Neo-populisms: Key hypotheses and types. The European Experience

Neopopulismos: hipótesis clave y tipos. La experiencia europea

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Abstract

What happens when, after a resounding electoral victory, populist parties and their leaders become prime ministers or ministers in governments or participate in the decision-making process? To reply to such a question, first, the authors propose a simple distinction between two neo-populisms and then control if there is adaptive institutional responsiveness with a possible consequent improvement of social rights and lowering of inequalities. The main conclusion suggested by the empirical analysis is that revendicative and redistributive leaders and parties are more likely to succeed in economically weaker countries. However, the cost of such a success is the political irresponsibility that may bring the democratic regime to bankruptcy.

Keywords: revendivative populism, identitarian populism, responsiveness, inequality, irresponsibility.

Resumen

¿Qué sucede cuando, luego de una contundente victoria electoral, los partidos populistas y sus líderes se convierten en primeros ministros o ministros en los gobiernos o participan en el proceso de toma de decisiones? Para responder a tal interrogante, primero, los autores proponen una simple distinción entre dos neopopulismos y luego controlan si existe una capacidad de respuesta institucional adaptativa con una posible consecuente mejora de los derechos sociales y reducción de las desigualdades. La principal conclusión sugerida por el análisis empírico es que los líderes y partidos reivindicativos y redistributivos tienen más probabilidades de tener éxito en países económicamente más débiles. Sin embargo, el costo de tal éxito es la irresponsabilidad política que puede llevar al régimen democrático a la bancarrota.

Palabras clave: populismo reivindicativo, populismo identitario, capacidad de respuesta, desigualdad, irresponsabilidad.

When looking at the large and growing empirical and literature on populism and neo-populism, one of the recurrent issues is the emphasis on how populist leader are ready to over-promise, to make consequent impossible commitments, which however allow those leaders and their parties to win resounding electoral successes. Up to now very few contributions made the subsequent step, that is, to check what happens when those parties are created and their leader become prime ministers or ministers in governments or are, however, present in the Parliament participating to the decision-making process. To start replying to such questions will bring us to propose a consequent, simple classification of two different neo-populisms. Thus, the main hypothesis is: if there are a more profound dissatisfaction and the consequent emergence of salient protest parties, there is a corresponding, adaptive institutional responsiveness with a possible consequent improvement of social rights and lowering of inequalities.

1. The New Protest Parties

The growth of inequality seems to constitute (Morlino et al. 2020, chapter 2) a structural aspect of advanced capitalist societies, when there is an economic crisis with its specificities-intensity, propagation, duration. A direct consequence is the emergence and success of protest movements and neo-populist or, in any case, new parties. The simple causal process and interactions (micro-meso-macro) is characterized by dissatisfaction and the spread of protest (social and political), which fuel the electoral success of neo-populist parties and their influence on the agenda of the incumbent governments, even when they are not directly in government. This may open spaces for redistributive policies, for combating new social risks and poverty, for guaranteeing social rights. In short, social cohesion climbs at the top of the agenda of governments even in conditions of weak, asymmetrical growth (between countries and regions), of deterioration in the standard of living of citizens, and of a "secular stagnation" (Jacobs and Mazzuccato, 2016).[1]

The dissatisfaction is in the background of the political choices and behaviour of voters. Here, we will limit ourselves to look specifically at voting for protest parties. Especially when there was an overlap with other crises (immigrants, inter-state conflicts, EU foreign policy), the Great Recession worked as a "catalyst mechanism" that strongly influenced the mobilization and competition models of the European democracies (Morlino and Raniolo, 2017). Overall, a convergence between a "security" demand (both economic and cultural) and a "protest" offer is favourEd. Accordingly, Kriesi (2014) spoke of "protest populism", which is characterized by:[2]

a) "The rise of new challengers in the party system" (Kriesi, 2014, p. 368): they give voice to the "new structural conflict that opposes globalization losers to globalization winners" (p. 369); during the second decade of the twenty-first century, in several European democracies, we have been witnessing the appearance and in some cases the resounding success of new protest parties or populist (or neo-populist) parties, which are particularly effective in giving voice to the discontent and protest of social groups.

b) "The radical rejection" of the political elite and mainstream parties (p. 369), with the parties of the traditional left and right government increasingly challenged by the new protest parties, while the political elites and institutional (technocracies) lose legitimacy.

c) "The expansion of the conflict beyond the party system" (p. 369) through the dissemination of nonconventional forms of political protest, such as demonstrations, strikes and other forms of direct action.[3]

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[1] To the growth of inequalities (also due to the growing phenomenon of precarious work), Jacobs and Mazzuccato (2016) add the environmental crisis and the overheating of the ecosystem.

[2] A further component of the protest is growing electoral abstention, though the trends vary.

[3] A fourth possibility for the expression of dissatisfaction by voters is abstentionism, a sort of long-term exit as the voter leaves the electoral market, while the protest vote can be considered a shortcut exit, as the voter remains in the market.

Here, we can also add the spreading of unconventional participation, mentioned above, which was already putting down roots in the 1970s, and has been talked about for some time as the "normalization of the unconventional" (Fuchs, 1991). In recent decades, waves of protest, characterized by the emergence of social movements linked to globalization and to the transformation of capitalism itself, have also been shaking European societies. In particular, for our purposes, it is appropriate to distinguish between two cycles of protest: the wave of protests relating to the Global Justice Movement (GJM) of the 1990s, inspired by anti-neoliberal and anti-globalization ideals; and the anti-austerity movements that sprang up in response to reactions to the 2008 crisis and its consequences in terms of restrictive budget policies, privatization, and the dismantling of welfare (Della Porta, 2015). As better seen below, the protest wave that followed took on two main patterns: the non-conventional, non-institutionalized participation through political movements and the support for protest parties with its two paths (the two faces of neo-populism): the so-called sovereign parties and the radical parties. When the pandemic hit our societies, the picture changEd. While almost everywhere in European democracies there has been a taming of neo-populist protest, a drive toward social polarization came out, manifested by the regressive extremism of no vax and green pass movements, sided by extreme rightist parties. Whether such phenomena are conjunctural or has been developing deeper roots —by channelling anxieties and social tensions— it is still too early to be affirmEd.

Now, we can analyse the change that has been taking place in the format of the party systems of our democracies. Following Sartori (1976), these changes can be mainly grasped in the "format" and "mechanics" of party systems. Moreover, many indicators, such as voter turnout, electoral volatility, the effective number of parties, the appearance of protest parties, would seem to suggest that political and electoral competition in European and Western democracies has been becoming increasingly centrifugal, and party systems themselves will be more "fluid".[4] Thus, the strategies of the actors in the field —of both the traditional parties and the new challenging protest parties— pursue or push voters towards extremes, with a consequent and increasingly "pernicious polarization" (McCoy and Somer, 2019) of social relations as well. Our democracies are thus turning into "radicalized democracies" (Morlino and Raniolo, 2017) or polarized democracies.

As we shall see later, in addition to the dissatisfaction, where this exists, system-level polarization takes on importance in our analysis for two reasons. On the one hand, it reflects the emergence of neo-populist, protest parties, though we should also consider the strategies of mainstream parties, which may intentionally choose to radicalize electoral campaigns and relations with other parties and institutions (Levitsky and Ziblatt, 2018). Among the possible examples, we can mention the relations between Berlusconi, the party oppositions, and the magistracy in Italy; the crispación in the relations between the Spanish Popular Party of Rajoy and the Socialist Party of Zapatero after the 2004 elections; and the referendum on Brexit (2016) in the UK "invented" by Prime Minister Cameron for political reasons that were inherent to his party. On the other hand, the growing systemic polarization reflects a society that is pervaded by tensions, resulting, for example, from the growth of inequality and the risk of a worsening of the economic conditions of the middle

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[4]   In the new edition of his famous 1976 work, brought out to mark the 40th anniversary of its original publication, Sartori (2016, esp. chapter 8) emphasized the process of fluidization of parties and party systems in Western democracies and the possible consequences. About half a century ago such a phenomenon was a distinguishing feature of African politics but is now becoming a reality in contemporary Europe. Among our cases, Poland, but also Italy, display stable fluidization of the party system. For an analysis of the changes of party systems in Europe during the twentieth century (Ignazi, 2017).

classes. The mobilization of resentment and the social construction of the enemy —first, immigrants or internal minorities— readily follow, contributing to further polarization. In this context, the strategic dilemma of the parties between "preference-shaping (trying to convince voters to see things your way) rather than preference-accommodating (adapting your policies to their views)" (Bale, 2010, p. 119) distinguishes populist parties and, generally, electoral parties, more oriented towards the accommodation.

The data on polarization (Morlino et al., 2020, Table 5.2), calculated on the basis of an algorithm proposed by Dalton (2008) for the distinct elections, seem to underestimate the effective polarization of the party system, and its radicalization,[5] but they do give us two significant pieces of information. First, during the time we are considering there was an evident increase of polarization in four of the six democracies; while the trend is more controversial for Poland, where, however, there was a significant increase in the 2015 elections, resulting in a fluctuating diachronic trend. Second, France stands out as the political polarization tended to shrink there as an effect of institutional drives. However, this was not so for political radicalization, which may even be pushed by those same majoritarian institutions and is graphically reflected in the protracted protest of the gilets jaunes or yellow vests movement in 2018-19. Third, the United Kingdom also displays the highest growth of polarization, from 0.29 to 0.41, revealing the radicalization of the Labour Party under its leader Jeremy Corbyn after the years of moderation under the leadership of Blair.

There is no doubt that much of the polarization or radicalization process is the product of the appearance and success of what we might call "new protest parties" (Morlino and Raniolo, 2017, esp. chapter 4). In some of our countries, these parties immediately (or almost immediately) became relevant political actors. Following the "rules for counting" suggested by Sartori (1976, p. 121-125), they achieved a high "blackmail potential" and even a "coalition potential",[6] but above all have been able to channel the potential for widespread dissatisfaction in society as a result of the economic crisis and, in some cases, of the worsening of equality.

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[5]   Here, it seems necessary to recall the distinction between polarization and radicalization. The first implies that political competition takes place through aggregation around two poles (or coalitions), which are not necessarily radical (as was the case for many decades in the UK), while the radicalization of political issues and positions results in a distancing among policy proposals and disappearance of moderate positions (Morlino, 1981, p. 41-45).

[6]   "'Coalition potential' and 'blackmail potential' refer to "parties that have either a governmental relevance in the coalition-formation arena or a competitive relevance in the oppositional arena" (Sartori, 1976, p. 123). This outcome is the product of several structural transformations and contingent events —among which the 2008 economic crisis has a prominent place— which has significantly lowered the "entry barriers" to the new parties (Raniolo, 2013).

Table 1. New parties and neo-populist parties: The European picture (2012-2021)

Party Name	Elec Year	Votes (%)	Seats	Party name	Left-Right	Foundation Year
Austria	2013	20,5	40	Freedom Party of Austria	8.3	1986
	2017	26,0	51			
	2013	5,7	11	Team Stornach	6	2012
Belgium	2014	3,67	3	Flemish Block	9.6	2004
Bulgaria	2013	30,5	97	Citizens for European Development of Bulgaria	7.4	2006
	2014	32,7	84	-		
	2017	33,5	95	-		
	2021 I	25,8	75	-		
	2021 II	23,5	63	-		
	2014	7,28	19	National Front for the Salvation of Bulgaria	8.7	2011
	2017	9,1	27	-		
	2021 I	3,1	-	-		
	2021 II	3,1 (+Volja+VMRO)	-	-		
	2017	4,26	12	Volya – Will	6	2007
	2021 I	2,1	-	-		
	2021 II	3,1 (+NFSB+VMRO)	-	-		
	2014	5,69	15	Reload Bulgaria		2014
	2013	7,30	23	Attack	5.5	2005
	2014	4,52	11	-		
Croatia	2015	4,19	1	Human Shield	8.7	2011
	2016	5,92	8	-		
	2015		3	Croatian Labourists – Labour Party	7.1	2010
	2015		3	Croatian Party of Rights dr. Ante Starčević	8.7	

Czech Rep.	2013	18,65	47	Action of Dissatisfied Citizens	6	2012
	2017	29,64	78	-		
	2013	6,88	14	Dawn of Direct Democracy	7.4	2013
	2017	10,6		-		
	2021	15,6	37	Pirate party + Mayors and Independents	--	
Germany	2012	8,6	64	The Left	1.2	2007
	2017	9,2	69	-		
	2021	4,9	39	-		
	2017	12,6	94	Alternative for Germany	8.7	2013
	2021	10,3	83	-		
Denmark	2015	20,58	37	Danish Peoples Party	8.2	1995
Estonia	2015	8,1	7	Conservative People's Party of Estonia		2012
	2019	17,8	19	-		
Spain	2015	12,7	42	Podemos	1.2	2014
	2016	13,37	45	-		
	2019	14,3	42	Unidos Podemos	1.2	2014
	2015	13,4	40	Ciudadanos	6	2005
	2016	13,0	32	-		
	2019	15,9	57	-		
	2019	10,3	24	Vox	6	2013
Finland	2015	17,65	38	True Finns	6.6	1995
	2019	17,50	39	-	-	-
United Kingdom	2015	12,65	1	United Kingdom Independence Party	7.8	1993
France	2017	28,21	308	La République En Marche!	6	2016
	2017	11	17	La France Insoumise	1.2	
	2012	13,6	2	Front National/National Rally	9.7	1972
	2017	13,2	8	-		
Greece	2012	16,79	52	Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA)	2.9	2004
	2012	26,89	71	-		
	2015	35,46	145	-		2013
	2012	6,97	21	Peoples Association -- Golden Dawn	8.7	1980
	2012	6,92	18	-		
	2015	6,99	18	-		
	2012	10,62	33	Independent Greeks	8.7	2012
	2012	7,51	20	-		
	2015	3,69	10	-		

Hungary	2014	20,22	23	Jobbik- Jobbik Movement for a Better Hungary	8.7	2003
	2018	19,05	25	-		
	2014	44,87 [+KNDP]	117	Fidesz - Hungarian Civic Union	6.5	1988
	2018	49,27 [+KNDP]	117	-	6.5	
Iceland	2009	7,2	4	Citizens' Movement	6	2009
	2013	5,3	3	Pirate Party	2.5	2012
	2016	14,1	10	-		
	2017	9,2	6	-		
	2021	8,6	6	-		
Italy	2013	4,08	18	(Northern) League	8	2013 (1991)
	2018	17,3	123	-		
	2013	25,55	108	Five Star Movement	5	2009
	2018	32,7	225	-		
Latvia	2014	16,6	17	National Alliance	8.2	2011
	2018	11,0	13	-		
	2014	6,8	7	For Latvia from the Heart	7.4	2014
Lithuania	2012	7,31	12	Order and Justice	5.3	2002
	2016	5,53	8	-		2002
	2020	2,0	1			
Luxembourg	2013	6,64	3	Alternative Democratic Reform Party	8.8	1987
	2018	8,28	4	-		
Netherlands	2012	10,8	15	Party for Freedom	8.8	2006
	2017	13,1	20	-		
	2021	10,8	17	-		
	2017	1,8	2	Forum for Democracy	7.4	2016
	2021	5,0	8	-		
Norway	2013	16,3	29	Progress Party	8.7	1973
	2017	15,2	27	-		
	2021	11,7	21	-		
Poland	2015	37,58	235	Law and Justice	7.7	2001
Romania	2012	13,99	47	People's Party – Dan Diaconescu	1.2	2011

Slovakia	2012	8,55	12	Ordinary People and Independent Personalities	7.4	2011
	2016	11,0	19	-		2011
	2020	25,0	53	-		
	2016	8,64	15	Slovak National Party	7	1989
	2020	3,2	-	-		
	2012	44,41	83	Direction – Social Democracy	3.8	1999
	2016	28,28	49	-		
	2020	18,3	38	-		
	2016	8,05	14	Kotleba – People's Party Our Slovakia	8.7	2010
	2020	8,0	17	-		
Slovenia	2018	4,17	4	Slovenian National Party	4.7	1991
Sweden	2014	12,86	49	Sweden Democrats	8.7	1988
	2018	17,5	62	-		
Switzerland	2015	29,4	11	Swiss People's Party	7.3	1971
	2015	1	2	Ticino League	8.7	1991

Source: The table includes only parties which won at least one seat in parliament.
Electoral Results, Seats, Left-Right (Döring and Manow, 2019). For 2018 and 2019 elections, own elaboration. Where otherwise indicated the parties were selected following Van Kessel (2015). For the Estonian and the Latvian case see Braghiroli and Petsin (2019), for La France Insoumise, Gerbaudo (2018), for Podemos, Vittori (2017), for Vox, Turnbull-Dugarte (2019). Forza Italia is excluded from the "populist party" category. Malta, Cyprus and Portugal have no significant populist parties in their political systems.

To give an account of these changes, let us take a more general look at the European countries. In Table 1, we included all European democracies where there was at least a neo-populist parties that won minimally a parliamentary seat. It is easy to see (column 3) that the success of the new protest parties, challengers or neo-populists (but also simply of a new party such as LREM in France) was dramatic in the years following the Great Recession.[7] However, for a large part of the twentieth century the so-called "freezing proposition" (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967, p. 50)[8] was the rule and, accordingly, the European party systems presented a substantial continuity. The appearance of "significant" new parties was a rarity, as was the transformation of party systems. In a sense, the electoral markets of Western democracies have been fundamentally stable. Electoral volatility would have become a crucial aspect of the new policy only starting from the 1980s and 1990s. The long-term perspective reveals how such volatility or instability is not an absolute novelty. Indeed, the electoral history of Western democracies shows a U-shaped pattern as high volatility was typical of elitist political systems of the nineteenth century. Later, there has

[7]   More precisely, in Marche and Ciudadanos can be classified as "insider challenge to the incumbent political establishment", as they are not characterized by the recurrent ideological features of neo-populism, one of them being the anti-elitism.
[8]   That is, the party alignments of the 1960s reflected the socio-economic divisions or cleavages of the 1920s.

been a long period of stability during the first half of the twentieth century, and a return to the high volatility during the last thirty years constituted a real opportunity for the emergence of new successful parties.[9]

From Table 1 we see that all recorded cases —in some cases the same party has been counted more than once— are all related to elections that have been held since 2012. Before the pandemic (2019) in 26 cases the new parties won between 10% and 19%. In five cases the voting percentages far exceeded 20 points: The Freedom Party of Austria with 26% (in 2017), La République En Marche! with 28,2% (also in 2017), SYRIZA with 27% (in 2012), and M5S with 26% (2013), while the Jobbik party in Hungary remained at 20% in the two most recent elections. There are also some even more striking results, with peaks of 37,6% in Poland with the Law and Justice (PiS) in 2015 and 43,6% in 2019, 35,5% in Greece with Syriza (in 2015), 32,7% in Italy (in 2018) with the M5S (Five Star Movement). But see also the case of Bulgaria were the right-wing party Citizens for European Development got over 30% in the three elections here considered. It hardly needs noting that three out of the four most successful cases are included in the democracies examined here. Moreover, 15 parties were established after 2008 in the context of the Great Recession.[10] Finally, of these new political formations, ten are situated on the right or far right (with LR scale values equal to or greater than 7) and six on the extreme left (with values less than 3).

During and after the pandemic (2020-22), in the countries where there were elections the consensus for neo-populist parties decreased, even significantly. For example, in Bulgaria, the CEDB with 33% in 2017 elections won 23,5% in 2021, whereas to mention one of the key European countries, Germany, the Linke lost about 5% points and Afd about 2%. However, there are exceptions: in the Czech Republic DDD went from 7% in 2017 to 10,6% in 2021 and the Pirate Party won 15,6% of votes; in the Netherlands the Forum for Democracy in the elections of 2021 gets 5% against 1,8% in 2017; in Slovakia the neo-populist party (Ordinary People) won 14 points more, from 11% in 2016 to 25% in 2020.

Overall, we think that there is no exaggeration to claims that not only have the turbulence and uncertainty of the electoral markets and party systems become chronic in recent years, but also that citizens feel they are living through a real "historical crisis" (Reynié, 2013; Mény, 2019). Such a crisis involves state institutions (first, those of welfare and security), the quality of representative institutions and the relations between state and market. Some author contends that the very survival of the political institutions of modernity, as we have known them in Europe for some centuries now, is now at stake.[11]

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[9]   For the analysis of the U-shaped pattern see Mair (1997); for more recent research on volatility see Chiaramonte and Emanuele (2017) and Emanuele and Chiaramonte (2018).

[10]   We excluded the League as the date of its foundation is 1991, despite the radical renewal it underwent in 2013 under the leadership of Salvini.

[11]   Yuval Noah Harari (2018) underlines the definitive crisis of the three "great narratives" of the twentieth century (Fascist, Communist and Liberal) and how the revolution of new digital technologies has favoured this. The radical changes at the international level are not without consequence for the analysis of equality, are well analyzed by Parsi (2018).

Table 2. New parties, neo-populist parties, radical left parties, radical right parties (1992-2021)

Country	Party name	1*	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Germany	**AfD**						4.7	12.6	10.3		
	Die Lin-ke	4.4	5.1	4	8.7	11.9	8.6	9.2	4.9		
France	*LRM*						28.2				
	FN	9.8	12.4	14.9	11.3	4.3	13.6	13.2			
	FG/Fr.In.	11.3	9.2	9.9	4.8	4.3	6.9	11			
Italy	*M5S*						25.4	32.7			
	Lega	8.4	10.1	3.9	4.6	8.3	4.1	17.4			
	FdI/An	13.5	15.7	12	12.3		2	4.4			
	PdR-RC/PdCI/Si	6	8.6	6.7**	8.1**		3.2				
Poland	**PiS**			9.5	27	32.1	29.9	37.6	43.6		
	K							8.8			
Spain	*Podemos*						20.7	21.2	14.3	12.8	
	Cs					0.2	13.9	13.1	15.9	6.8	
	Vox							0.2	10.3	15.1	
United Kingdom	**UKIP**		0.3	1.5	2.2	3.1	12.6	1.8	2.0		
	SF	0.2	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.2		

Notes: (*) The numbers (1 through 10) in the first line of the table correspond to the different electoral years for each country. Elections were held: in Germany in 1994, 1998, 2002, 2005, 2009, 2013, 2017, 2021; in France: 1993, 1997, 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017; in Italy: 1994, 1996, 2001, 2006, 2008, 2013, 2018; in Poland: 1993, 1997, 2001, 2005, 2007, 2011, 2015, 2019; in Spain: 1993, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008, 2011, 2015, 2016, 2019I, 2019II; in United Kingdom: 1992, 1997, 2001, 2005, 2010, 2015, 2017, 2019.
(**) Sum of votes PdR-RC and PdCI.
In addition, please, note the identitarian populist parties are in bold; the revendicative populist ones in italics. Here we only included the parties existing in the six largest European democracies.
Legend: AfD: Alternative for Germany; Die Linke: The Left; LRM: La République En Marche! ; FN: Front National; Fra.Ins.: La France Insoumise; FG: Front de Gauche; M5S: Five Star Movement; Lega: League North/League; FdI/An: Brothers of Italy/National Alliance; PdR-RC/PdCI/Si: PRC: Communist Refoundation Party/ Party of Italian Communists/Italian Left; Pis: Law and Justice; K: Kukiz'15; Podemos: We Can; Cs: Citizens-Party of the Citizenry; Vox: Voice; Ukip: United Kingdom Independence Party; SF: Sinn Féin.

When to go more in depth in our analysis, we only select the larger European democracies, which include more than two thirds of European population (United Kingdom, France, Spain, Germany, Italy, and Poland) (see Table 2), the data show a high differentiation of the electoral consensus for the parties in the various elections held over

the twenty years, and in these cases, the averages are of little use. In the light of what was said above about the appearance of significant new parties, it is better to consider the parties with relatively high percentages of consent. This criterion, however crude, allows us to allocate the political parties considered into three significant groups. In a first group, we find four parties, all above the threshold of 20 percentage points: LRM (28,20) in France, M5S (32,7%) in Italy, PiS (37,6%) in Poland and Podemos (21,2%) in Spain, at least until 2016. The picture in Spain changed with the 2019 first elections. Once again, the coalition with the left (Unidos Podemos) was not successful, and the 14.3% is about 7 points lower than previous elections, putting the "electoral cartel" of protest in fourth place after the PSOE (28,7%), PP (16,7%) and Ciudadanos (15,9%) and immediately before the radical rightist Vox (10,3%), the real surprise of the last elections.[12] In the 2019 second election, Unidos Podemos loses 1.5 points (12,8%), and Ciudadanos 9 (6,8%).

In the second group, there are parties with an electoral performance within the 10-19% range. However, the picture is more differentiated for both variability of consensus and timing of the elections when the best results are won. In this group we find the Germans of AfD (12,6%), and of Die Linke (11,9% in the 2009 elections), as seen above, however, both parties lost votes in the 2021 elections;[13] the French FN, with an average of 11,4% in all the elections, that is, above the 10-point threshold (except in 2007 when it received 4,3%); the Mélenchon movement, which obtained 11% in the last elections, a result that was similar to that of the Front de Gauche in the 1990s; the Italians of the Lega di Salvini (Salvini League) (17,4), but also the Alleanza Nazionale (National Alliance-AN), whose best result was 15,6% in 1996; and finally the Spanish of Ciudadanos with an average of 14% in the last three elections and the British of the UKIP, who won over 12% in the 2005 elections. However, in the 2019 election, the party led by Farage, i.e., the Brexit Party, only won 2%. A new entry is the Spanish right-wing and nationalist party Vox with 10,3% and 15% in the November 2019 election. Founded in 2013 after a split within the Popular Party (PP), Vox obtained 16,2% in the Andalusia regional elections in the autumn of 2018. As we can see the trends seem positive especially for AfD, FN, Lega, and UKIP, all four of which we can label as right-wing populists (see below).

Finally, there is the third group of smaller parties that have not reached the 10% threshold in any election and are mostly the parties of the radical left in Italy (PdRC/RC, PdCI, Si) and Sinn Féin in the United Kingdom. To them, we can add two right-wing parties: The Fratelli d'Italia in Italy and the Kukiz'15 in Poland.

In addition to the variability (over time and between the different cases) of electoral consensus, when population and territory are considered, we can see that the largest European democracies are all characterized by the presence of new protest parties. This is quite significant in Italy, Spain, Poland, and France. Except for Spain, in the other three cases, the new parties became governing actors after the outcome of the last elections. If for the sake of clarity, we recall the hypothesis we addressed earlier (if there are more profound dissatisfaction and stronger protest parties, there is corresponding responsiveness with a possible consequent improvement of social rights and lowering of inequalities), we can sum up our empirical results thus far.

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[12]   When we analyse Italy, it is perhaps appropriate to mention GoItaly! (FI) as well, led by Berlusconi, which carried significant weight in the polarization process of the post-1994 Italian political system (Morlino, Piana and Raniolo, 2013). We need only add that in the time frame considered here FI obtained an average level of consensus of 24%. It has negative trend, and in the 2018 elections had its worst result (14%).

[13]   In the last ten years another protest party that has had some success at the state level, but less at the federal level, is the Pirate Party. Founded in 2006, it obtained its best result in the 2009 federal elections, with 2%, which was below the threshold for access to the Bundestag.

The growing dissatisfaction with democracy (particularly evident in Spain and Italy, but also in France) and the polarization of the party system (again quite evident in Spain and Italy, but also in Germany) established the conditions for the emergence and development of new protest parties. This occurred in Spain and Italy. Furthermore, in 2018-19, in both countries, there is a "bilateral opposition" (Podemos, Ciudadanos and Vox in Spain; M5S and Lega, FdT in Italy). Moreover, until early September 2019, in Italy, the government was formed by a coalition between the M5S and the League. In France, instead, the crisis of the traditional parties has favoured the formation of a new technocratic party (LREM). A right-wing populist party has been successful and is also in government in Poland (PiS), but in this case, as said, the prevailing "domain of identification" is of a sovereign, religious and anti-immigration type. In Germany, finally, the "great coalition" between Social Democrats and Christian Democrats is increasingly weak in the face of the challenge posed in this case too by a double opposition (AfD and Die Linke).

2. Neo-Populism, Protest and Political Consequences

Going back to the hypothesis on dissatisfaction, protest parties, and a corresponding possible institutional responsiveness, it can be empirically checked by looking at the political consequences of the appearance of new protest parties. If focusing on the largest European democracies, we can imagine four simplified synchronization patterns, to quote Almond and Powell (1978), between demands from citizens and political responses, and a residual fourth one.

1. Spain (social and political 'voice'): the social movement Indignados and the subsequent institutionalization through the formation of Podemos, which in alliance with the radical left proposes equality and redistributive and active citizenship policies; Unidos Podemos entered a governmental coalition in January 2020.

2. Italy (political "voice" and anti-party sentiment): The M5S immediately institutionalized the protest against the "casta", i.e., the establishment, formed a government with the League of Salvini after the elections of 2018 and another government with the Democratic Party since September 2019; M5S proposed forms of direct participation and not always coherent policies to fight poverty (in particular, citizenship income) (Morlino et al., 2020, chapter 2 for further details).

3. France (establishment reaction and social "voice"): The Macron presidency and the protracted protest of the gilets jaunes prompted the government to propose policies of assistance and support to calm social unrest and fight unemployment.

4. Poland (nationalist loyalty cum distributive policies): the electoral success of the PiS favours the consolidation of nationalist and conservative governments, with a distributive policy profile, profiting of favourable economic conditions.

Let us add that in Germany and United Kingdom there are neither similar social and political protest movements, nor new distributive policies. Moreover, as we have seen, countries have different developments. In the first two countries, there has been a partial strengthening of the left, which had a subsequent (2019) decline in the UK with the Labour Party, while the Social Democrats were able to keep their votes and Die Linke became stronger in Germany.[14] However, here there is a significant difference between Germany and the United Kingdom, which brings the latter closer to the other four cases.

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[14]   For the electoral results of these parties, see Table 1. Let recall here that PiS is a party that complements traditional nationalist positions on the family and the community with strong welfare policies (see above).

The "populist reaction" has substantially affected five of our six cases, although remaining rather limited only in Germany. In three cases (Italy, Spain, and Poland) it produced the appearance of new populist protest parties (see below), which on two occasions became incumbent. In two cases, the reaction was internal to the technocratic establishment and aimed at "modelling the preferences" of the voters by introducing reforms (France), or more traditional and aimed at "matching their preferences" (see Bale, 2010) with the protection of national interests through Brexit (United Kingdom).

We can now look a little bit in-depth to these cases, all characterized by the preference-accommodating orientation of our parties, starting with Spain. In 2011, protest and social malaise resulted in the birth of the Indignados or 15M movement. At the heart of this "social universe in movement" there was the demand for a more authentic participatory democracy and a revival of social citizenship. Using the slogan que se vayan todos and no nos representan, the main targets of the Indignados were the PP and the PSOE, the two main partisan actors in Spanish politics up to that moment. Podemos —we can, but also Po(wer) and demos(people)— took up these challenges in 2014, establishing an autonomy vis-à-vis the social movement.

Moreover, its opposition to the traditional parties, especially to the PSOE and IU, does not appear so absolute as to preclude the possibility of collaborations and coalitions, or of acting as a possible ally in a progressive government.[15] In the electoral campaign for the 2015 general election, Podemos claimed its main objective was to defeat the PP in order to create a progressive government along with IU or with the PSOE (especially if it obtained more votes than the latter). Finally, in 2016, it participated together with IU in a single list (Unidos Podemos), but with a disappointing outcome. The two parties together lost votes in both absolute and percentage terms compared to six months earlier (-3,3%). There was a strategic dilemma between the aspiration to appear different from other parties and the need to collaborate. In fact, this interpretation seems the correct one if we look at the results of the last elections in March 2019. The coalition of the radical left Unidos and Podemos obtained 14,3% of the vote (7% less and 29 seats fewer than in the 2016 elections) and was overtaken by Ciudadanos with 15,9% (up 3 points and 25 seats compared to 2016). However, the electoral success (April 2019) of the extreme right Vox party, with 10,3% approval and 24 seats should also be mentionEd. This competitive issue is also present in the November 2019 elections, which pushed the axis of the Spanish party system to the right with the PP growing from 16,7% to 20,8% (against PSOE, which remains the first party with 28%) and above all, the success of Vox that wins 15,1% of votes, while both Unidos Podemos (-1,5) and Ciudadanos (-9.1) lose electoral support.

As for Italy, in the years of the crisis the spreading out of the protest seemed to be missing. Unlike other countries, such as Spain and Greece, in Italy there was no anti-austerity mass movement, with the result that social protest remained largely fragmented (Della Porta and Mosca, 2015). Here, the electoral-party channel remains dominant, through an electoral demand and a party supply that tend to "leapfrog over" the mainstream parties.[16] In this context, the M5S transformed the potential protest that existed in the society into a useful tool to enter and change institutions from the inside.

M5S was officially founded on 14 October 2009. The main objective of the M5S was to fight against the Republican political class, regarded as deeply corrupt and intent above all on protecting their privileges. On several occasions, Beppe Grillo said: "we

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[15]   Indeed, this happened after the municipal elections in Barcelona and Madrid (2015).

[16]   This happened in the 1980s with the phenomenon of the "leagues" in the Northern regions, in the 1994 crisis with the emergence of Forza Italia, and more recently, in the 2013 election, with the success of the M5S and, in the 2018 election, also of Salvini's League.

will open up parliament like a can of tuna" (Morlino and Raniolo, 2017, p. 67). In the political elections of 2013, M5S was the most voted party (with 25,6%), but the centre-left coalition obtained the absolute majority in the Chamber of Deputies and only a relative majority in the Senate. The situation changed with the 2018 elections, when the M5S was the undoubted winner with 32,7% of the vote, though this was not enough to give it a parliamentary majority to form a one-party cabinet. After lengthy negotiations, the M5S and the League of Salvini formed a coalition government, with the signing of a written "contract" between the two parties. The policies supportEd by both parties are "distributive", but in opposite ways: The M5S holds positions close to the radical left and supports a policy of fighting against poverty, unemployment, and privileges. At the same time, the League of Salvini is more focused on the reduction of taxes, anti-immigration, and competition between regions. In 2019 a governmental crisis ended with a new coalitional cabinet between M5S and Democratic party (PD), but at the same time the change from protest party to incumbent one had been bringing about an electoral decline.

Now we come to France. The 2017 French presidential elections were held between April and May, with 11 candidates competing in the first round, none of whom achieved an absolute majority. The second round included Marine Le Pen of the Front National and the young Emmanuel Macron, who presented himself as the leader of a "personal party" expression of the French economic and institutional establishment, La République En Marche![17] and won the presidency with 66% of the votes. In the subsequent elections for the National Assembly, his party won 28,2% of the votes and 308 seats, becoming the leading party in the country. Although in his book Revolution, published in 2016, he defines himself as a leftist and a liberal, his politics can be defined as centrist with a marked technocratic profile.

About one year after the beginning of his mandate, in November 2018, Macron has been coping with a widespread social protest as a reaction to his reform policies, the movement of Gilets Jaunes. According to data from the French Ministry of the Interior, the first demonstrations mobilized over 280 thousand citizens, a number that would drop significantly in the first months of 2019 to a few thousand demonstrators on the streets of Paris. After a few months of negotiations with the government, the leaders of the movement, which was rather fragmented internally, did manage to get the French authorities to take measures to "appease social anger".[18] Notwithstanding this, the protest has been going on with more radicalized and on occasions violent expressions. For example, Paris suffered the longest uninterrupted strike of public transport in its history, from December 2019 through January 2020 (about seven weeks).

Finally, in Poland the Kaczynski twins founded Law and Justice (PiS) party, a conservative and nationalist party in 2001. After a non-flamboyant start, in the 2005 elections, PiS won 27% of the votes becoming the relative majority party and was able to have Lech Kaczynski, who died in a plane crash in 2010. at the presidency of the Republic. Ten years later, the PiS became the party dominant of the Polish political scene: in the 2015 parliamentary elections, it obtained 37,6% (and 235 seats out of the total of 460 in the Sejm and 61 in the Senate) and won the presidential election with Andrzej Duda. The success of 2015 was mainly due to broad public support for its expansive welfare programs and promises of greater economic equality. In the 2019 election, PiS

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[17]   The conspicuous financial support the new party was able to collect for the presidential elections (about 3.7 million euros) highlights the role of the economic establishment in the success of Macron and his party.

[18]   See the Breaking News of WallStreetItalia.com on the gilets jaunes.

had resounding success with 43,6% of votes.[19] Thus, PiS remains the most popular party in Poland despite a string of scandals that seemed to erode the support and cast some doubts about the possibility of retaining the parliamentary majority. However, the country's sound economic situation has allowed PiS to resort to distribution policies: "A person whose pockets are empty isn't free", Kaczynski, Poland's de facto leader, told supporters at a party convention. "We are filling these pockets, within what's possible". At the same time, the PiS presents a strongly identifying, nationalist, conservative and clerical program, contrary to gay unions, euthanasia, and the liberalization of drugs. As Garton Ash (2019, p. 180) rightly stresses, "Law and Justice ideologists talked, tellingly, about 'the redistribution of respect' and 'the redistribution of dignity'", and in doing so the party gained the support of most of the Polish society.

As Hirschman (1970) observed, exit and voice act as feedback mechanisms capable of remedying the decline in the "performance" of democratic institutions. On some occasions, this may imply introducing significant democratic innovations. In our case, the voice and loyalty, characterized by the four patterns presented at the beginning of this section, indicate an attempt by the challenging political elites (and the new protest parties) to successfully mobilize the dissatisfaction and resentment of the voters and transforming them into promises of new representation with the consequent government actions. In this sense, responsiveness increases, but at the expense of responsibility.

3. The Neo-Populist Dilemma: Redistribution vs Identity

The Great Recession has worked as a catalyst mechanism in various directions and has favoured the formation of a more open and sensitive public debate agenda in the fight against inequality issues with the emergence of different neo-populisms. A first distinction between right-wing populist parties and left-wing ones has already been established in the literature, often with the addition of the adjective "radical" (Mudde, 2016).[20] Here, however, we prefer to follow another classification that absorbs the previous one and allows us to distinguish between open or inclusive populist parties (left) and closed or exclusive populists (right).[21] Elsewhere we have already proposed this distinction based on four criteria: ideology, communication style, organization-leadership model, and social situation of reference (Morlino and Raniolo, 2017, p. 76-80).

However, the distinction between exclusionary and inclusionary populism was made by Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2013). They also use it to distinguish not only different types of parties but also two different traditions of populism in different areas of the world: the more inclusive one in Latin America and the more exclusive one in Europe, which is also more recent in its mass dimensions, i.e., since the 1990s. The two types of populism differ in the emphasis placed respectively on the "material dimension", i.e., distribution of state resources (monetary or not monetary); the "political dimension", the structure of opportunities for political participation; and on the "symbolic dimension", which "essentially alludes to setting the boundaries of 'the people' and, ex adverso, 'the elite'" (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013, p. 164).

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[19]   And 52% of seats (235 out of 460). At the Senate PiS won 48 seats out of 100. But. on the one hand, there are four independents and, on the other, the Senate has a subordinate legislative power vis-à-vis the Sejm. It may reject or amend the bills passed by the Lower Chamber, but an absolute majority of the Sejm can overrule any rejection or amendment.

[20]   Table 1 also indicates the placement of the different parties along the left-right divide.

[21]   Unlike what happens in Western Europe, the experience of the United States, Latin America, Asia and even Eastern Europe itself makes it necessary to include the parties of the radical left in the analysis of populism (Inglehart and Norris, 2016, p. 8). In the European literature of the 1990s, populism concerned far-right parties (Norris, 2005; Mudde, 2007).

An interesting aspect that is useful for our discussion is that the two types of populism, even in their geopolitical characterization, clearly reflect two different dimensions: the socio-economic one associated with the problem of equality and poverty, and the cultural and security one relating to the problem of identity. In connection to the former, we can see a leftist or inclusionary populism or, better, a revendicative populism. In connection to the latter, a rightist or exclusionary populism or an identitarian populism.[22] This distinction is only partly similar to the one made by Inglehart and Norris (2016). According to them, the positioning of parties mainly differentiates left and right populisms for the main economic issues (market, welfare, individualism). And, in any case, populist parties are exclusionary or closed parties. In our distinction, exclusionary populist or right-wing parties are mainly "entrepreneurial identities" or, if preferred, sovereigntists, nativists and communitarians. Although present, these aspects are not central to the inclusionary or leftist post-sovereign populists.

In Table 2, we have indicated in bold the identitarian populist or exclusionary parties and in standard font the revendicative or inclusionary populists. However, the attribution of empirical cases poses a classificatory problem, as neither the M5S nor the Macron movement can readily be considered to belong to one of those two categories. The République en Marche! has the unusual traits of a top-down or "president's party", with a strong technocratic and, at the same time, anti-political connotation. The M5S has an ambiguous profile, which becomes even more apparent when we switch our attention from the cultural dimension (mainly connected to the issue of immigration) to its position on socio-economic issues.[23] Both are hybrid cases, and therefore we have indicated them in italics in the table. But what is more interesting is that only in Spain, at least until 2019, is there a prevalence of inclusionary populists (Podemos and, in some features, Ciudadanos). In all other cases, identitarian and exclusionary populisms prevail.[24]

It is worth dwelling further on this distinction because it has a strong connection with the distinction between economic and social (in)equality, on the one hand, and ethnic (in)equality, on the other (Morlino et al., 2020, chapters 1 and 2). It is also related to the different perception of the economic and cultural effects of ethnic inequality (i.e., immigration), with the latter, as we have seen, becoming increasingly relevant in public perception of the democracies under scrutiny. Inglehart and Norris (2016, p. 3) already pointed out that an adequate explanation of populism must consider the interaction between two theories that emphasize economic inequality or the cultural backlash.

Moreover, our data allow us to state that while economic-social inequality carries more weight in the Mediterranean countries and France, especially after the 2008 crisis, the other one is central concerning Poland and, more generally, to all the countries in the "Visegràd group", which, besides Poland, includes the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary. As we have seen from Table 2, all the countries we analysed are affected by a crisis of the mainstream parties and the success of new protest parties. This different (populist) political offer has taken the two paths indicated above: that of identitarian populism and that of revendicative populism.

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[22]   For an original perspective on the analysis of party position, see De Sio and Weber (2014).

[23]   Citizen income, approved in 2019, should be seen as part of a distributive policy. It is, however, a selective one, as restrictions are imposed on non-citizens.

[24]   This does not mean that the positions of the inclusionary populists on economic and symbolic issues, opportunities for participation included, did not end up influencing the manifestos of the Christian-democratic and social-democratic ideological families, as well as the agenda of centrist and centre-left governments. For some reflections along these lines (see Mény, 2019, conclusions).

Where the economic crisis has weighed most profoundly, the latter prevailed, and this was a situation that characterized Southern Europe, while in the other cases the former prevailEd. In the first group of cases, the line of political conflict was characterized by the contrast between the "haves" and the "have nots" (security problem linked to economic and social inequality). In the second group, the contrast was mainly between "us and them" (a problem of identity linked to ethnic or cultural inequality). The first mainly prevails in countries where the issue of immigration and the nationalist one are central, from France with the FN to Italy with the League of Salvini, the United Kingdom with Ukip, and, although to a more limited extent, Germany with the AfD and Spain with Vox. Podemos has a more revendicative profile and in part the M5S. In Poland, especially after the 2015 elections and already before the 2019 elections, the PiS presents a distributive and identitarian profile, but with much less emphasis on immigration and higher centrality for the traditional conservative values.

As Mounk (2018) states, in all democracies the "rebellion" against multi-ethnic democracy is the basis for the success of populist (identitarian) parties and, generally, the perception of immigration is a useful indicator of voters intentions. However, "we must also consider more subtle and indirect ways in which economic anxiety and racial hostility could manifest themselves in our politics" (p. 129). The poorest or those affected by globalization and the economic crisis are not always the ones that vote for leftist populists and not always are communities that vote for right-wing populists ones where immigrants are relatively more present. Insecurity and fears play a significant role in the real situation, as does the ability of "political entrepreneurs" to mobilize such powerful emotions for electoral purposes.

The different incidence of the two components of inequality (economic and social) (Morlino et al., 2020, chapter 2) is mirrored by the type of populist offer present in the different countries. On the one hand, the protest is mobilized against the worsening of "living standards", as a consequence of growing inequalities and the risk of relative and absolute poverty. In short, there is a fear of losing material resources and social status, with Italy, Spain, and France being part of this group. This explains the success of the M5S and Podemos, and in part of Ciudadanos[25]. On the other hand, there is the fear of losing one's "lifestyle", the insecurity that comes from the dissipation of cultural heritage, and intangible and tangible assets (Reynié, 2013). This time a question of meaning and identity comes into play, which is qualified by themes about sovereignty, security, and anti-immigration. This seems to be the central aspect in Poland, but it has salience in other countries as well, such as the United Kingdom. After the Brexit, a resurgence of regional identities and a consequent much deeper conflict on those issues that are also relevant for the economic relations with the other European countries are very likely, and they will be compounded by the polarization and radicalization discussed above (see Table 1).

4. Concluding remarks

We started from the hypothesis that if there are more deep-seated dissatisfaction and stronger protest parties, there is a corresponding, adaptive institutional responsiveness, with a possible consequent improvement of social rights and lowering of inequalities. The empirical checking of this hypothesis required some intermediate steps. The growth of dissatisfaction with democracy fuels social and political protest, which among other things reinforces the polarization of the party system, also within society. This paves the

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[25]   For the Latin American cases see Kapszewski, Levitsky and Yashar (2021).

way to the success of new parties able to mobilize voter resentment. In three cases (Italy, Spain, and France) this hypothesis appears solidly empirically supportEd.[26]

Building on these results we developed the distinction between revendicative populist parties and identitarian ones. This dichotomy reflected the taxonomy between inclusive and exclusive parties.[27] In general, this dichotomy reflects two of the main explanations of the populist phenomenon. First, the economic explanation, whereby populism is the outcome of the cleavage between insiders and outsiders, brought about by the transformations of the international division of labour, of globalization, of the consequent growth of economic and social inequality, of the processes of "expulsions" of an increasingly predatory market economy (Sassen, 2016). Second, there are the cultural explanations, which put in the foreground the reactions to the processes of social and cultural hyper-fragmentation, to the anguish produced by the loss of reference to shared normative criteria (Germani,1982), to the fear —often more perceived and imagined than real— of the "other", of minorities (e. g. LGBT, poor, other marginal groups) or immigrants.

On this distinction have insisted several authors, such as Norris and Inglehart, Reynié, Mounk. The theme, however, has more distant roots in time. For example, the work of Harold Lasswell, who stressed how political phenomena are always the interdependent result of multiple factors, can be recallEd. To the two conditioning factors, which are the dynamics of economic production and technological revolutions (today, the digitalization) and of cultural production and manipulation, Lasswell and Kaplan (1950) add the allocation of the means of violence, connected to the security and the increasing uncertainty due mainly to the transformations of the international order (Germani, 1982; Parsi, 2018; Panebianco, 2021). Domestic and international political factors tend to weld together with culturalist explanations, especially in the ideologies of populist identitarian parties and movements with the demand for safety, with the closures, expulsion practice, and re-confinement of States even through coercive forms, which dismiss human rights (for migration the migration see D'Agostino and Raniolo, 2021).

Moreover, the distinction between revendicative or inclusive populism and identitarian or exclusive populism can be enriched by the "operational definition" suggested by Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2013; and see above). They identified three empirical dimensions related to inclusion/exclusion: the material dimension, with the beneficiaries of distributive policies, public services and welfare, the political dimension, with reference to opening or closing the structure of participation to groups and minorities, and the symbolic dimension characterized by tolerance and the definition of the "other". These analytical dimensions clearly mirror the distinction made by Lasswell (economic, symbolic and political factors).

In this vein, the obvious conclusion is that revendicative and redistributive leaders and parties and leaders are more likely to be successful in the economically weaker

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[26]   In Poland, post-transition economic developments and a democracy where equality is gaining priority (see Morlino et al., 2020, chapter 4) feed an "identitarian populism". At the same time, in Germany and the United Kingdom the mainstream parties are resisting, even if challenged by "bilateral" political protest (as in Germany) or by social discontent (as in the United Kingdom with the Brexit).

[27]   This typology is directly linked to the theme of the quality of democracy (see below). Other classifications are possible when focusing on organizational aspects or on strategic ones. For example, the distinction between "parties (populists) with leaders" and "leaders with parties", which differentiates Podemos and Syriza from M5S until the 2018 elections (Morlino and Raniolo, 1917); or between digital parties (or platform) characterized by disruptive Innovation, such as M5S and Pirates, or sustaining innovation, Podemos or France Insoumise (Raniolo and Tarditi, 2021).

countries and where the fiscal crisis of the State is stronger. But, as mentioned above, the cost of such a success is the political irresponsibility that may bring the democratic regime to bankruptcy if some constraints, such as the rules of the European Union for the European countries, are not carried out. Thus, these patterns of "voice" push our democracies, on the one hand, towards protest democracies, which feed a constant tension between responsibility and responsibility (Mair, 2009) in search of equality, and irresponsible democracies, which try to promote the welfare of the groups that hold it and end up fueling the equally high tension between responsibility and a governability that compresses and limits basic freedom (Morlino et al., 2020, chapter 8).

Before concluding this analysis an obvious question, which has been behind this entire piece, concerns the development of populism in Latin America. In those countries will we see the alternative between revendicative populisms and identitarian ones complemented by the alternative between protest democracies and irresponsible democracies? It is well known that the rich and diversified experience of Latin America with populism dates to much earlier (say, since the 1940s) than the European one, and has often fostered the development of inclusive populist parties and radical leaders, aimed at attenuating the oligarchic and plutocratic character of Latin American political regimes. And there is a rich and well-known literature on populisms in that area on those aspects (see, e.g., De la Torre, 2015 and 2017; Di Tella, 2017; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2014). Thus, alongside the identitarian populism, a revendicative and redistributive populism has been already present in Latin America and similarities can be recalled with reference to Southern European cases, such as the M5S, Podemos and Syriza. But what about the perspective of protest democracies and irresponsible democracies? Actually, this is still to be seen in the future although, for example, the impact of the pandemic in the countries of Cono Sur such as Argentina and Brazil might push those democracies in those directions, whereas the result of presidential elections in Chile (2021) can already point to some possible result of a protest democracy.

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