

# Populism in Latin America and in the European Union: Two Sides of the Same Coin?

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## Abstract

Populism is usually seen in an ambivalent perspective, as it is conceived both as a threat for the representative democracy and as an opportunity for the renewal of the democratic institutions. This essay intends to show the evolution of the populist phenomenon in Latin America, since its initial phase in the 30s of the 20th century until the neo-populist or even postpopulist conjuncture, and the populist dynamics occurring in the European Union. It will be a comparative study, because a comparison helps to understand one reality vis-a-vis another through similarities and differences. The interrogation in the title points to the starting point of this research: is there continuity or influence between the populist realities in the two continental blocks?

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**Index terms**— Populim, Neo-Populism, Latin America, European Union.  
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tendencies” and the third approach ”is to argue that there are common features to populism”. I define Populism as a way of articulation of the discourse conveying a fight for hegemony. Unlike the fight by the mainstream political parties, it provokes an antagonism between two collective bodies conceived as homogeneous: the people and the elite. It is a deeply entrenched antagonism that does not accept intermediaries, because the populist leader considers only himself in conditions to decipher the will of the people.

All the demonstrations against the leader’s will are severely punished, as Federico Mello proved in what concerns Movimento 5 Stelle (M5S) because Beppe Grillo kicked out several members

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understanding does not accept Dahrendorf’s statement (2007) who did not respect his advice not to participate in television debates.

This presence of the leader is not direct democracy but a sort of referendum democracy as we can conclude from the official sites of some populist parties. There is never a real discussion that precedes a decision. Lanzone and Morini (2017) denounced that ”the question of internal democracy has become evident in Autumn 2012 with the complain made by Giovanni Favia, a leading M5S politician in Emilia-Romagna, on the absence of debate and the role played by Grillo and Casaleggi”. The party usually proposes the approval of a decision. It is a democracy of consent using the computer keyboard as a tool.

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Perhaps the exposition helps to explain the reasons for the choice of our heading. It is not difficult to justify the thematic. Indeed, according to Simón Pachano and Manuel Anselmi (2017, p.3), the populist experience in Latin America ”is gradually fading”, giving way to a new neoliberal wave, putting aside what was thought as a ” twenty-first socialism”, but that did not last ”more than a decade and has undergone degeneration made of clientelism, personalism, corruption and instability”. However, it is not less real that Populism is simple, and that

43 democracy is complex. Neither the former nor the latter are simple. This presumes Woods' view that Populism  
44 is still looking for its model, even though there is abundant literature about this evasive phenomenon.

### 45 2 I. Introduction

46 he title of the essay requires a double justification. As a matter of fact, in spite of the European Union representing  
47 a strong base of regional integration since the Treaty of Rome of 1957, the actual designation is recent, because  
48 it only started to be used from the 1 st November 1993. Hence, rather than Populism one must speak of Neo-  
49 Populism, since the most relevant populist experiences, the Populism of the first phase, go back to 30s and 40s  
50 of the last century.

51 This dating is relevant for Latin America and Europe, even though in the case of Europe the designation  
52 Populism appeared in the Czarist Russia of the 19 th century, with Herzen as its originator. It was studied by  
53 Frank Venturi in his book *Roots of Revolution* that carried a systematizing preface by Isaiah Berlin.

54 Moreover, the option of putting the word "Populism" in the singular may be insufficient to convey fully a  
55 phenomenon that, in its concept and practice, is far from homogeneous. Populism can be seen both as "an  
56 ideology (Laclau 1977;Mudde 2004), style of politics (Knight 1998), specific discourse (Hawkins 2009) or the  
57 political strategy (Weyland 2001)" ??Pappas, 2014, pp. 2-3). However, the comparative study of Populism in a  
58 country at two distinct moments of time, or in different countries simultaneously, permits to understand that,  
59 despite the specificities, there is something that can be considered as the essence of Populism. According to  
60 ??aggart (2004, pp. 271-273), "the study of populism has been characterised by three

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69 another through similarities and differences. The interrogation in the title points to the starting point of this  
70 research: is there continuity or influence between the populist realities in the two continental blocks? than a  
71 "legacy the Latin American neo-populist experiences [...] outside the Latin America" can be identified. Or, one  
72 must inquire if this legacy, as cited by the above authors, is characteristic of some cases in the European Union,  
73 like Podemos in Spain. If this influence is real we need to understand not only what brings closer or moves away  
74 Populism in Latin America and in the European Union, but also the reason why a model that did not succeed  
75 in American lands got followers on the other side of the Atlantic.

## 76 4 II. The Populism of the First Phase in

77 Latin America

78 The analysis of Populism, whatever its definition, implies four issues: the reasons for the emergence of  
79 Populism, that is, the description of the initial conjuncture, the cause of its increased intensity, the way a  
80 populist party conquers the power, and how the populist agent acts once it reaches the political hegemony.

81 In what concerns the first issue, Laclau (2015, p. 207) considers that there are two necessary conditions for  
82 the emergence of Populism: a particularly serious crisis in the block of power that allows a part of it to intend  
83 to establish its own hegemony through the mobilization of the masses, and a crisis of the transformism.

84 In Latin America, from the 30s of the 20 th century, the two previously identified conditions came together  
85 and, therefore, the populist phenomenon spread, even when countries presented different characteristics. For  
86 example, Brazil still faced interregional problems, while Argentina had already overcome that phase due to the  
87 federalization of Buenos Aires in 1880.

88 According to Ignacio ??alter (2008, p. 2), "the period between the 1930s and the 1940s that saw the emergence  
89 of populism in Latin America, corresponds to an authoritarian wave, characterized by negative attitudes towards  
90 liberal-democratic institutions and liberal capitalism". Indeed the world crisis of 1929 modified the status quo  
91 that assigned the hegemony to the elite or a landowner oligarchy.

92 Thus, the option for a political economy that valued the import substitution industrialization led to conflicts  
93 of interests between the great landowners and the industrial sector, and to the change of the effective situation  
94 of articulation between liberalism and democracy as compatible, because, according to Laclau (2015, p. 219),  
95 the democratic mass demands and the symbols that represented them were increasingly less acceptable to the  
96 liberal regime.

97 The Populism spread across Latin America from the 30s of the 20 th century, favoured by the great depression,  
98 but in reality the economic and social structure of the subcontinent was mainly responsible. Therefore, in the  
99 case of Brazil, António Carlos' slogan became popular: "let us make the revolution before the people make it".

100 If the so-called revolution served the interests of the people or of a part of the elite, it is a matter for discussion  
101 with several readings, as Alan ??night (1994, p. 78) wrote about Mexican cardenism, a populist regime that

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102 nationalized the oil in 1938 and proceeded to an agrarian reform according to the model of the ancient ejidos,  
103 small communal properties that could benefit of a specific credit facility. Indeed, "there were Cardenistas who  
104 believed that «their» regime was the only one which delivered the goods to the people, literally and figuratively"  
105 while revolutionary veterans "reversed this picture and branded Cardenas as a traitor to the Revolution". Knight  
106 had no doubt that Cardenas regime "was more jalopy than juggernaut" (p. 79). An evaluation that is not in  
107 favour of a leader who assumed "an autocratic role, «amo y señor de México», less of St. Francis than a wily  
108 Machiavellian fox (or worse, un zorro com sayal franciscano" (p. 76). The perfect art of concealment. The ability  
109 to hide the force and the craftiness, but to use both whenever necessary.

110 In what concerns the second aspect, or the increase of Populism, Yascha Mounk pointed out three reasons for  
111 this increment: the stagnation of the standard of living of the common people or the middle class, the slow change  
112 of countries that ceased to be monocultural and monoethnic and turned into multiethnic and multicultural, and  
113 a deep division between flourishing urban areas and agricultural or deindustrialized areas that had lost influence.  
114 Such were the areas where, for example, Marine Le Pen counts on a broad supporting social basis.

115 There are few doubts that the middle class has usually been the preferential victim of the politics of the  
116 parties in power. It is enough to watch where the tax burden falls when the public safes are almost empty. In  
117 the same way, the times of crisis become propitious for the revolt against the presence of the immigrant, seen as  
118 the usurper of jobs, and deemed responsible for growing insecurity, a fertile ground to feed Populism.

119 As for the way the populists gain power, in the initial conjuncture, Octavio ??anni (1991, pp. 121-122)  
120 evidenced that there is no typical way of conquest by the populist forces. A situation already verified when  
121 Maquiavel presented the diverse ways of somebody becoming a prince.

122 In fact, in Latin America, while Lazarus Cárdenas in 1934, Juan Perón in 1946, 1951 and 1973, after the  
123 military coup that had dismissed him in 1955, had gained power through electoral processes, in the institutional  
124 frame of the representative democracy, Getúlio Vargas did it in 1951, after reaching it through a coup d'etat  
125 in 1937, and Velasco Ibarra led Equador five times, between 1934 and 1972, using both these processes. This  
126 without counting that João Goulart became President after the resignation of Jânio Quadros, supported by a  
127 social movement, Victor Estensoro ruled Bolivia after a revolution by the Revolutionary Nationalistic Movement,  
128 and Fidel Castro was the guerrilla leader who, on the second attempt, knocked down Fulgêncio Batista, in 1959.

129 The examples pointed by Octavio Ianni had also been verified in Europe. It seems sufficient to remember  
130 that Mussolini was nominated First-Minister as a consequence of the march on Rome in 1922, and Hitler gained  
131 power by vote, though after attempting a coup d'etat. Both Fascism and Nazism have their own characteristics,  
132 but share in common the Populism. Like the Sovietism that used the Communist Party as the vanguard of the  
133 people.

134 Three regimes based on the antagonism and without any repulse in what concerns the invention of scapegoats.  
135 This justifies our use of the term "Populism" in the singular.

136 Populist regimes with exception of Peronism and of Sovietism, did not survive the disappearance of their  
137 charismatic leader. According to ??aclau (2015, p. 223), in the case of Peronism, its roots in the factory workers  
138 allowed it to spread its influence into the middle class that had been radicalized in the last two decades as a  
139 result of the contradictions created by the expansion of the monopolistic capital.

140 As Philippe Raynaud (2017, p. 12) states, Perón represents an ambiguity because he was an extremeright  
141 military officer, an admirer of Mussolini and Hitler, and ruled in a totally arbitrary way without any regard for  
142 the law. However, thanks to his economic and foreign policies, he won sympathies of the left and even of the  
143 extreme left. Perón had understood the importance of the trade unions because, as Capelato (2013, p. 145) tells  
144 us, the number of factory workers doubled between 1935 and 1946. Similarly, it was the case of the trade unions,  
145 which in 1943 represented 20% of the urban workers. In 1948, the unionization reached 30.5%, and 42% in 1954.  
146 So, between 1946 and 1951, the number of union members grew from 520 000 to 2 334 000.

147 That was the reason of Peronism returning to power and a kind of dynastic succession through Isabelita Perón.  
148 A return was a complete failure. As Laclau (2015, p. 224) recognized, the efforts to put back the History clock  
149 failed. It was unable to articulate popular-democratic ideology in a way that the bourgeoisie could assimilate.

150 Instead, the Peronism resorted to a repressive chaos without attempting any form of stable articulation between  
151 popular demands and bourgeois ideology. As Chico Buarque sang in Brazil: nobody returns to what does not  
152 exist anymore.

153 As regard the Sovietism, its continuity was the result of conceiving the party as vanguard of the people. Such  
154 a single or hegemonic party was not the experience of Getúlio Vargas since the forces that supported him were  
155 organized in two parties. Laclau (2015, p. 225) defends that Vargas was supported by the Partido Socialista  
156 Democrático that joined the conservative forces of the coalition, and by the Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro, based  
157 on urban sectors, mainly factory workers, intending through them, to develop a populist jacobinism. With such  
158 a mix of contradictory forces Vargas was never the leader of a unified and homogenous movement.

159 Concerning the importance of a party we must say that the cardenism opted for the constitution of social  
160 organizations outside the party, aiming at centralizing in the executive power every decisive element. It did  
161 not use the Revolutionary National Party, established by Plutarco Calles in 1929 to institutionalize the Mexican  
162 revolution. It was the Government that effectively programmed everything to do with the industrial revolution or  
163 the agrarian reform. Capelato (2013, p. 158) considers that it was only in 1946, after the end of the government  
164 of Cardenas, with the creation of the Institutional Revolutionary Party, that an elite of politicians would become

165 entrepreneurs through the state management and it started to dominate the social organizations. A change of  
166 masters.

### 167 5 III. The Failure of the First Populist Experience in Latin 168 America

169 This first populist wave in Latin America lasted a long time, but it did not create conditions for its continuity.  
170 Errors of planning and execution, patronage due to social Populism, and personalization and abuse of power  
171 would be sufficient to pull down the populist construction. The adhesion or sympathy for ideas connected with  
172 the left, in a conjuncture that partially coincided with the cold war, hastened this process.

173 After all, Latin America is a close neighbour of one of the two superpowers that controlled the World, and for  
174 the United States of America the Soviet influence in Havana was serious enough. In Cuba the Populism imitated,  
175 and even exceeded the Sovietism benefiting from its support for a longer time.

176 In this initial phase of Latin American Populism, History demonstrated the importance of the military in  
177 the subcontinent, and that the elites have many lives. In Brazil, João Goulart, like Vargas, did not count on  
178 urban social bases due to the low industrialization. He was overthrown by the military coup d'etat on the 1  
179 st April of 1964. Populism gave way to the military dictatorship that ruled the country with Constitutional  
180 Acts, before promoting the transition to democracy that would allow the populist return. Populism did not exist  
181 during the mandates of Humberto Castelo Branco, Artur da Costa e Silva, Emilio Médici, Ernesto Geisel and  
182 João Figueiredo, because, as Canovan says, Populism follows democracy as a shadow, while the authoritarianism  
183 tramples any shadow.

184 In Argentina, General Jorge Videla put down Isabelita Perón through the military coup of 24 th March of  
185 1976 and led the country into a five year long dictatorship, before being replaced by Robert Viola, his military  
186 chief. Videla has a record of two convictions to life imprisonment, in 1985 and 2010, respectively.

187 In Paraguay, General Alfredo Stroessner staged a coup d'etat in 1954 and through manipulated elections, ruled  
188 during seven consecutive mandates, until being knocked out by another military coup in 1989. However, in the  
189 case of Paraguay it will be more correct to speak of Populism after 1908.

190 In what concerns Mexico, the measures adopted by Cardenas would be reverted by his successors: Ávila  
191 Camacho (1940-1941) (1942-1943) (1944) (1945) (1946), Miguel Alemán (1946-1947) (1948-  
192 1949) (1950-1951) (1952) and Adolph Ruiz Cortines (1952-1953) (1954-1955) (1956-1957)  
193 (1958). The revolution was not institutionalized. The interests of the erstwhile big landowners and of the recent  
194 industrial entrepreneurs became compatible at the expense of the workers' rights. The triumph of a neoliberalism  
195 avant la lettre.

196 However, if the elite is like a Phoenix, also Populism saw a second life in Latin America, the Neo-Populism,  
197 that, according to Walter (2008, p. 2) appeared "in this third and unprecedented wave of democratization in  
198 Latin America and around the world". Between Populism and Neo-Populism, as mentioned in the previous  
199 paragraphs, the military sought to leave the authoritarian mark.

## 200 6 IV. Neo-Populism: old Wine in New Bottles

201 Vélez-Rodríguez (2001) defines Neo-Populism as a political style of wide ideological spectrum and lists its twelve  
202 characteristics: soteriology or incarnation in the figure of the savior of the people, personalism, demagoguery,  
203 seduction, plea, direct action, popular image, wide phenotype, denunciation, antipolitical feature, anti-elitism  
204 and nationalism. These characteristics could be grouped into just one single category, a discourse form of  
205 fighting for the hegemony. However, the inclusion of the nationalistic element represents a newness, which makes  
206 Populism and Nationalism represent different concepts, though Walter (2008, p.2), referring to the previous wave  
207 of Latin American Populism, defends that it was a popular and national phenomenon. Popular "in terms of its  
208 antioligarchic component", and national "in terms of its antiimperialism", because rejecting "foreign control of  
209 natural resources and national economies".

210 In the case of the European Union, it does not seem abusive to attribute that inclusion to the fact of the  
211 financial crisis and the conflicts, some of which by proxy, have originated hordes of immigrants and refugees,  
212 a circumstance that allowed the populist parties to discover an enormous potential to attack the governmental  
213 elite. Hence the use of flags, which were initially raised on behalf of other interests. The context dictated the  
214 adaptation. On this issue we may refer to Mény and Surel's study about the people and its three levels: the  
215 people-class, the people-sovereign and the people-nation. The latter is the one that seems more sensitive to the  
216 populist appeal.

217 In South America, Vélez identifies some faces of the neopopulism: the Kirschner couple in Argentina, Hugo  
218 Chavez in Venezuela, Correa in the Equator, Evo Morales in Bolivia, the bishop Lugo in Paraguay, when a  
219 populist coalition Populist won the 2008 elections and took power out of the Party Colorado, and Lula da Silva  
220 in Brazil.

221 Larry Diamond (2015, p. 147) and Kenneth Roberts (1995) complete this list. Diamond agrees that "Hugo  
222 Chávez (1999-2013) gradually suffocated democratic pluralism during the first decade of this century" and he  
223 defends that "after Daniel Ortega returned to the presidency in Nicaragua in 2007, he borrowed many pages from

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224 Chávez's authoritarian playbook". Roberts considers that "the leadership of Alberto Fujimori in Peru suggests  
225 that new forms of populism may be emerging despite the fiscal constraints of neoliberal austerity".

226 In the cases of Venezuela and Brazil, Vélez's list could also include the successors, Maduro and Dilma, although  
227 one needs to take into account the warning of Pachano & Anselmi (2017, p. 3) about "a post-populistic condition,  
228 in which the disappearance of a populist leader leaves, on one hand, a strongly shaped institutional political  
229 system imprinted on personalist leadership, and on the other, a highly polarized society, where the possibility of  
230 a democratic dialogue between the opposition and the government is almost completely deleted".

231 A more intense Post-Populism surged in Venezuela due to Chavez's physical disappearance, despite Maduro's  
232 attempt to invoke the continuation of Chavez's presence and the influence of the erstwhile leader, than in Brazil,  
233 where Dilma, although re-elected, has often been seen as a creation of the lulism. A hiatus until Lula da Silva  
234 comes back to the Presidency. It is an assumed intention, but the problems with Justice and the destitution of  
235 Dilma Rousseff during the second mandate are making such a come-back difficult.

236 Will Lula da Silva obtain, as it happened in the re-election that many analysts considered impossible  
237 accordance with the polls the dispute would be between Alckmin and Jose Serra -a social base of support to  
238 put him again in Planalto Palace? The answer is not easy, even considering that the re-election of Lula had  
239 been preceded by the Mensalão. However, in the next presidential election it is not sure if the subproletariat -a  
240 creation of Paul Singer in the 80s to identify the voters of very low income -remains faithful to Lula, their late  
241 option of vote. In other words: after the generalized corruption -Mensalão and Lava-jato are examples -could  
242 there be a space for a direct intervention and ubiquity of the State, without confronting the interests of the  
243 capital?

244 According to Pachano & Anselmi (2017, pp. 3-4) "the Latin American neo-populist experience to date" has  
245 been an "attempt to replace the classical liberal democracy with a model of plebiscitary democracy" of a "socialist  
246 and participatory" nature, implying "direct relationship between the president and the people, and where the  
247 intermediate bodies and pluralist dialogue between the parties are almost excluded".

248 The leader appears as the only person who can understand the will of the people. A leader who, in a first  
249 moment, "allowed the political and social inclusion of large sectors of the population which were excluded". Then,  
250 "with the phase of institutionalization" Neo-Populism "caused an impact on the structures of liberal democracy".  
251 Finally, "a phase of disillusionment and political realism" did not take too long to emerge.

252 The multidimensional crisis that Venezuela actually lives constitutes an example of this evolution and a mirror  
253 of disillusion. A frustration that with the decline in oil prices became undisguised and appeared in Bolivia of  
254 Morales, leading Dahrendorf to affirm that the revolutions create as many problems as they solve.

255 At this point it is apposite to cite César Rojas Rios (2014, p. 97), who, after pointing to Morales' positive  
256 points, identified the menace of the negative ones, covering four new problems: "the quality drop in democracy,  
257 the imbalance in the quality of governance, deterioration in institutional quality, and the mediocrity of the quality  
258 of society".

259 In the 30s, Populism appeared mainly due to economic crisis and the impossibility to continue the distribution  
260 of subsidized benefits that allowed to replicate the Roman bread and circus. In the 21 st century, the financial  
261 crisis and the strong decline in oil prices have placed the Venezuelan government before the same deadlock.

262 What had been the main factor for the emergence of Populism changed into the basic element for the  
263 disintegration of Neo-Populism. Meanwhile, the patronage, the corruption and the bad management of the  
264 *res publica* did not fail to fulfill the role that the system attributed to them.

265 That helped Macri's victory in Argentina, marking a return to the power of the most conservative forces.  
266 The *Ola rosa* that had allowed the triumph of the left Neo-Populism started to faint. This Neo-Populism, in  
267 the Argentine case, was object of disparate evaluations. Peruzzotti (2017, p. 48), who cites two Argentine  
268 scholars who studied the phenomenon, namely Ernesto Laclau and O'Donnell, shows that they totally differ  
269 in the evaluation of the twelve years under Kirchner's leadership, because, while Laclau "sees kirchnerism as a  
270 deepening democratic experience", O'Donnell considers it "as an illustration of a defective version of polyarchy".  
271 Concerning this evaluation, Chantal Mouffe (2015) 3 V. The Populist Reality in the European Union agrees with  
272 Laclau's opinion. She considers that kirchnerism is a source of inspiration.

273 These are the reasons for the decline of Neo-Populism in Latin America. All Populism, while it fights for the  
274 hegemony, has economic base and drives with an executive centralism that almost ignores the participation of  
275 the institutions. The State is seen as a factor of enrichment of the new elite and it is sustained through a wild  
276 distribution of benefits. In the initial phase, when the money is plentiful, the common people are not ignored.  
277 The bill of the messianism comes for payment later. It is a behaviour that the dictatorial systems also practise.  
278 In Bolivia, before Evo Morales' Populism, "the military dictatorships, and especially the first government of Hugo  
279 Banzer (1971) (1972) (1973) (1974) (1975) (1976) (1977) (1978)", distributed thousands of hectares  
280 of land in eastern Bolivia through fraudulent means, free of charge, and mainly as payment for political support"  
281 Colque, 2014, p. 178).

282 The Neo-Populism is a centralism with no place for what Enrique Peruzzotti and Catalina Smulovit (2000,  
283 2002) call social accountability. The centralized power does not appreciate the monitoring of its actions. It is in  
284 keeping with the synthesis of Adriano Moreira (2001, p. 153): the power is accustomed to hearing «yes» and it  
285 resents hearing «no», because "from the point of view of Political Science", the law is more an instrument of the  
286 Power than its limitation.

287 And how has Populism and its dynamics developed in the European Union? In first place, after fifty million  
288 died in the Second World War, Western Europe realized false messianisms were not an assumed option in the  
289 West, and the phenomena, such as poujadism, that gave rise to the French National Front, became rare and  
290 socially little recommended.

291 Meanwhile, the European world view became dysfunctional, and the West Europe began to be rebuilt thanks  
292 to the Marshall Plan and the early forms of regional cooperation and integration, Populism was becoming more  
293 visible, though not presented as such. It corroborates the idea that Populism follows democracy as a shadow. It  
294 is not democracy's bastard, but a twin that is able to take advantage of the right moment.

295 Grossman and Saurugger (2006, pp. 85-86) consider that the fear of capture is an old fear, and the State  
296 is consequently afraid that the interest groups succeed in capturing a sector of public politics. The mainstream  
297 parties which consider themselves as the agents of democracy, resort to a blind inbreeding and they fail to  
298 understand that Populism is more than an epiphenomenon.

299 It is important to note that the recent elections in Germany and Czech Republic showed a strong increase  
300 In two of these countries -Hungary and Poland -the fall of the Berlin wall was followed by the opening up to  
301 democracy, but the new order was replaced by a disorder. In Greece, the end of the military dictatorship allowed  
302 a return to democracy, but the bad performance of the parties that ruled the country became a fertile ground  
303 for Populism.

304 In the remaining countries the growth of Populism was weaker, in spite of the increasing trends in Denmark  
305 -from 12,5% to 28,9%, in Italy -from 19,5% to 33,7%, in Spain -from 5,6% to 21,2%, in Bulgaria from 1,4% to  
306 17,5%, in Finland -from 2,1% to 18,2%, in Sweden -from 0,4% to 12,9%, in the United Kingdom from 0,8% to  
307 12,6%, and in Portugal -from 12,2% to 20,5%. 4 They are four after the 2017 Parliamentary Election in Czech  
308 Republic. 5 Andreas Heinö explains that «to measure influence two indicators are used. Firstly, the total amount  
309 of mandates. The index shows how many mandates are held each year by representatives of authoritarian parties.  
310 [...]The second indicator is participation in a government».

311 of Populism. In Germany, a new right populist party -Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) -founded in 2013, got  
312 12,9% of the votes and entered into the National Parliament -Bundestag -where it has won 94 seats. It was the  
313 first time, after 1945, that an extreme right party won seats in the German Parliament. In Czech Republic, Action  
314 of Dissatisfied Citizens (ANO), also a recent right populist party, overpowered the Czech Republic's mainstream  
315 parties.

316 On the other hand, there was a decrease of Populism in eight countries, but only in two cases the descent  
317 was striking: In Slovakia -from 40,2% to 17,2% and in France -from 32,1% to 21,7%, even if the French electoral  
318 system -two round system -makes it possible to hide in the electoral results the manifestations of Populism present  
319 in everyday life.

320 All the other expressions of decrease had been almost residual: Cyprus -from 33% to 29,4%, Austria from  
321 27,4% to 25%, Romania -from 21,9% to 15,3%, Belgium -from 11,4% to 7,4%, Slovenia -from 4,4% to 2,2% and  
322 Luxemburg -from 3,3% to 1,6%.

323 As the Populism and the Latin American Neo-Populism are almost entirely the responsibility of the left, even  
324 if a careful analysis also reveals the existence of elements of the right, it may be interesting to know if the  
325 same happens in the European Union. That could permit testing the hypothesis of an influence or ideological  
326 continuity between the two realities.

327 It is a controversial issue because there are populist parties, like Podemos and Syriza, which do not accept the  
328 traditional division between left and right, considering it necessary to draw a new borderline.

329 This happens perhaps because of the mix in the populist parties' programs of elements from the left and  
330 the right. Indeed, it is possible to agree with the left on ecological issues or on issues of work insecurity, while  
331 supporting the ideas of the right concerning immigration or the decrease of taxes paid by the companies.

332 In the European Union, the use of the Index of Authoritarian Populism as a source shows the left and right  
333 Populism in twenty-seven countries, excluding Malta. One of them, Belgium, evidences a tie between right and  
334 left Populism. In the remaining twenty-six countries, the right Populism is dominant in fifteen: Hungary, Poland,  
335 Denmark, Austria, France, Finland, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Latvia, Sweden, the United Kingdom, Netherlands,  
336 Lithuania, Estonia and Slovenia; while the left Populism imposes itself in eleven: Greece, Italy, Cyprus, Spain,  
337 Czech Republic 6 Volume XVII Issue IV Version I That is why the populist parties won the elections in three  
338 countries 4 of the European Union and we see an increasing visibility, as the Index of Authoritarian Populism  
339 elaborated by Andreas Heinö of the Timbro Foundation shows 5 . Indeed, by entering in the zone of the  
340 Neo-Populism and by comparing the data collected in 2000 with those of 2016, we can verify that the number of  
341 countries where the rate of Populism tax rose -twenty-two -, noting that the increase was much higher in Hungary  
342 -from 9,6% to 66,4%, in Greece -from 9,3% to 57%, and in Poland -from 0,1% to 46,4%, that is, in three countries  
343 whose governments are presently led by populist parties -FIDESZ, SYRIZA and PiS.

344 Assuming that in some States the predominance of one side of the spectrum does not invalidate the existence of  
345 Populism of contrary ideological drive, one can safely say that, contrary to what it is occurring in Latin America,  
346 the right-wing Populism predominates in the European Union.

347 However, the predominance of the right-wing Populism does not mean the inexistence of populist parties in  
348 the European Union that resemble the Latin American populisms. In the political discourse of the European left-  
349 wing Populism there is sympathy for the way of governing of some American populist leaders. The same happens

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350 with the rightist declarations of Marine Le Pen, Nigel Farage or Geert Wilders concerning Donal Trump. This  
351 can be a matter for subsequent research, because U.S.A., despite the increasing number of Hispanic population,  
352 does not belong to Latin America.

353 For the moment, it may be relevant to point out that Donald Trump's populist discourse was against the elite,  
354 and Hillary Clinton failed to show to the electorate that Donald Trump belonged to the elite as well.

355 Coming back to the left Populism, the sympathy that the Spanish Podemos and the Greek Syriza reveal  
356 for some manifestations of the Latin American Neo-Populism is connected with their adoption of the doctrinal  
357 post-gramscian line, even when the intellectual formation of the actual leaders cannot be compared to that of  
358 the past leaders. The university replaced the school of life.

359 On this doctrinal sharing we can say that the problems start when a populist party gains power. When Syriza's  
360 delegation was presented at the 10 th Convention of a populist party which supports the present Portuguese  
361 Government, namely the Left Block, in 2016, it was booed, while in the previous meetings it had been warmly  
362 received.

363 Besides, Muller (2017) 7 affirms that the idea of a progressive populism is mainly an American phenomenon.  
364 According to Baquero (2010) 8 , it results from the lack of confidence in the political institutions responsible  
365 for keeping the social contract. It applies also to the European Union as the regional integration imposes a  
366 sovereignty of service to the members, i.e., gives the community and the supranational institutions the possibility  
367 of taking decisions which belonged to the national organs. It is a change that is not acceptable to Populim and  
368 it allows the populist discourse an increasing media power.

369 Therefore, failures are justified not by one's wrong performance, but by internal and external boycott. The  
370 caste and its external allies are perceived saboteurs of the political action of the masses.

371 In what concerns the appreciation by some European communist parties, such as the Portuguese Communist  
372 Party (PCP), of the Populism in Cuba and in Venezuela, it reveals that these parties have not felt, at ideological  
373 level, the URSS implosion. The new orthodoxy manifests the same behaviour of old orthodoxy, in keeping with  
374 what Gramsci wrote in a letter to the Comunist Party of the URSS, denouncing the repression of the soviet  
375 regime against the left opposition.

376 The 15th Congress of the PCP witnessed 59 foreign delegations, including the Communist Party of Cuba, and  
377 27 organizations sent greetings, including the Communist Party of Venezuela. For these totalitarian populist  
378 parties the appeal to the unity of the whole world proletarians is still relevant. This is a call that has not yet  
379 brought fruits for Populism, despite the existence of two clear populist groups in the European Parliament and  
380 the strong relationship among their leaderships.

381 We can also see that, despite the enormous potentialities of the Internet for an almost unlimited communication,  
382 the populist leaders, both in Latin America and in the European Union, prefer the monologue of their master's  
383 voice.

## 384 7 VI. Conclusion

385 It is the same coin with two sides. Populism does not represent an ideology, but it admits ideological influences  
386 from the left and the right. That explains why some populist parties in Europe, including their prominent  
387 political leaders and analysts do not hide their sympathies for some populist models tried in other regions with  
388 ambivalent results.

389 In the colonial times, different metropolises adopted different approaches to their political motivations and  
390 strategic visions. It was the civilization for the English, the lights for the French and the religion and the pepper  
391 for the Portuguese.

392 Héctor ??eis (2008, p. 35) defends that the South American populist leaderships adopted a caudillesco profile  
393 borrowed from the Iberian tradition and the influence of the fascisms (Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and German).  
394 This study confirms this reality, but it would not be correct to brand all four regimes univocally under fascism. A  
395 profile that helps to understand the mobilizing potential of a leader who appeals to people's feelings and emotions.

396 In the year that marks the centenary of Roberto Campos it seems timely to recall his vision focused upon  
397 two dangerous personalities for the consolidation of the democracy in Latin America, namely that of the I had  
398 questioned in the Introduction the title of my essay. At the end of this article I hope to have shown that despite  
399 the temporal or regional specificities of Populism, it can retain its singular form, without the need of being  
400 referred in plural. Moreover, the plurality represents a threat for a form of articulation of the discourse that, in  
401 its fight for the hegemony, tends to impose a single vision. demagogue and that of the extremist. Granted that  
402 Populism is democracy's twin brother and that demagogy was the Greek term for Populism, it does not seem  
403 abusive to say that, in our times, there are many situations in which the demagogue and the extremist trend to  
404 merge themselves in the same person: the populist leader. If it is the lion that disguises the fox or if it is the fox  
405 that hides the lion, it makes little difference.

406 The reality extends beyond Latin America as demonstrated in this study. To get back yet once again to the  
407 significance of our title of this study, particularly in a context of opinions claiming that the European Union can  
408 only succeed in combating the right-wing populism if there is an intensification of left-wing populism, prudence  
409 suggests that we should distrust either. As Mounk (2017) affirms, while left populist "diagnosis of society's  
410 problems is often accurate, and their passion for economic justice genuine, their solutions are just as simplistic  
411 as those propagated by the populist right".

412 Moreover, the examples of the ruling populist ruling parties in the European Union show that when they  
413 belong to the right, like PiS in Poland and FIDESZ in Hungary, the Index of Democracy begins to fall. Till now,  
414 only one left populist party gained power in the EU, namely Syriza in Greece, but its discourse, as well as its  
415 action, have changed significantly. Many of its promises are forgotten. There is a big distance between dreams  
416 and reality.

417 Further research is required to analyze two new situations. One in Finland. The populist party, True Finns,  
418 accepted to participate in a ruling coalition, but when its new leader, Jussi Halla-aho, was elected, the twenty-one  
419 moderate MPs broke away in protest at his tough anti-immigration and anti-EU message. They called themselves  
420 New Alternative and saved the ruling coalition. The second case happened in Portugal, when populist parties  
421 lent support to the Government without participating in it.

422 Is the European Union facing a Post-Populist phase? For the moment, Populism is best viewed as a two-faced  
423 coin. <sup>1 2 3 4 5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Giovanni Fava and Federica Salsi for example.<sup>2</sup> The sentence «Populismus ist einfach, Demokratie ist komplex» can be found at the beginning of the point 5.© 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)

<sup>2</sup>In an interview made by Eduardo Febbro published in Página/12, le 14 Juin 2015. © 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US) Volume XVII Issue IV Version I

<sup>3</sup>Year 2017Populism in Latin America and in the European Union: Two Sides of the Same Coin?

<sup>4</sup>As it was already said, in Czech Republic the situation changed because ANO, a right populist party founded by a billionaire oligarch, Andrej Babis, won the parliamentary election in October 2017. The extreme right-wing Freedom and Direct Democracy also doubled its proportion from the previous election in 2013. , Portugal, Romania, Germany, Croatia, Republic of Ireland and Luxemburg. © 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)

<sup>5</sup>© 2017 Global Journals Inc. (US)

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