, 1	4, 2
T	2, 4	3, 3

Source (Figures 4 to 6): author

Having opted for open confrontation, Calderón established a situational logic that delimits what government actors can do. Since 2006, drug cartels have remained in (V) and the federal government in (C). Each actor seeks a different equilibrium: (2, 4) for drug cartels, and (4, 2) for the federal government. In certain stages of the game, the state has dominated it, forcing some criminal groups to establish themselves in the (4, 2) equilibrium, but this is not a predominant tendency. The state's position in (C) was inevitable to postpone. Some reasons that, according to Chabat (2016, 34), made it impossible for Calderón to opt for tolerance, are: 1) an agreement with drug cartels was feasible in a system for which accountability was not a priority (that is, before Mexico's political transition in 2000), but not in a system with greater openness; 2) the current strengthening of drug cartels complicates the feasibility of accepting any agreement; and 3) public opinion has demanded that the federal government openly fight drug cartels. These same reasons make it difficult for AMLO to make a choice other than (C). Let us suppose, however, that an agreement could be promoted, and so focus on (3, 3). This is not an equilibrium, since each actor has incentives to move to a different option. In the case of drug cartels, they want to move towards (V). This is because they have strengthened to the point of not needing any agreement with the federal government. In addition, the reasons listed above make it difficult for the federal government to search for (3, 3). While at the federal level it is possible to model this strategic interaction, at the state and municipal level, some government actors have had no choice but to collaborate and subordinate themselves to the cartels. The rational choice for public officials has been to submit to this criminal logic. The passivity of the state and municipal administrations could be explained, in addition to their institutional weakness and the imposition of conditions of drug cartels, by their decision not to play a Chicken Game.

AMLO's government faces the same set of options as Calderón and Peña Nieto: confrontation or tolerance. It also faces serious challenges: just between December 2018 and October 2019, 28,396 were killed in Mexico (Zuckermann 2019). If an agreement is not feasible, what other options are available? A third alternative is,as AMLO has emphasised, a strategy of social development ("a departure from the neoliberal economic model") that rebuilds the social fabric and reduces inequality – a discourse that has characterised him at least since the beginning of 2000. However, this is a long-term strategy. A fourth possibility refers to the legal combat of cartels, either, through the legalisation of some drugs, or the dismantling of their power networks and financial circuits, but these options are barely being analyzed in the national public security agenda.

At least for much of 2019, AMLO has seemed to avoid a logic of open conflict against cartels. During the 2018 election campaign, and subsequently – once he had won the elections – AMLO has even included the idea of "national reconciliation" and "social forgiveness" in his discourse, with the tacit aim of reducing violence. In practice, this means avoiding open confrontation, as could be observed in the events that occurred in the state of Sinaloa in October 2019, in which confrontations between criminal groups and the Mexican Army, due to the arrest of the son of the most powerful cartel leader in Mexico, resulted in the release of the detainee following orders from the federal government. Either because of the strength of drug cartels, which has forced the government not to wish to enter into a game of violence, or because of the inability to understand the situational logic in which it finds itself (one that forces AMLO to openly confront the drug cartels), in some episodes of this game the federal government has assumed the role of the chicken.

A preliminary explanation for this deviation could be found if we include a mechanism that goes beyond instrumental rationality in the game; for example, magical thinking, that is, according to Elster (2010, 151), "the tendency to believe that one can exert causal influence on outcomes that, in reality, are beyond one's control", say, by choosing to cooperate in a Prisoner's Dilemma in the belief that this will elicit the cooperative behavior of the opponent (Elster 2010, 151), or desiderative thinking, i.e., the influence of desires on belief formation (Elster 2010, 155). However, although AMLO may have distinct preferences, or seek a different game, the situational logic is that of a Chicken Game, and this points towards, at least in the short term, one only option, which is open confrontation. Unlike the previous case, in which AMLO started a game with his supporters whose logic he ends up rejecting, in this one AMLO is prey to a logic that limits what he can do. What

follows is that, in some situations, the players of a game are vehicles of the intrinsic interactive logic, and that their deviation can have disastrous consequences.

Collaboration with drug cartels in Mexico

The rule of law is an aspect of the quality of democracy that is affected by illegal behavior such as society's collaboration with drug cartels. The latter is a recurrent behavior in non-liberal contexts such as Mexico's, but it is not always the result of the intentionality of the actors but rather of the imposition of preferences by the opposing participant in the game. Although the interaction between Mexican society and drug cartels has a long history in this country, it is a phenomenon that is insufficiently discussed in political science. This interaction is not exclusive to the period of the war against drug cartels, initiated in 2006. For decades a social fabric has been built in the form of negative social capital that articulates the interests of criminal groups with the needs of the Mexican population. Not only so, but in some contexts, criminal groups have replaced the state and established unique forms of social and even political order. Although a more profound analysis is needed as to what extent cartels need formal political power, criminal groups promote singular forms of social organisation, whose authority is often constructed on fear, based on resources such as racketeering, extortion, offering security against other criminal groups, and in general, through the construction of negative social capital. These forms of organization constitute serious challenges to the advancement of the country's democratization since they threaten the very concept of citizenship.

Why do citizens collaborate with drug cartels? Only an empirical examination would shed light on the way in which the mechanisms involved in such a complex phenomenon as the collaboration of citizens with criminal groups operate causally. One of the variables that such an analysis would have to include is the type of model of interaction that criminal groups establish with citizens (Schedler 2015, 124). Such an analysis would have to explore the configuration of preferences (types of preferences) of each player and the games resulting from the interaction of strategies. The following is an example, based on a theoretical reflection, of how the construction of these models of strategic interaction can help to understand the collaboration between the above-mentioned actors. These models allow for a first approach to singular cases of the Mexican context, so they could be reformulated once they are empirically contrasted.

Let us suppose, counterfactually, a society immersed in a situational logic in which suddenly drug cartels begin to disrupt the tranquility of that context by resorting to racketeering, extortion, kidnapping, and other illicit activities. Since in this hypothetical

context the invasion of drug cartels constitutes a non-routine phenomenon[4], it can be assumed that society's preferences will remain stable at first. Let us suppose that in the face of this irruption, citizens can choose between non-cooperation (NC) or cooperation (C). Non-cooperation means that citizens are willing to denounce criminal groups to the police, but it can also mean that, in the absence of the rule of law, as it regularly occurs in Mexico, they are willing to organize citizen defense groups to contain criminal groups – a phenomenon that has become common in recent years in states such as Guerrero and Michoacán. Cooperation, on the other hand, means that citizens can be part of a criminal social system in which they can obtain a direct benefit from cooperation. In a context in which drug cartels are just gaining ground, it is likely that society will opt for (NC) as its first preference (however, if the cartel shows totally non-cooperative preferences from the beginning, society will probably opt for (C), given the costs of confronting the cartels). Conversely, let us think that drug cartels can opt between a position of coexistence (C) and one of aggressiveness (A). Coexistence means including society in the construction of a criminal social fabric, rewarding citizens who collaborate in their criminal activities. The position of aggressiveness implies that drug cartels carry out actions mainly steered by economic motivations such as kidnapping, extortion, and racketeering that promote fear and harm to citizens.

In this hypothetical scenario of drug cartels' irruption, citizens prefer to opt for a position of non-involvement with drug cartels, and if they do, they prefer to face a non-violent drug cartel (NC, C). However, since non-cooperation can generate a violent position on the part of drug cartels, their second preference, is to opt for passivity, and if they do so, they prefer to face drug cartels that choose a position of cooperation (C, C). If they have to deal with a position of aggressiveness on the part of the drug cartels, citizens prefer a position of non-cooperation (NC, A) because passivity (C, A), which is very costly, is deemed as a possibility of last resort. (NC, A), a situation that in a different context can be very costly since it means a non-cooperative relationship, is not constituted as the fourth preference because, again, the assumption is that drug cartels irrupt a setting where there is no previous interaction.

For their part, drug cartels, following a logic of profit, prefer a position of attack in the first place, and if they do, they prefer passive citizens (C, A). However, given that a position of attack does not generate social legitimacy (a goal sought by some cartels, for

[4] Actually, this abrupt penetration is not a phenomenon far from the Mexican reality since one of the consequences of the war against drug cartels is the displacement of cartels from one state to another.

example, the Sinaloa Cartel in Sinaloa, or the extinct Valencia Cartel in Michoacán), their second preference, is to opt for a position of coexistence, and if they do, they prefer that citizens also cooperate (C, C). If they do not find a context in which the articulation of a network of illicit cooperation with citizens is possible, they prefer a position of attack (NC, A), over being the fool of the game (NC, C).

Figure 7: Fictitious preferences of citizens and drug cartels

	Citizens	Drug cartels	Payments
Citizens	NC	C	4
	C	C	3
	NC	A	2
	C	A	1
	Citizens	Drug cartels	
Drug cartels	C	A	4
	C	C	3
	NC	A	2
	NC	C	1

Figure 8: Game between citizens and drug cartels

Citizens/drug cartels	C	A
C	3, 3	1, 4
NC	4, 1	2, 2

Source (Figures 7 and 8): author

The result of these preferences, as shown in the payment matrix above, is a Prisoner's Dilemma in which, as is known, the equilibrium is at (2, 2), and is a result of neither party wishing to be the fool of the game. In this logic, a first solution for understanding the cooperative behavior of society towards drug cartels lies in what Axelrod (1986) calls continuous replays. In some Mexican states, citizens and drug cartels have developed a symbiotic relationship. Some drug cartels such as those whose model of interaction is based on social legitimacy, build a social fabric that generates incentives for citizens to accept a logic of cooperation. This situation can be identified in (3, 3), and represents a situation in which citizens are passive and drug cartels seeks coexistence. This result is a product of the constant interaction between citizens and drug cartel, of the confidence created that no actor will change its strategy and of the expectation of meeting again in the future. It is also a product of the threat that if citizens change their strategy to (NC), which gives them a benefit of 4, and 1 for drug cartels, the latter will move to a position of attack. This produces a "return" to conflict situation (2, 2). Likewise, the threat of citizens towards drug cartels, is

that if drug cartels opt for the position of attack, which gives them a benefit of 4, and 1 for the citizens, they will opt for a position of NC, which in turn will affect the social legitimacy of drug cartels. Thus, although in principle citizens may not wish to get involved nor tolerate drug cartels; and although drug cartels are guided by strong economic motivations, both actors understand that given the constant interaction it is necessary to learn to coexist harmoniously.

Although it is possible that collaboration with drug cartels is a product of some citizens engaging into a logic of constant interaction, the problem with this game lies in the fact that it does not take into account that: 1) even assuming that citizens do not want to get involved with drugs cartels and are not permissive with them either, drug cartels, with their capacity to implement systematic violence, can force citizens to change their preferences, forcing them to opt for passivity from the beginning (particularly in the case of cartels who display violent preferences); and 2) in non-liberal contexts, the preferences defined by institutional arrangements (and actually followed by citizens) may be oriented from the beginning towards collaboration with drug cartels, without the need for social learning – replays – or the imposition of preferences – violence from the beginning of interaction. Therefore, in contexts of institutional weakness, it is more reasonable to attribute to citizens, preferences that are strongly oriented towards stability and passivity. These preferences would appear as follows:

Figure 9: Citizens' preferences for passivity

Citizens	Drug cartels	Payments
C	C	4
C	A	3
NC	C	2
NC	A	1

Figure 10: Second game between citizens and drug cartels

Citizens/drug cartels	C	A
C	4, 3	3, 4
NC	2, 1	1, 2

Source (Figures 9 and 10): author

If we keep drug cartels' preferences constant, the following game results. Unlike the previous one, now the equilibrium is in (C, A), that is, on in which citizens remain passive or cooperative in the face of aggressive drug cartels. Citizens collaborate, either because they

are immersed in a situational logic of preference imposition, or because they wish, free of any external pressure, to be part of the criminal system of drug cartels. In the Mexican context, the collaboration of citizens with drug cartels cannot be explained without the presence (to different extents) of three mechanisms: replays, imposition of preferences, and illicit preferences. The first game is useful for situations in which the interaction model put in place by the drug cartels is not so violent; their preferences can promote a certain degree of cooperation. The second model, logic of domination, is useful for "repressive models" (Schedler 2015, 124).

Conclusions

The study of democratisation and of the sub-processes that constitute this phenomenon is one of the subfields of greatest interest in contemporary political science. These processes have been mainly explored from a number of versions of the comparative tradition. In Mexico, where the direction of political change and the characteristics of the country's institutional arrangements are still uncertain, in order to explain the logic of the main challenges of the democratisation agenda, innovations in terms of theoretical and methodological approaches are appropriate. In theoretical-methodological terms, this article has outlined a direction that a research agenda on the study of the empirical problems associated with the distinct dimensions of the quality of democracy in the Mexican context could embark on. This proposal does not seek to measure the dimensions of the quality of democracy but rather to show how the analysis of concrete cases (processes) serves to identify the mechanisms that explain the strengthening or weakening of these dimensions. To demonstrate its usefulness, I have oriented the analysis towards some of the challenges of the Mexican political context (a hybrid regime). In particular, I have presented three cases linked to two dimensions of the quality of democracy: political participation and the rule of law.

These cases constitute only an initial exploration and provide a source of hypotheses to conduct further research which may reveal the logic of such complex phenomena. A more systematic analysis would shed light on the thorough reasons that explain the actors' strategies in the three cases studied as well as the resulting equilibria. Although the approach formulated makes use of the language of GT, it is compatible with the internalist tradition of rational choice (Elster 2010), mainly in the first and second cases: the first case shows how AMLO moves away from the logic of a game that he had initially promoted; the second shows how AMLO, unlike in the previous game, refuses to be part of a game that has enough power to drag players into its logic.

A possible criticism is that the scope of the analysis may be limited to local explanations, i.e. singular cases, while the essence of studies on the quality of democracy is the search for patterns that result from the analysis of a large number of cases through different versions of the comparative method. Nevertheless, games also have comparative functions: as all ideal types (McKeown 1999), they can be contrasted with empirical phenomena in order to discern which contextual conditions explain the deviation from the model, and thus explain the case. Beyond that, GT models could be compatible with a comparative design, not focused on variables, but on games. This compatibility would require an in-depth comparative analysis on the building blocks of a game: actors, preferences, strategies, and equilibria.

Further studies may delve into a number of sub-themes that have only been mentioned here: the connection between GT and non-rational motivations; a more systematic exploration on whether GT is an approach completely anchored in the MI, or whether it can be argued that in some contexts GT logic is seemingly more like a structuralist logic in which individuals are simply vehicles of a larger force (second case); and, in general, the effects of criminal violence promoted by drug cartels on Mexico's democratisation process.

Further research should not only explore the consolidation of the Mexican hybrid regime, but also venture into a conceptual reflection of what type of hybrid regime best characterizes the country at stake. This question becomes even more relevant after 2018, when a majority of the electorate decided to give the opportunity to a party-movement (MORENA) and its leader, AMLO, the eternal left-wing opponent with populist overtones, to govern. Thus, an additional question for reflection would be whether left populisms may affect the process of democratization as well as the consolidation of hybrid regimes.

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COVID-19 and the Making of a South African Democratic Developmental State: Prospects and Pitfalls Amid a Pandemic

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.22151/politikon.48.4

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Abstract

This article assesses the impact of untraditional security threats on the origin and institutional configuration of existing and prospective developmental states in Africa. It adopts a case study research methodological approach which interrogates the effect of internal and global security threats on the formation of 21st-century African developmental states through the presence of four developmental state features: Development-Oriented Political Leadership; Presence of a Pilot Agency; Private Sector and/or Broad-Based Developmental Coalitions; and Popular Mobilisation through a Developmentalist Ideology. The case studies under review include four existing (Botswana, Mauritius, Ethiopia, and Rwanda) and one prospective (South Africa) African developmental states. This article finds that intense ethnic rivalries and domestic development imperatives were sufficient factors triggering the construction of developmental states in Botswana, Mauritius, Ethiopia, and Rwanda. Furthermore, the outbreak of COVID-19 has served as a global threat which precipitated developmental state project in South Africa.

Keywords

Cold War Geopolitics; COVID-19; East Asian Tigers; Ethnic Rivalries; External, Internal and Global Security Threats; Democratic Developmental State; Developmental State; South Africa

Originally published in Volume 48 (March 2021), pp. 70–95. Corrected October 2026: volume and issue numbering.

Introduction[1]

Developmental states historically arose during times of great instability, uncertainty and resource constraints. The presence of grave external security threats has commonly been flagged as a precipitative factor provoking a unique institutional response within these states. This, in effect, has enabled them to engage in large-scale capacity building and resource mobilisation. As such, the institutional arrangements which underpinned the East Asian developmental states did not occur spontaneously or at random. Neither did they emerge solely in response to a nationalist desire to develop. Rather, these states arose within a particular time period, characterised by unique prevailing external security threats which provoked a complex institutional response. This response found its expression in the construction of economic bureaucracies with strong state-private sector links, all embedded within a national developmentalist ideology (Johnson 1999).

The notion of what constitutes a viable security risk, severe enough to threaten the survival of a regime and prompt leaders to construct effective developmental institutions has changed since the initial 20th-century East Asian developmental states up until the latter 21st-century African developmental states. For Cold War East Asian developmental states, the threat of communism posed 'an unusual degree of external [security] threat' (Öniş 1991, 116). The direct threat of communism and military invasion precipitated the speedy formation of strong economic institutions given the thinking at the time that, 'economic growth [was] indispensable to military security' and therefore to the regime survival of East Asian states (Woo-Cumings 1998, 332).

However, contrary to predictions made by Jeffrey Herbst (1990), which linked Africa's lack of developmental institutions to an absence of inter-state war on the continent, the African continent has witnessed the emergence of democratic and non-democratic developmental states during the 21st century. Botswana, Mauritius, Ethiopia, and Rwanda have all constructed developmental states, despite there being no threat of external military invasion driving them to do so. This is not to say that there were no other non-traditional security imperatives at play that have been previously ignored by scholars in the origins of four mentioned African examples.

As such, during and, more so, in the aftermath of the Cold War, the nature of conflicts together with what constitutes a grave security threat changed, particularly for

[1] I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to Professor Chris Landsberg for his encouragement and support. This work was supported by the NRF SARChI Chair: African Diplomacy and Foreign Policy at the University of Johannesburg.

emerging developmental states on the African continent. The change in the nature of conflicts from inter- to intra-state conflicts saw security threats, which challenged regime survival, emerge from within African state borders. This has most notably appeared in the form of intense ethnic rivalries. Moreover, this shift in the nature of conflict together with increased popular pressure for democratic governance, following the third wave of democratisation, also necessitated a redefinition in the concept of security; which places less emphasis on the traditional state-centric aspect of security and greater emphasis on its human aspect. Together, these factors have also advanced the emergence of the democratic developmental state model with its distinct institutional arrangements which gives credence to popular participation and inclusive socio-economic development (Akokpari 2021). Underpinning all these shifts and changes in Africa was the great promise, expectation and domestic imperative of development, which was to be pursued by African governments and its leaders in the post-independence period.

The 21st century has also brought about a globalised world order in which our increased interconnectivity has brought to the fore an emergence of global security threats which are not constrained and confined to territorial boundaries. The outbreak of the global coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic represents one such security threat which threatens both lives and livelihoods and requires a strong, well-coordinated interventionist state response. It brings to the fore the significant role played by the state in mobilising resources in response to a crisis. For the South African aspirational democratic developmental state, the pandemic has the potential to activate the necessary process of institutional capacity building, effective centralised economic and development planning, as well as the formation of solid and lasting broad-based coalitions: This is because the outbreak of the virus worldwide and its arrival within South Africa's national borders has exacerbated the country's increasingly growing constrained socio-economic and political environment to the extent that the only manner in which the ruling African National Congress (ANC) regime may survive, and indeed thrive during this time period, would be under the strong leadership of a democratic developmental state.

For this reason, this article explores the emergence and formation of existing and aspirational 21st-century African developmental states in the absence of external security threats. The remainder of the article is divided into six sections: The first section provides a literature review which serves a basis for the study. Secondly, the article defines the concepts of the non-democratic and democratic developmental states and its accompanying theories. The third section outlines the research design and methodology employed within this article.

The fourth section assesses the effect which internal security threats and domestic imperatives has had on the developmental institutional configurations of four 21st-century African developmental states: Botswana, Mauritius, Ethiopia, and Rwanda. The fifth section analyses the manner in which the global security imperative of COVID-19 has already begun to prompt a developmental state response in South Africa and highlights potential prospects and challenges in this regard. The sixth, concluding section sums up the findings made within the research article and offers a brief final word on the need for South Africa to genuinely embark on its democratic developmental project in the time of COVID-19.

As it will be demonstrated in the next section, much has been written on in the literature of the role of external security imperatives in the emergence of classical developmental states in post-war East Asia. Yet, little attention has been given to the evolving nature and broadened understanding of security imperatives and the role of untraditional threats. More so, the impact which it has on institution building within existing and aspirational 21st century developmental states in the Global South and Africa, in particular. The arguments and research presented in this article is significant in that it seeks to contribute to the literature on the 21st century African developmental state. It does so by challenging the former state-centric security approach by incorporating previously overlooked unconventional security threats in its analysis of developmental institution-building.

East Asian Developmental States and Cold War Geopolitical Insecurities: A Review of the Literature

External security imperatives have been flagged within developmental state literature as one of the main key factors which prompted the emergence of classical East Asian developmental states in the initial post-World War Two period (Öniş 1991; Stubbs 2018; Haggard 2018; Wade 2018; Lee 2019; Keating 2015; Routley 2012; Woo-Cumings 1999).

As previously noted, developmental states initially emerged during the period of the Cold War: Japan was the first of these particular states to emerge in the 1950s, followed by South Korea and Taiwan in the early 1960s and thereafter their Southeast Asian counterparts (Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia) towards the late 1960s and early 1970s (Haggard 2018, 28). According to Stephan Haggard (2018, 6), 'the high-growth Asian countries emerged at a propitious moment, tied by alliances to an American hegemon that was leading a liberalisation of world economy on which they could free ride.'

Ziya Öniş (1991, 116) explains that it was precisely the constant external threat of nearby communist states which served as an 'extraordinary security threat' for East Asian states. This, in turn, compelled its leaders to erect strong institutional structures which would

promote rapid economic growth through industrialisation. Similarly, Doner, Ritchie and Slater (2005) maintain that while the institutional capacity to bring effect to the construction of developmental state may not be present at the onset, political elites were driven to erect these institutional structures when they faced 'extraordinary constrained political environments.' This was brought about by a significant external security threat or what they refer to as the precondition of 'systemic vulnerability' (Doner, Ritchie and Slater 2005). In this regard, 'Communist China and North Korea were perceived to be the most radical and aggressive adversaries in the international Communist movement: They possessed an extraordinary will and capacity for invasion, economic coercion, psychological intimidation, and subversion' (Lee 2019, 3). The achievement of national economic growth was regarded as indispensable to the maintenance and improvement of military capabilities. This all served to secure the regime against any external military attacks from close communist countries.

Robert Wade (2018, 530) remarks that the constant external security threat of communism assisted in limiting predatory behaviour by ensuring that political and bureaucratic elites acted in line with national objectives. East Asian states were put in a position whereby they had to legitimise their respective regimes against the competing communist regimes and ideology (Öniş 1991, 116). They did so by adopting a nationalist ideology of developmentalism and committing themselves to the pursuit of long-term structural economic transformation (Öniş 1991, 116).

Meredith Woo-Cumings (1999, 23) observes that this ideology developmentalism was sourced by "harnessing very real fears of war and instability toward a remarkable developmental energy, which in turn could become a binding agent for growth." This was done through popular mobilisation, which required citizens to make short-term sacrifices in order for the state to achieve its long-term developmental goals (Johnson 1999). It is for this reason that scholars such as Chalmers Johnson (1999) identify authoritarian states as better suited to rallying the masses around a developmental project. In sum, then, the arrival of the Cold War in East Asia, together with the proximity of communist states within the region, precipitated elite solidarity and popular legitimacy within these developmental states (Wade 2018, 530).

This constrained political environment brought about by the direct threat of communism also advanced the formation of coalitions, notably between the state and the private sector. For example, during their respective high growth phases, both South Korea and Japan formed close relationships with a number of family-controlled conglomerates, famously referred to as 'Korea and Japan Inc.' (Evans 1995).

From an International Relations' perspective, the outbreak of the Cold War warmed relations between the United States (US) and East Asia. As part of its containment strategy, the US formed an alliance with East Asia and deepened its economic ties within the region through supplying financial, technical and military aid (Wade 2018, 530). Due to their budding relationship, it is argued that the US overlooked East Asia's interventionist policies and allowed the region to free-ride on its post-war hegemony. Hence, East Asian developmental states were able to erect protectionist trade barriers while simultaneously dumping its products in the US' open markets (Keating 2015, 99).

James Lee (2019) goes further in arguing that the geopolitics inherent during the Cold War era, and the US in particular, not only favoured state-led economic growth within East Asia but also played a more intrinsic role in the creation of developmental institutions. As part of their 'grand strategy' in response to the perceived threat of communism, Lee notes that the US went a step further to actively advocate state-led industrialisation within East Asia as a means of safeguarding its allies from proximate and encroaching communist powers (Lee 2019). While other authors, as touched upon above, briefly mention the US' economic aid given to its East Asian allies, little is spoken about the extent to which the aid and technical assistance influenced the process of institution building and centralised economic planning within emerging East Asian developmental states (Lee 2019).

Nevertheless, East Asian states were fortunate to be able to practice state intervention strategies prior to the ascendency of the neoliberal orthodoxy coupled with the establishment of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the spread of free-trade agreements and bilateral investment treaties all skewed in favour of the West (Wade 2018, 531). Closely linked to this point, the East Asian developmental states industrialised prior to the 'global political awakening' which demanded the incorporation of public participation within public policy (Wade 2018, 531). For this reason, East Asian developmental states did not have to succumb to global democratic pressures which may have restricted their autonomy during their take-off years.

In turning the Africa, Jeffrey Herbst (1990) commented at the onset of the 1990s that it is precisely the absence of external security threats coupled with its abundance of natural resources, which has prevented African states from engaging in the necessary institution building required for the construction of developmental states. However, the advent of the 21st century has witnessed various developmental and, more notably, democratic developmental states crop up across the continent all in the absence of inter-state war. This article, therefore, seeks to contribute to the African developmental state debate by

breaking away from the traditional conception of external security imperatives (defined in military terms). It delves into the untraditional internal and global security threats and its affect within existing and prospective African developmental states.

Unpacking the (Democratic) Developmental State: Conceptual and Theoretical Definitions

The concept of the developmental state was coined by Chalmers Johnson (1982) to refer to the interventionist role which the strong and efficient Japanese bureaucracy assumed in its pursuit and achievement of rapid economic growth and development through industrialisation. Since the 1980s, the concept of the developmental state has evolved, alongside the fall of communism in 1989 and the rise of neoliberalism as the dominant global politico-economic orthodoxy which incorporated a democratic component. As such, the concept of the developmental state is used within this article as an umbrella term which encompasses both non-democratic developmental states and democratic developmental states.

Defining the Non-Democratic Developmental State

Developmental states can be defined as, 'organizational complexes in which expert and coherent bureaucratic agencies collaborate with organized private sectors to spur national economic transformation' (Doner et al. 2005, 328). The developmental state has as its primary objective the pursuit of rapid economic growth through industrialisation (Johnson 1999). The concept is based on the assumption of a mutually beneficial relationship between the bureaucracy and private sector firms where the state intervenes within the market to foster economic growth and pursue its developmental objectives (Woo-Cumings 1999).

The developmental state concept and accompanying theory is positioned between a liberal open market economy and a centrally-planned model. Its unique position suggests that it is neither capitalist nor socialist in nature, but rather brings together private capital with state supervision (Woo-Cumings 1999, 2). Developmental state theory argues that these states were able to rapidly industrialise and grow their economies precisely because they ignored neoliberal policy prescriptions. Instead, they redirected capital into selective business industries, thereby distorting the relative prices.

Developmental state theory also highlights the significant role which key institutions play in rapid economic growth and development. These particular set of institutions within developmental states have been the economic bureaucracies and are regarded as the core centres of strategic economic development (Leftwich 1995, 412). The economic bureaucracy

is characterised by; a pilot agency, highly skilled and technically competent economic bureaucrats who are insulated from external pressures and recruited and compensated on the basis of merit, and 'embedded autonomy'. For Johnson, one of the core features of an economic bureaucracy is a pilot agency. Pilot agencies are regarded as being small, inexpensive, professional and very efficient institutions that are bestowed with high degrees of prestige, legitimacy and authority which allows them to pursue development policies (Johnson 1982, 49). Pilot agencies are also tasked with the overall economic responsibilities of planning, directing and coordinating industrial policies. Japan's Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) has been widely cited as the classic example of a strong and effective pilot agency.

Although the developmental state acts autonomously in its pursuit of economic growth and development, it is not entirely divorced from society. Peter Evans (1995) refers to this concept as 'embedded autonomy' which implies that while political and bureaucratic elites are able to withstand the pressures of rent-seeking groups in their execution of national policies; their activities are embroiled in a close-knit social network that positions them in close proximity with dominant actors, notably from the private sector, within civil society. These close ties formed enables the developmental state to better articulate and negotiate the implementation of developmental policies with key business actors within society.

Developmental states are not static; as will be shown directly below, shifts in global economic and political factors may precipitate further alterations in the original concept and model of the developmental state.

Defining the Democratic Developmental State

The concept of the democratic developmental state was initially introduced to incorporate elements of democracy into the original developmental state model (Robinson and White 1998, 5). Unlike East Asian developmental states, which were characterised as being inherently autocratic, democratic developmental states are grounded in principles of democratic governance (Edigheji 2010).

A democratic developmental state is defined as one which aims to not only pursue rapid economic growth, but one which also seeks to uplift its citizens out of poverty through the formulation and implementation of pro-poor policies (Robinson and White 1998, 6). It seeks to first and foremost address the basic needs of the most impoverished and marginalised groups within society. The introduction of the democratic developmental state, thus, signals a sharp departure from traditional notions of the developmental state in which

the state remained oppressive and unresponsive to its citizenry, in spite of its claims of reducing poverty and increasing living standards (Robinson and White 1998, 6).

Democratic developmental states function in such a manner as to allow for the active participation and involvement of non-state actors within the developmental agenda-setting phase and democratisation process (Matlosa 2005, 2). As such, state-society relations in democratic developmental states differ from that found in East Asian developmental states in that they are not restricted to government-private sector alliances (Edigheji 2005). Within the parameters of the democratic developmental state, the concept of 'embedded autonomy' associated with the classical developmental state is broadened to accommodate not only the interests and views of the private sector, but also that of other key social actors (Edigheji 2005; Green 2012, 41). Gordon White (1998) refers to this concept as 'inclusive embeddedness' and argues that it is the ability of the democratic developmental state to promote 'broad-based developmental coalitions.' It does so by establishing horizontal relationships between the state and society, elected officials and the electorate and political parties and its supporters. In order for a developmental state to be regarded as truly democratic, it ought to incorporate the values, interests and aspirations of the majority of its citizens within its developmental policies (Robinson and White 1998, 6).

Research Design

By adopting a case study research methodology approach, this article interrogates the effect which untraditional (internal and global) security threats has on the construction of developmental states in five African countries: Botswana, Mauritius, Ethiopia, Rwanda, and South Africa. It does so by specifically assessing the effect which internal and global threats have shaped the presence of four key developmental state features: Development-Oriented Political Leadership; Presence of a Pilot Agency; Private Sector and/or Broad-Based Developmental Coalitions; and Popular Mobilisation through a Developmentalist Ideology.

The decision to restrict the case study selection to the African region is in direct response to the statement made by Herbst (1990) which links the absence of external military threats to the failure of developmental institution building in Africa. As such, all five African states have embarked on their individual developmental projects without the impetus of inter-state war: Botswana and Mauritius have been chosen for their strong democratic credentials; while Ethiopia and Rwanda, by virtue of their authoritarian features, have been selected as non-democratic developmental state cases. South Africa, regarded as an aspirational developmental state for having not fully realised its developmental project, serves as the outlier. The broad range of 21st century African developmental states provides the

research with a holistic overview of how unconventional threats can give rise to both democratic and non-democratic developmental states. Moreover, the inclusion of South Africa enables the research to experiment with ways in which the developmental state model is prompted by the threat of a global pandemic. More importantly, it serves as an illustrative example of the continued relevance of the developmental state model within an increasing globalised world amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

21st Century African Developmental States: Internal Insecurities and Domestic Imperatives

As indicated above, 21st century African developmental states were met with security threats and imperatives of a different kind: This not only brought about their emergence, but also altered the nature and breadth of its coalitions and structure of its institutional arrangements. As such, internal security risks (presented most commonly in the form of intense ethnic rivalries) coupled with political and development imperatives prompted its leaders to pursue an interventionist state model as a means of spring-boarding their societies out of the endless cycle of poverty and underdevelopment pervasive within its post-independence period – and will be illustrated in the four case studies below.

Since gaining independence from Britain in 1966, Botswana has been highlighted within the literature as a successful African democratic developmental state (Routely 2012, 11). The origins of Botswana's democratic developmental state can be traced back to its independence from Britain in 1966 and the political imperative of the post-independent elites to secure socio-economic development and uplift its citizens out of poverty. Botswana's post-independent political leaders, such as, Seretse Khama (the first President 1965 – 80), Quett Masire (Vice President 1965 – 80 and second President 1980 – 98), Festus Mogae (third President 1998 – 2008), were already wealthy by the time they entered office – owing to their vast amount of cattle (Sebudubudu and Botlhomilwe 2011, 29). They used their positions, not to further their individual self-interest, but rather, to pursue the national goal of inclusive socio-economic development. This effectively limited corruption and predatory behaviour akin to many other African states. Botswana's founding political elites are said to have had, 'acquired a developmental orientation' (Tsie 1996, 601). During the 1970s and 1980s, Khama used his position to appeal to the citizens to make short-term sacrifices for the state's developmental project: For example, in his address to trade unions in 1980, Khama urged them not to bargain for higher wages until the economy had achieved 'greater self-sufficiency' (Carter and Morgan 1980, 327 – 328). He noted that citizenry had a collective

responsibility in assisting in the development of the economy which should take precedence all else (ibid.).

The political elites undertook a dual strategy of democratisation and economic development which allowed the country to achieve exceptional economic growth within the first 30 years of independence. Between 1965 and 1995, Botswana was regarded as 'the fastest growing country in the world' for the period 1965 - 1995 (Beaulier 2003, 231). Botswana's per capita income, for example, rose from US$ 60 to US$ 2583 per year between 1966 and 1999 (Meyns 2010, 44). Botswana's post-independent political and bureaucratic elites set about stamping out corruption within the bureaucracy; centralising economic planning within its pilot agency, the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP); and improved transparency, enhanced good governance and strengthened participatory democracy through the decentralisation of powers and responsibilities from central to local government (Nagar 2015). The use of participatory development planning in Botswana assisted in the formation of broad-based developmental coalitions by mobilising citizens around the state's developmental project (ibid.). The construction of Botswana's democratic developmental state, arguably, enabled it to effectively manage its natural resource wealth and prevent it from falling prey to the 'resource curse' which has befallen many other African countries.

The same can be said for the Mauritian democratic developmental state, which was instrumental in bringing about structural transformation and diversification within its economy since the 1970s (Nagar 2019). During the 1980s, Mauritius succeeded in effectively reversing the direction of its development; while much of the African continent experienced economic recession and stagnation associates with its 'lost decade of development' (Easterly 2001). Between 1970 and 2010, Mauritius had achieved an average Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of 5.4 percent, when much of Africa stood at 1 percent (Frankel 2010). Similarly to the case of Botswana, the origins of the Mauritian democratic developmental state can be traced back to the precarious economic position which the post-independent Mauritian government found itself in 1968 and summarised in the 1961 Meade report which, 'famously predicted a dismal future for Mauritius because of its vulnerabilities to weather and price shocks and lack of job opportunities outside the sugar sector' (Zafar 2011, 91).

The Mauritian government was operating within a constrained political environment at the start of independence compounded by intense ethnic rivalry between the Hindu- and Franco-Mauritians: The Independence Party (a coalition three of political parties who were all pro-independence comprising of the Mauritius Labour Party [MLP], the Independent

Forward Block, and the Muslim Action Committee [CAM]) had won the first general elections by a slim margin, receiving 55.1 percent of the votes casted, while the *Parti mauricien social démocrate* (PMSD) received 43.1 percent (Nagar 2019). The marginal victory by the Hindu-dominated MLP effectively broke the Franco-Mauritian political domination that had characterised colonial Mauritian politics. Consequently, not only were the MLP-led coalitional government faced with the pressing imperative of socio-economic development, but also with entrenching and legitimising their narrow victory and building upon their newly acquired political power. The survival of the MLP-led coalitional regime ultimately rested on its ability to bring about accelerated and inclusive economic growth and increased job opportunities.

The Mauritian democratic developmental state set about structurally transforming its mono-crop economy, solely reliant on sugar, into a diversified economy with rising manufacturing, financial and tourism sectors (ibid.). To this end, it created an insulated and efficient bureaucracy led by its pilot agency, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED) (ibid.). Similarly to Botswana, workers within the country's main growth engine – the Export Processing Zones (EPZs) – were made to sacrifice their freedom to join and participate in trade unions (ibid., 166). In its place, the Mauritian government regularly intervened in collective bargaining to enforce speedy resolutions (ibid.). This was all done to prevent labour disputes from disrupting the EPZs' activities (ibid., 167).

Ultimately, the Hindu political elite (the MLP) formed an alliance with the Franco-Mauritian economic elite: This was established a corporatist arrangement that connects the state with business and labour within the Joint Economic Council (JEC) (ibid., 162). The Mauritian democratic developmental state formed broad-based developmental coalitions with its citizens by including them within the development and economic policy process. This was achieved through participatory budgeting and participatory governance structures such as the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) (ibid., 162).

While their democratic credentials are somewhat debatable, the Ethiopian and Rwandan states both played pivotal developmental roles within their respective countries: Rwanda, in the aftermath of its 1994 genocide, and in Ethiopia, beginning in 2002 (Nagar 2019). In the initial aftermath of the genocide in 1995, Rwanda's economy grew at 3.6 percent (Crowley 2000). Rwanda's GDP growth rate for the period 2001 – 2015 averaged at an annual 8 percent (World Bank 2017). Equally impressive has been the economic growth of Ethiopia which has, since 2004 and for more than a decade, maintained an annual GDP growth rate

averaging between 8 and 11 percent, making it one of the five fastest growing economies among the 188 International Monetary Fund (IMF) member countries (ibid.).

The origins of both developmental states can be traced to the presence of pressing internal security threats – in the form of intense ethnic rivalry – which posed a significant challenge to the survival of each respective regime. For Rwanda, the history of rife contestations for political power between the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups, as a legacy of German and Belgian colonial rule which culminated in the 1994 genocide, prompted the construction of a strong, centralised and development-oriented state by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) government. Under the leadership of President Paul Kagame, Rwanda's economic growth and development trajectory in the wake of the violent civil war and genocide has been intrinsically linked to its process of 'state (re)formation' (Mann and Berry 2016, 138). Beginning in 2000, the origins of the Rwandan democratic developmental state was founded on the assumption that the state has a pivotal role to play in reconciling past ethnic divisions and tensions, which have historically been the root of political instability, by promoting economic and social development and providing all Rwandans with access to public goods (Nagar 2019). The RPF Rwandan government reasons that if it can bring about rapid economic and social development through the construction of a developmental state, the ensuing generations will not readily associate and place themselves into past ethnic categories and challenge the RPF regime for political dominance.

Rwanda, has also exhibited notable developmental features such as development-oriented political leadership; a highly effective bureaucracy led by its super-ministry, the Rwandan Development Board (RDB); and a close linkages between the state and private sector which are both geared to the creation of an entrepreneurial society. The Rwandan case study has also been characterised by the centralisation of economic rents though its 'party-statals'. 'Party-statals' is a term used by Nilgün Gökgür (2012) to refer to large enterprises closely associated with and fully or partially owned by the ruling party. Through the operations of these enterprises (notably, Tri-Star Investments [TSI]/Crystal Venture [CVL], Horizon Group and Rwanda Investment Group [RIG]), Rwanda's ruling party has been able to channel economic rents towards long-term socio-economic development.

Similarly in Ethiopia, given the country's vast composition of 13 different ethnic groups, ethnicity has played a key factor in the enduring conflict over political rule. The post-1991 Tigray-dominated Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) pursued rapid economic growth and poverty reduction through the construction of a developmental state as a means of warding off any potential ethnic-based political

contenders. Following the failure of the IMF and the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) to bring about poverty alleviation in Ethiopia, the then President Meles Zenawi announced in 2002 that the country would adopt the developmental state model. The ideology of developmentalism constituted the ruling party's main source of legitimacy as well as the Ethiopian state's *raison d'être*: 'The motive and source of legitimacy of developmental states is the single-minded pursuit of accelerated development' (Zenawi 2012, 169).

Similarly to Rwanda, the Ethiopian state has also directed economic growth and development within its economy through the centralisation of rents that have been channelled into massive infrastructural and education investments. In this regard, it has also established strong private sector alliances with two key party-affiliated companies: The Endowment Fund for Tigray (EFFORT) and the MIDROC Investment Group. Additionally, through its pilot agency, the National Planning Commission (NPC), the Ethiopian state has taken a decisive role in industrial policy. Ethiopia has actively pursued an agriculture commercialisation strategy through its Agriculture Development Led Industrialisation (ADLI) policy (Melke 2013).

In sum, the occurrence of ethnic civil conflict in the cases of Ethiopia (1974 – 1991) and Rwanda (1990 – 1994) culminated in the formation of highly centralised anocratic regimes. This is due to the fact that the victors of the conflict (the Rwandan Hutus and the Ethiopian Tigrayans) have suppressed any form of dissent or opposition in an effort to retain political hegemony. Ethnic conflict has thus had negative repercussions for democratisation by state formation in these two instances. In contrast to the democratic developmental states of Mauritius and Botswana, Ethiopia and Rwanda have not engaged in the formation of broad-based developmental coalitions with a view to genuinely incorporate their populations within the developmental process. Their citizenry are not encouraged to make sacrifices for a greater developmental good. Rather, they are subject to sacrifice basic human rights (such as the freedom of speech and association) in order to entrench the ruling party's political dominance. For the Ethiopian and Rwandan elites, the survival of the political ruling class remains paramount.

Realising a South African Democratic Developmental State in the Time of COVID-19: A Grave Global Security Imperative

In contrast to Botswana and Mauritius, the ever-present internal threat of growing poverty coupled with increasing socio-economic inequality and marginalisation within South Africa have not been sufficient factors to prompt the emergence of a strong, interventionist

state in driving its democratic developmental agenda. On the contrary, and particularly during former President Jacob Zuma's term in office (2008 – 2018), the South African state has been crippled by corruption, scandal, state capture, political patronage and the persistent practice of cadre deployment which has brought its bureaucratic state structures to its knees.

Thus, South Africa faces three glaring deficiencies in its full implementation of the democratic developmental state model (Nagar 2015). Firstly, since Nelson Mandela's term in office, South Africa has been unable to produce development-oriented political leaders needed to spearhead its developmental project. Secondly, South Africa lacks the necessary institutional capacity to carry out its democratic developmental project. South Africa's economic bureaucracy lacks institutional coherence and is highly politicised. While the country's National Planning Commission (NPC) has been flagged as the 'pilot agency' – it has not been equipped the sufficient power and authority to take the lead in development. South Africa's bureaucracy remains highly fragmented lacking clear guidance and coordination. Coupled with this, has been the persistence of cadre deployments within South Africa's civil service. This has led to a highly politicised bureaucracy where ANC party affiliations and loyalty trumps technical and administrative competency in the recruitment of public officials. Thirdly, South Africa's popular participation mechanisms suffer from limitations which impedes on the country's ability to form broad-based developmental coalitions. In sum, then, the referral to South Africa as a democratic developmental state on the part of ruling party has at best been a ploy at politicking to bolster its developmental currency and credentials.

Within South Africa, the outbreak of COVID-19 has exposed the country's deeply entrenched and persistent inequalities and brought to the fore its pervasive dual economy, 26 years after the advent of its democracy (Allan and Hesse, 2020). Experiences from other parts of the world that were affected earlier by the virus, such as the US and the United Kingdom, show that poorer communities with less access to healthcare are most at risk of being infected and succumbing to the virus (ibid.). They are also most adversely impacted by the negative socio-economic consequences associated with the pandemic. Compounding the situation in South Africa has been its failing healthcare system, systemic unemployment and rampant poverty, which places additional strain on the state's already limited capacity to address the needs of its most vulnerable.

Since the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic, calls have been made for South Africa to abandon its developmental state project and relinquish its developmental function to the private sector in rebuilding the South African economy (Bernstein 2020). Scholars and

political commentators, such as Ann Bernstein (2020), too hastily dismiss the South African democratic developmental state as a strictly interventionist state which will inevitably produce and result in market inefficiencies via its activities and role in the economy. However, they fail to see the manner in which COVID-19 has represented a grave global security threat potent enough to spark an institutional response which deeply resembles the making of a democratic developmental state model in South Africa.

Firstly, the outbreak of COVID-19 has brought to the fore the calibre of development-oriented leadership in Ramaphosa that was last seen during Mandela as president. The credibility of the ruling ANC party suffered from moral degeneration under President Jacob Zuma's decade in power. However, Ramaphosa has been internationally commended for showing formidable leadership by decisively ushering in one of the most stringent 21-day national lockdowns worldwide beginning on 26 March 2020. Following the worsening of the global coronavirus pandemic, Ramaphosa was further applauded for his decision to extend the initial lockdown period on 9 April 2020 a further 14 days as well as formulating a COVID-19 response which reconciles human rights and economic imperatives by prioritising 'both lives and livelihoods' (The Presidency 2020). The decision of the president and his ministers to donate a third of their salaries to the COVID-19 Solidarity Fund was also met with admiration by the public.

Linked to the above point, development-oriented leadership is also measured by its ability to eradicate all forms of corruption and predatory behaviour by the state. Under Ramaphosa's administration, there has been a steady increase in anti-Ramaphosa sentiment following his inability to fully tackle corruption since assuming office. Therefore, the success of the Special Investigating Unit (SIU) and National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), empowered by the Presidency, in bringing to book all those 'covidpreneurs' who have looted billions Rands in relief funds may be what is needed in bringing back the 'Ramaphoria' felt by South Africans in the wake of Ramaphosa's presidential appointment in 2018. Curbing all forms of pervasive corruption within government is a necessary step towards the construction of a democratic developmental state.

Secondly, the threat of COVID-19 has brought about the emergence of the National Coronavirus Command Council (NCCC) and the arrival of a "listening government" (Tandwa 2020). The NCCC, chaired by the president, consists of cabinet members and experts who collectively deliberate and coordinates the government's response to the pandemic. While it has no decision-making powers, it is reminiscent of the role played by a pilot agency in taking a lead role in guiding the state through a period of uncertainty and

scarcity. Here, the NCCC has made more victories in less than a year since its inception where the NPC has failed in its decade-long existence. On the one hand, this pertains to the ability of the NCCC to serve as an effective coordinating mechanism by bridging the challenges which the NPC faced in terms of departmentalism. On the other hand, the breadth by which Ramaphosa's administration has engaged in lengthy and exhaustive broad consultation and information-sharing prior to undertaking any major decisions affecting the government's COVID-19 response closely reflects the key feature of 'inclusive embeddedness'. Moreover, broad consultations with a wide range of key relevant stakeholders such as business, labour, provincial, local and traditional governments, civil society organisations, and experts is a prerequisite for the formation of broad-based developmental coalitions. It appears that only now within the constrained socio-economic and political environment brought about by the pandemic have such coalitions are coming to fruition.

Thirdly, while South Africa's developmental project has received little public support, the initial outbreak of the virus within South Africa saw numerous political parties, civil society organisations and citizens band together in solidarity in what has been described as a rare moment of national unity. Ramaphosa has repeatedly called on South Africans to show resolve and to make individual short-term sacrifices as part of the lockdown restrictions in an effort to reduce and slow down the rate of infections. His addresses to the nation during lockdown has been deeply personal: In the opening of his fourth address on 9 April 2020, Ramaphosa made reference to "you" South Africans a total of 12 times (du Toit 2020). The manner in which Ramaphosa has been able to encourage South Africans to make concessions and bear the socio-economic burden of the lockdown restrictions has been commended by observers, who have praised the country for its 'ruthlessly efficient fight against the coronavirus' (Harding 2020).

Nevertheless, the steady erosion of public trust and legitimacy experienced by the ruling ANC party has meant that the government could not escape public scrutiny in its decisive and authoritative decision-making from opposition parties and the broader public, alike. This is in stark contrast to East Asian developmental states, such as China and South Korea, whose impressive developmental past records meant that it could act authoritatively and deliberately in the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak without much opposition from the public. More concerning has been the South African government's treatment of its most vulnerable groups and instances of police brutality, especially during the initial 21-day lockdown. South Africa's homeless people in Cape Town, for example, were forced into

shelters that resembled 'concentration camps' with little access to basic services (Nowicki and Stent 2020). The police and South African National Defence Force (SANDF) has used excessive force against refugees and South African citizens alike, in its enforcement of the lockdown regulations. As of June 2020, there had been ten reported deaths as a consequence of soldier and police brutality since the beginning of the national shutdown (Harrisberg 2020).

The eminent approach of South Africa's 2021 municipal elections, coupled with the worsening of the South African economy, has undoubtedly witnessed competing political parties and the broader civil society challenge the lockdown decisions and measures implemented by President Ramaphosa alongside the NCCC. These include the ban on alcohol and tobacco sales, the closing of public spaces and the restriction of economic activities. The leader of the Democratic Alliance (DA), the main opposition party, John Steenhuisen, described the regulations as 'petty' and 'irrational' (Rumney 2020). The Liberty Fighters Network advocacy group asserted that the lockdown regulations were a clear violation of South Africa's Bill of Rights (Rumney 2020). Moreover, the decision-making powers of the NCCC has been challenged as 'unlawful' and an overreach of dictatorial powers, which severely threatens parliamentary checks and balances within a democratic setting (Manyane 2020).

Another significant decision that has faced public criticism, and equally important to this discussion, has been the US$ 4.3 billion (R70.7 billion) loan approved to South Africa by the IMF on 27 July 2020 under the Rapid Firing Instrument (RFI). The loan is intended to address South Africa's pressing Balance of Payments (BOP) needs arising from the fiscal pressures brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Much of the criticism levelled at the ANC government from opposition parties surrounding the IMF loan stems from the historical legacy of the SAPs in Africa and the detrimental socio-economic effect which its stringent conditionalities attached had on underdeveloped nations. Economic Freedom Fighter (EFF) spokesperson Vuyo Pambo stated that the party wholeheartedly rejected ANC's decision to solicit funds from the IMF commenting that '[L]oans from the IMF are always neo-liberal and neo-colonial conditionalities and South Africa will not escape from this reality' (Mtshali 2020).

However, granted that RFI falls under one of the IMF's emergency funding options, the loan has been approved to South Africa at a low interest rate of 1.1 percent and without any enforceable conditionalities above the commitments that the South African government has already made in its letter of intent to the IMF. The government intends to reform its

fiscus, improve the governance of its state-owned enterprises (SOEs) by reducing costs and curbing corruption, mismanagement and excessive political interference, and by adopting inclusive growth-enhancing structural measures. According to the National Treasury, the IMF loan will contribute to the country's COVID-19 related interventions and help lessen the adverse socio-economic effects of the pandemic. More specifically, the funds will be used to, 'support health and frontline workers, protect the most vulnerable, drive job creation, unlock economic growth through reforms, [and] stabilise public debt' (National Treasury 2020). However, in the wake of the billions of Rands worth of relief funds being looted by South Africans and allegations of 'tenderpreneurship' against government officials, analysts and civil society groups have questioned whether the IMF loan will be used for its intended purpose or whether it will be stolen by corrupt politicians and citizens.

South Africa's commitment to reforming its SOEs, as stated in its letter of intent to the IMF, therefore, serves as an invitation for the country to finally begin disciplining this sector by drawing on and experimenting with East Asia's 'sticks and carrots' approach in an effort to overcome its chronic deficiencies. At present, some of South Africa's largest and most important SOEs (such as Denel, the South African Broadcasting Corporation [SABC], South African Airways [SAA] and Eskom) suffer from deepening financial and operational crises, excessive political meddling, and major corporate governance failures. South Africa's SOEs pose a grave risk to the economy, accounting for over a third of the government's liabilities – a risk which has been significantly exacerbated amid the COVID-19 pandemic (Skiti 2020). In July 2020, the government released a document titled, 'Post Covid-19: A new inclusive economic future for South Africa,' in which it highlighted the need to rationalise its SOE sector and have it operating according to market principles. The success of the South African government to structurally reform its SOEs so that they thrive within the market will be crucial to its economy's post COVID-19 economic recovery. This is due to the fact that South African SOEs play an indispensable role in providing services and infrastructure which supports private-sector development.

Thus, the idea of a South African democratic developmental state should be viewed as an invitation for much needed institutional and policy innovation and the opportunity to form inclusive and broad-based developmental coalitions in order to arrive at the most appropriate response to the common threat of COVID-19. The construction of a capable South African democratic developmental state may not only be the most appropriate response in dealing with and mitigating the socio-economic implications of the global pandemic, but in the case of the ruling ANC, it may prove indispensable to the survival of

its regime (since coming into power in 1994, the ANC has seen its influence dwindle substantially).

The current pandemic will serve as a momentous occasion for the ANC-led government to renew its social compact with the South African citizens, a commitment made by Ramaphosa in his first State of the Nation Address in 2019. This call has been echoed in a recent public addresses wherein he has stressed the importance of the state working together with the private sector, civil society and social formations to manage resources and unlock growth and employment opportunities. He has also indicated the need for a social compact for South Africa's economic recovery growth. On this score, Ramaphosa appears to be aware of the vital importance of consensus building and in aligning the efforts of government within South Africa's social framework in order to arrive at an appropriate and coordinated response to the pandemic. All of this is encapsulated within the concept of inclusive embeddedness; a key underlying feature of any democratic developmental state. What is yet to be seen is whether the South African government will set out to establish genuine, broad-based developmental coalitions that will bring the poorest and marginalised closer to government in a dense set of networks that will produce inclusive economic growth and development, or whether it will continue to prioritise high and rapid economic growth rates which benefit the minority, as has been the trend up to date.

Conclusion

Contrary to Herbst's (1990) statement concerning the role of external threats in effective state-building, this article has shown that internal and domestic imperatives have been sufficient precipitating factors for the construction of four developmental states on the African continent. For the cases of Botswana and Mauritius, this article has found that the internal domestic imperative of development proved sufficient in sparking (1) the emergence of development-oriented leaders (Botswana's Seretse Khama and the Mauritian Hindu political elite); (2) the construction of pilot agencies (Botswana's MFDP and Mauritius' MOFED); (3) the formation of broad-based developmental coalitions through participatory mechanisms; as well as in soliciting the buy-in and short-term sacrifice of the citizenry within each state's developmentalist ideology. Likewise, in the cases of Ethiopia and Rwanda, internal security threats (in the form of ethnic rivalries) have driven the emergence of development-oriented leaders such as Zenawi and Kagame. They have also prompted the construction of pilot agencies (Ethiopia's NPC and Rwanda's RDB) and a close-knit relationship between both states and their respective party-affiliated companies. However, ethnic civil conflict has culminated in the formation of highly centralised anocratic regimes

in both Rwanda and Ethiopia. Consequently, citizens are subject to sacrifice basic human rights not for long-term developmental goals, but to entrench the political dominance of the RPF and EPRDF.

For the South African aspirational democratic developmental state, where neither external nor internal threats proved adequate, this article has gone further in showing how a global security threat (such as COVID-19) can trigger a developmental state process. The outbreak of COVID-19 has motivated a coordinating institutional response in the NCCC which has arguably succeeded where the ordained pilot agency, the NPC, has failed in overcoming departmentalism. It has also witnessed Ramaphosa step up as development-oriented leader in rallying the nation around the government's COVID-19 response. Moreover, the global threat of COVID-19 has seen the realisation of genuine 'consultative government' where previous mechanisms have been limited in its ability to form broad-based developmental coalitions.

Nevertheless, extraordinary external, internal and global security threats aside, the construction of a (democratic) developmental state will always hinge on the political will of the leaders. Experiences from other parts of the world, and Africa alike, show that the political and bureaucratic elite were able to recognise external and internal risks, not only as threats to regime security, but more importantly, as potential windows of opportunity to exploit and embark on their respective developmental projects. The construction of democratic developmental states requires the formation of broad-based developmental coalitions between the state and society. As history has shown, events and threats which trigger the formation of these social compacts are far and few in between. For South Africa, during the time of COVID-19, the socio-economic stakes have never been higher: all that is left is for Ramaphosa, together with ANC elite, is to seize this window of opportunity and amass the political will to genuinely embark on and realise its democratic developmental project. Failure to do so may see the end of the ANC regime and the underprivileged and marginalised plunged further into deprivation and poverty. As always, institution building and policy adaptions necessary in the construction of these particular states call for intelligent design and statecraft derived through a process of learning and experimentation.

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A Review of "How to Steal a Country: State Capture and Hopes for the Future in South Africa"

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.22151/politikon.48.5

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Keywords

African National Congress; Corruption; Gupta; Jacob Zuma

Originally published in Volume 48 (March 2021), pp. 96–100. Corrected October 2026: volume and issue numbering.

From a democratic "miracle" to a stolen country

How to steal a country: State capture and hopes for the future in South Africa is a political affairs non-fiction book published in 2018 by Robin Renwick. The author used his diplomatic experience and familiarity with South African politics and politicians even before democracy (from 1987 to 1991) to write this comprehensive publication on the state of corruption and state capture in democratic South Africa. The book is a dexterously and well-structured insight into the corruption within the ruling party, which has also sailed out to the country's governance. The publication contains 145 pages with cartoons by Jonathan Zapiro – a South African cartoonist who also has been taken to courtrooms for the nature of illustrations of the former president Zuma presented to various media platforms. Interestingly, the book cover page contains former and late President Mandela's picture as a symbol of hope and leadership towards defeating a "new" enemy, called "state capture" and its' key players.

Renwick refers to corruption as an endemic threat that has been a factor in every African National Congress (ANC) leadership since the rise of democracy. However, he highlights the Jacob Zuma-led administration as the most corrupt and pioneer to the concept of "state capture" in the context of South Africa. The book chapters revolve around events, statements, reports, and even individuals who were either key players of state actions or victims of serious actions by those spearheads of state capture. For instance, there is a reference to "Gordhan versus Zupta", "Guptaleaks" and "Government at war with itself" (Renwick 2018). This structure succinctly addresses the subject of state capture in South Africa over the past two decades under democratically elected president Zuma.

The publication begins with a well-written introduction, entitled "From Mandela to Mbeki", where Renwick highlights that the saintly Mandela had a wily side as well. Nevertheless, the author does not go into detail on this claim, referring the reader(s) to another publication instead (Carlin 2013), that he recommends being comprehensive in unpacking the rowdy side of the former and late president Mandela (Renwick 2018, 12). The rest of the chapters, from the Nelson Mandela-led administration to the rise of the Cyril Ramaphosa-led regime captures this publication to be a crime-like novel, one that is like "the Napoleon Crime" (Renwick 2018, 6). Napoleon Crime's notion is demonstrated through the looting and unjustified impunity that numerous senior members of the national executive have enjoyed in democratic South Africa.

As much as the publication spells out all the negative and nexus between Zuma, the Guptas, and state capture, conversely, there are a few positive pointers that Renwick considers. These include the win against former president Thabo Mbeki for the top seat in

the Republic's presidency, a statement made by the former opposition leader, Ms. Hellen Zille, which referred to Zuma as "this charming man" (Renwick 2018, 26). However, this provided a very limited perspective as Renwick, to some extent, ignored the political power that Zuma enjoyed before (even when he was fired as Deputy President of the Republic because of allegations against him), and even during his tenure as president of the Republic. According to Gumede (2008, 265), Zuma is one of the most popular leaders with a huge number of supporters – with some being non-ANC members.

The support was built on a left–wing populist coalition within the ANC comprising of trade unionists, socialists, unemployed youth, veteran guerrilla fighters, women's lobbies, supporters of causes ranging from the death penalty to virginity testing, black business tycoons, and evangelicals. One of the most noticeable supporters included Julius Malema, who was the ANC Youth League, however, currently, he is the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) President, who publicly announced that he will "kill for Zuma" (Posel 2014, 41). This showed significant support for the former president and his leadership. Until now, there has been not a single statement of this nature made in defence and support of a president or even a presidential candidate in South African politics. Interestingly, some of these "Zuma loyalists", as Renwick (2018, 60) refers to them, were later (in early 2017) seen to be opponents of the Zuma-led administration. This was when former minister Gordhan publicly was announced his unhappiness with the leadership of President Zuma and his relations with the Gupta (Renwick 2018, 60).

Another significant contribution of the book is what the notion of state capture entails, as a relatively new phenomenon in South African politics and current affairs. The book aptly demonstrates the notion of state capture as being characterised by factions. Factions divide the ruling party instead of having members who seek to further advance the interests of those who voted for them. Furthermore, state capture is frequently accompanied by a programme or movement driven by denialism, arrogance, abuse of power, total disregard of national institutions and constitution, and the endless use of the country's public purse to defend and deter wrongdoing. Most importantly, Renwick's view on state capture is that the actions and activities of capture are deliberate and systematic in nature.

Any hope for a U-turn to a better South Africa?

The hope for the future in South Africa started in Nasrec, when Ramphosa, whom President Zuma did not trust as a leader who would politically protect him from being held accountable for the allegations on his role in the state capture of South Africa, won the ANC presidential elections which also makes him hold the position of President in the Republic

of South Africa. Renwick's view and some political analysts and commentators that should Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, who is now a minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta), have won the elections in Nasrec. It would have resulted in former President Zuma not being held accountable. Again, the author portrays South Africa's hopes to be championed by Cyril Ramaphosa since he is one of the key players in the business sector.

Overall, the author's view on Guptas' relations to the former President Zuma offers a limited perspective on the notion of state capture in South Africa since Zuma mentioned during the Zondo State Capture commission that both former President Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki enjoyed a relationship with the Guptas, yet there was no outcry (Khumalo 2019). Some political reports/statements, however, suggest that this notion is not novel since the presence and relations of the Gupta family to senior executive members of the ANC is known to have started as early as days of Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki (Daniel 2019; Institute of Security Studies 2019). With regards to relations with former President Zuma, the Institute for Security Studies (2019, 3) reports that the Gupta relations began in 2002. Therefore, the publication could have highlighted the genesis of state capture and what it means in democratic South Africa. Nevertheless, Renwick argues that hope for South Africa is both in restoring democratic values post the Zuma-led administration, and in ensuring that the ANC regains its majority and voters' confidence especially after the continuous allegations and endemic of corruption and state capture by ANC executive members.

The publication provides a solid account of what has been perceived to be the dark side of South Africa's democracy and the actions of those elected to lead the nation. However, the narrative that Ramaphosa as President carries a great chance for South Africa because of his strong exposure and familiarity with the world and African business sector, is somewhat misleading. This is because recently the President of the Republic, Cyril Ramaphosa, just like his predecessor, has been faced with several questions as an ongoing review to his leadership and integrity to leading South Africa towards sustainable and good governance. Questions that remain include:

- *Is Cyril Ramaphosa going to do the same as Zuma, allow the country to be captured, but this time not by the Guptas but by the elite or white monopoly capitalists?*
- *During Zuma's tenure and involvement in state capture, is Ramaphosa above suspicion from all state capture activities, or is he another accomplice that the public is yet to know of (especially since he was the deputy president of the ANC and the Republic)?*

The book could be used in studies of the quality or (in)effectiveness of democracy or political leadership in South Africa. A second edition could focus on tracing the notion of state capture even in forthcoming presidential tenures in democratic South Africa. This edition could bridge the gap between the current edition, titled "How to steal a country: State capture and hopes for the future in South Africa" and Van Vuuren's publication titled "Apartheid, Guns, and Money: A Tale of Profit".

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Politikon

the IAPSS Journal of Political Science

ISSN 2414-6633

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