

UNIVERZA V LJUBLJANI
FAKULTETA ZA DRUŽBENE VEDE

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Populizem v Latinski Ameriki - primerjava Brazilije (Vargas), Mehike (Cárdenas) in Argentine (Perón)

Populism in Latin America – A Comparison of Brazil (Vargas), Mexico (Cárdenas) and Argentina (Perón)

Magistrsko delo

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POVZETEK: Populizem v Latinski Ameriki - primerjava Brazilije (Vargas), Mehike (Cárdenas) in Argentine (Perón)

Latinska Amerika je skozi 20. stoletje imela številne populistične figure: Juan in Eva Perón v Argentini, Getúlio Vargas v Braziliji, José Maria Velesco Ibarra v Ekvadorju, Lázaro Cárdenas v Mehiki in drugi. Te figure predstavljajo vojaki, politiki srednjega razreda, delovodje, tradicionalne elite. Glede na različne poglede so le-ti videti kot heroji, kot tudi kot zlobneži. Kljub temu, za nadaljnje desetletje oblikujejo politični diskurz v svojih državah. Populizem je zelo izpodbijan pojem, ki ga ni enostavno opredeliti. Zgodovinarji so populizem opredelili tako, da so poiskali podobnosti med populističnimi figurami ali gibanji. Sociologi so analizirali odnos med vodjo in množico ter kako se to nanaša na demokracijo. Politologi so se osredotočili na institucionalne mehanizme predstavnštva ali sredstva za ohranjanje moči. Po drugi strani pa so prišli do skupne točke, da populistični uresničujejo gospodarsko politiko. Glede na raziskave, vsaj dva dejavnika kažeta, da bodo populistični elementi v politiki ostali ali se še povečali. Prvič, predstavniška demokracija gre, glede na demokratični paradoks, neizogibno skupaj s populizmom. In drugič, visoka medijska prepoznavnost v politiki vodi k številnim priložnostim za populiste. Medijska izpostavljenost pomaga populistom zbrati podporo s širjenjem sporočil in predstavljanjem samih sebe kot karizmatičnih vodij in pravih predstavnikov ljudstva. Zato bo populizem po vsej verjetnosti še naprej del politike in politične analize.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: POPULIZEM, LATINSKA AMERIKA, POBUNA, IDEOLOGIJA, POLITIČNI SISTEM

SUMMARY: Populism in Latin America – A Comparison of Brazil (Vargas), Mexico (Cárdenas) and Argentina (Perón)

Latin America has seen a number of populist figures throughout the twentieth century: Juan and Eva Perón in Argentina, Getúlio Vargas in Brazil, José Maria Velesco Ibarra in Ecuador, Lázaro Cárdenas in Mexico, and others. Such figures represent from military men, through middle-class politicians, labor leaders to traditional elites. Considering different perspectives, they are seen as both, heroes and villains. Despite that, they shaped political discourse in their countries for further decades. Populism is a highly contested concept that is not easy to define. Historians have defined populism by looking at similarities among populist figures or movements. Sociologists have analyzed the relationship between leader and masses, and how this relates to democracy. Political scientists have focused on institutional mechanisms of representation or means of retaining power. On the other hand, they reached the common point by defining populists pursuing economic policies. Considering the research, at least two factors indicate that populist elements in politics will remain or even increase. First, representative democracy unavoidably goes along with populism, due to the democratic paradox. Second, the high media visibility of politics that leads towards many opportunities for populists. Media exposure helps populists to gather support by spreading the messages, and presenting themselves as charismatic leaders and true representatives of the people. Therefore, populism is likely to continue to be part of politics and of political analysis.

KEY WORDS: POPULISM, LATIN AMERICA, REVOLT, IDEOLOGY, POLITICAL SYSTEM

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ABBREVIATIONS

ALN	Alianza Libertadora Nacional
APRA	Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana
CGOCM	General Confederation of Mexican Workers and Agriculturalists
CGT	General Confederation of Workers
CNC	National Confederation of Cooperatives, also National Peasant Confederation
CTM	Confederation of Mexican Workers
DASP	Administrative Department of Public Services
GOU	Group of United Officers
PEMEX	Petroleos Mexicanos state company
PJ	Partido Justicialista
PRI	Institutional Revolutionary Party
PRM	Party of the Mexican Revolution
PRN	Institutional Revolutionary Party
PSD	Social-Democratic Party
PTB	Partido Trabalhista

1 INTRODUCTION

The election successes of Evo Morales in Bolivia, Michelle Bachelet in Chile and Ollanta Humala in Peru are seen as leftism and a failed change that happened in Latin America couple of years ago. Some of the region's new presidents were presenting social-democratic left parties. That means they stand for permanent macroeconomic policies and the retention of the liberalizing reforms on the 1990s, however with better social policies. Even populism is very vague and unclear concept, it is very important to understand it in order to be aware of the political situation in the region. Populism is facing with many difficulties and one of them is using populism as a term of abuse.

Populism has many meanings that are different from place to place. If we examine Europe, in France, all politicians from Pierre Poujade (1950) to Jean-Marie Le Pen have supported the "little man" (especially farmers and small shopkeepers) against big corporations, unions and foreigners. The same situation was in United States, where populism had rural roots, too. Furthermore, in 19th Century, Russian populists were middle-class intellectuals who enclosed peasant communalism as a solution to Western liberalism. However, in Latin America populism had the greatest and most permanent influence and became an urban movement. As in Russia and the United States, it began as an attempt to improve the social dislocations caused by capitalism.

Populism in Latin America emerged in the early 20th century as a reaction to profound changes in society. Most countries began to export products to Europe, by which they earned money for industrial and city development. Thousands of migrants who began settling in the cities and looking for work, became the target of activists who were recruited into its ranks. These were the workers' organizations, trade unions, military, monks, politicians and others. We can say that the populist policies, since the beginning of the World War I until the early '60s of the 20th century, shaped the political changes in countries of Latin America.

This period is viewed as the classical era of populism in Latin America. Moreover, in this period, populism was developing together with the growth of new technologies primarily related to the means of mass communication and transportation. The new media allowed politicians to be heard by the proletariat voters. Populists were much better in speeches on

radio and television than their competitors, therefore they were able to gain support from voters in big cities and those from smaller towns and rural areas. Most of the populists were great speakers, so public presentation was one of their most powerful strength in political campaigns. Politicians who appeared in the media during that time were seen as modern, future-oriented, competent and convincing candidates. In the 1920s and 1930s, radio was the media that has played a significant role in electoral campaigns of populists. In the early fifties, households already had a television, and the populists were quickly embraced this new media and took the advantages of the benefits offered. The television has enabled politicians to contact the voters even closer, by visualizing the gestures and facial expressions of politicians. By that, the slogans and messages sounded more convincing and had a greater impact on voters.

Populists also gave great attention to aesthetics and visual impressions. The physical attractiveness of the candidates significantly influenced voting preferences. Populists like Perón, Gaitán and Arias cultivated a cult of machismo, so it was not rare that they were more symphonized by the female population. Furthermore, new vehicles and better roads enabled them to travel the whole country during the election campaigns. They got a chance to hold speeches even in small towns and villages, whose inhabitants listened and saw a national politician for the first time.

Apart from media, technology growth and improved transportation, there are additional explanations for the rise of populism in Latin America, such as urbanization and industrialization. Millions of people accumulated in the cities. Politicians had an easier job to lead their campaign when they were concentrated in one city, as opposed to being scattered in many small villages and towns across the country. However, we cannot state for sure if there is direct bond between urbanization, industrialization and populism, because development of cities and industries did not lead to populism in every case. On the other hand, populism began in some countries that were still not urbanized and industrialized. However, we can say that those factors lead to social-political conditions that were appropriate for founding the populist leadership in Latin America. In these new large cities, feelings of alienation affected all social groups: workers, immigrants, youth, indigenous people, women, migrants from rural areas and others. All of them wanted to improve living conditions, so they often fought against each other in order to get state benefits. Even life in urban places had much more benefits and advantages comparing with the life in small towns and villages. Life in big

industrial places was very rough. During that time, political elite increased their control over working and middle class by rigging elections. That led to strikes and demonstrations on the streets, so they needed to use police to help them putting everything back in order. Furthermore, politicians paid certain people to intimidate the voters on the day of elections, in order to assure their government authority.

At the beginning of 20th century most of the people in Latin America lived in nondemocratic conditions. Countries in Latin America were behind in development of individual rights comparing to Europe and North America. Those conditions were ideal for empowering leaders to provide feelings of affiliation and alternation that would improve everyday living. Therefore, when individuals and groups of people needed to adjust to crises or bad condition in the country, there was a perfect chance for populists to succeed. In those situations, people often decide to give their full trust to politicians who are seen competent to be good leaders in those circumstances. Populists were indicated as more capable than their competition in assuring the voters how they are the ideal leaders for solving the crisis and emergency situations.

Success of populist leaders depended on their ability to adulate the crowd and get their affection and trust. Their charm and charisma was accepted among the people. Charismatic leadership implies on connection and bonding between leaders and followers that have several characteristics: 1. Followers perceive their leaders as some kind of “superheroes”, 2. Followers believe in everything what the leader presents, 3. Followers unquestioningly accept all guides from their leaders about how should they behave, 4. Followers are completely and emotionally addicted to the leader (Conniff 1999, 192). In most cases, people fall under charismatic leadership when they suffer from a lack of self-confidence and while considering they cannot overcome the challenges and risk environment. That weakness and fear are making people feeling scared and anxious. If all nations are feeling like that, as most of the Latin Americans did in the 20th century, than this is the ideal prerequisite for the rise of populism. People saw populists as saviors that would solve their problems and afford them a better way of living.

The end of the Cold War, the initiation of globalization trends, free markets, the spread of democratic values and increased competition in the market economy, again favored the populist leaders and populist politics.

In the 20th century, most of the Latin American leaders were populists. From the early ages of 20th century until 1990s, populists in La Plata region were very successful in winning the elections and getting most of the votes. They were most successful in getting the sympathy of the people (for example working class), and kept their devotedness in order to remain in authority. Furthermore, most of the populists were unbeaten in coming back to constituted authority, after they lost the elections or have been grip on power. We can take Perón in Argentina as an example. After Perón was removed from power in 1955, he spent some time in exile and in 1973 restored to power and elected for the president.

The influence of populism and their leaders on politics and everyday life in Latin America is really great and there are still investigations that are trying to find out all the ways that populism affected different spheres of life. As any other political movement, populism had a lot of disadvantages, but there were also some positive sides of it. It is important to mention that some populists were corrupt and others tried to manipulate their followers. However, they tried to include as many citizens as possible in the voting process, gave import to the idea of elections, and generally enhanced positive sentiments about citizen duties in Latin America.

During that time, women acquired the right to vote in most of the countries. As women were the biggest group in the country who didn't have the possibility of voting, populists decided to change that in order to get more followers and get the elections. Nevertheless, populists protected the women rights in general, and one of the most important and famous advocate in women rights was Eva Duarte Perón, known as Evita, wife of president Juan Perón, Argentine populist.

Michael Connif (1999, 2) states that populists are irresponsible leaders who spend their state money in order to keep the mass support. As a result, the rise of populism in Latin America is an important phenomena and research on how those leaders got their power and how they used it is an important research question. In this work, I will try to investigate the facts and get the final answers on those questions.

2 POPULISM

Many people tried to define populism, but a lot of works and researches fail to state what this term particularly means. Margaret Canovan (1981) divides populism into two categories, agrarian populism and political populism, which are subdivided into a total of seven different groups. In the same way, Wiles (1969) defines populism by listing twenty-four characteristics of populism. Because of his limited empirical applicability, the identification of cases of populism is not that clear. Furthermore, Berlin (1968) provided a definition that consisted of six features, including the importance of people and the rejection of politics (return to the natural condition of society before the introduction of any political system). These authors also mentioned that modernization leads to populism. However, their work can help us to analyze the populism in general, but we cannot understand the essence of the phenomenon of populism.

In addition, Meny and Surel (2000/2002) reduced the number of populism's characteristics to the three main ones. First is "the people", what has the highest importance. Second, populists state that the people has been betrayed by the elites through their abuse of power and corruption. Third, populists demand that the "primacy of the people" (Meny and Surel 2002, 13) has to be restored. So basically, the whole idea is about replacing the current elites by new leaders (the populists), who would act for the good of the people. Taggart (2000/2002) agrees with two of these three points. First, he agrees with the importance of the "people", since populists try to represent the community they belong. Second, he agrees with the antagonism towards a constructed "other". Taggart states that the key feature of populism is the opposition towards representative politics that is stealing power from the "people". He also points the necessity of a "sense of extreme crisis" (Taggart 2002, 69) for populism to emerge. Lastly, Mudde (2004) got the deepest into the whole definition about the "people" and antagonistic "other". He perceives populism as an ideology of society which is separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups (the pure people versus the corrupt elite). Furthermore, he discusses about politics being an expression of the general will (*volonté générale*) of the people (Mudde 2004, 543).

To conclude, these definitions show us that the core aspects of populism are the focus on the “people“ and the antagonism between “people” and its “other” that represents either the elite in a representative democracy, foreigners or others.

The word populism comes from the Latin word *populous*, which means people, ideology, movement and politics that can be put together under the word population. “In social and political-science terms, word populism is related with public dynamics” (Milardović 2004a, 13). Populism can appear as a rivalry of new values in society, modernization and globalization, decreasing of national satisfaction and acceptance, or can be a reaction on social crises and split traditions. “Populism is a label for identity, culture and historical tradition, as well as incentive to find the right way towards the future” (Wieviorka 1993; Milardović 2004b, 13). Populists extol traditional values such as country, religion, and nation sovereignty. Populism is linked with protecting national interests of globalization processes and processes of modernization. Populism appears as a mass mobilization against idea of improvement, change and development. Populism is mostly allied with charismatic and superior leader’s role. “In social dynamic sense, advances the mass mobilization” (Milardović 2004, 14). National or different groups in society are appearing as actors in populist movements and activities. Therefore, any social and political movement that is related with national and anti-elitism or protects the interests of a “small man” can be seen as a populist action. Populism defends the existence of a “small man” from the big financial, cultural and political systems. It tries to protect the small man from a modernization processes and corruption. Moreover, populist movements are fighting against the “mediators” between world globalization and the nation. Populists stand against the big organizations and corporations, factories, banks, state bureaucracies, parliaments and other intermediaries that stand between people and the state. According to the populists, this mediation has negative effect on a life of a “little man”. Direct actions are pursued through populist movements. In the political world, populism is performed as a direct articulation of national interests without democratic mediation.

Populism is seen as a mass protest involving national, social, and political systems. It is a protest between lower social groups and modernization, mass capital, different races, colonization, foreigners, metropolization and globalization. “In social sense, it is a movement that is not relied on a social groups, than particularly on a ‘little man’ who is diffusible among undefined proficient, competent or skilled social structure” (Milardović 2004, 15). Populism

is not allied with one specific ideology. It is possible to find populism in different ideologies that are even opposing each other. Furthermore, populists do not lead with just one definitive doctrine; they change their way of ruling based on the situation in the state in order to keep the power and popularity among followers. Populist programs were designed and planned to attract and collect as many followers and voters as possible at any time. Even in the expression populism, the central word is population (nation). It cannot be equaled with the expression democracy because it contains the authoritarian and totalitarian syndrome that is destructive for democracy. Excepting the authoritarian and totalitarian way of ruling, populism is also distinguished for extolling army, ideas of external enemy, nationalism and diabolical internal enemy.

During the elections, populists were leading group campaigns, which helped them get new groups of followers and voters, and kept their loyalty during their whole life. Populists promised their followers better life in all aspects, by making them proud on their culture and psychically related with the nation. Most of their campaigns and speeches were held in big cities, where more than ten millions of people got the chance and opportunity to vote and be part of the election process. Most of those new recruited voters were from working class so as a result, populists were seen as protectors of workers' rights. Populists also had the support of middle class voters, who were backing populist social and economy programs in order to get more working places and advantages the populists have promised to them. Furthermore, a number of rich and influence citizens were also thinking that populist programs will favor their interests, so they became their followers, too.

Populists always got the authority through elections. They never despotically deposed the present authorities, radically restricted the society or plead for revolution. Populists were dedicated to national sovereignty, and conducted changes through legal ways and promoted democracy, even they didn't rule democratically all the time. They considered leaders as national representatives of the nation's opinion and will. In spite of it, many populists ruled autocratically, past their authorities. "Even when they were statutory elected, they would not adhere to their statutes" (Conniff 1999, 7).

In general, populists were more competent than traditional politicians; they raised money for election campaigns, got citizens to vote in the elections, and were able to maintain their following. Almost all populist leaders were very charismatic. Because of their charisma, they

have been seen as strong individuals who are capable to take care and protect the nation. After populists appeared, citizens didn't trust the Church, political parties, newspapers, aristocrats and elite anymore. Formerly, the political elite and the Church determined the presidents and legislators. However, when those institutions lost their legitimacy, charismatic persons as populists had power to convince the people they have the right to fill a post in the nation. As populists became more and more successful and popular, their followers were more and more loyal and confident in their leaders. We are not exaggerating if we say that among followers was mass hypnosis, during the populist speeches. The charisma of some populist leaders turned into a myth, so the followers were fascinated by their leaders in next few decades after their death.

Populists have promised that they will actualize reforms in the country and improve the life conditions for the citizens. They were dedicated about changes and development. It was important for populists, to raise the morality of the people, especially in times of crises when self-sacrifice was needed. Populist rhetoric was filled with national pride. Populists proclaimed the idea of making each person a proud citizen. Populist leaders have seen themselves as protectors of national sovereignty from international pressure and exploitation. The special coup had the international organizations, because populists thought those organizations are exploiting domestic workers and resources, without taking care about the economic development of the country. Sometimes, in the time of great crises, this national pride transformed has been transformed into the xenophobia. After all, the easiest thing is to accuse external enemies for the bad situation in the state.

2.1 ECONOMY

As the populists promised their nation better life conditions, they used different mechanisms for performing the services (so-called patronage) and improving the general life standard (so-called economic development). They ensured many new working places in public sector, financed the infrastructure, lowered the prices of basic groceries, subsidized public traffic, increased pensions, provided free education, and almost anyone had the possibility of taking a loan. These mechanisms achieved results, citizens started to respect and extol the populists, because of the redistributing the incomes in profit for working class. Cárdenas, Perón and Vargas used these kind of mechanisms in one period during their rule and managed in making the economic miracle in their countries. Expansive economic politics mostly leded towards

inflation and indebtedness. “Afterwards, some economists started to use the term *populist* for bad financial management in the state and opportunism” (Conniff 1999, 6).

2.2 FOLKLORE

Populists got their voices and legitimacy from “regular” people, the subjugated and poor people along with middle class. In order to be closer to “regular” people, populists accepted some elements of national folklore. The President of Peru, Haya de la Torre and Panamanian president Arnulfo Arias showed their pride thorough Indian heritage, while Perón and Vargas cherished the image of *gauchosa*¹. Meanwhile, Jorge Gaitán and Leonel Brizola always emphasized how they grew up in poverty, so they could identifiable with poorness in their countries. By noting the names in national poesy and song verses for dancing tango, samba and other dances, people exposure the honors to populist leaders. There is no information about how the appealing on national folklore has increased the popularity of populist leaders in the nation. However, we can certainly conclude that has helped in maintaining the authority.

2.3 PHASES OF POPULISM IN LATIN AMERICA

In the first two decades of 20th Century, there were some leaders that had the characteristics of a typical populist. For example José Batlle y Ordóñez, who ruled from 1903 to 1907, and then from 1911 to 1915 in Uruguay, as well as Guillwemo Billinghurst, who ruled from 1912 to 1914 in Peru. For the period of 1920s and 1930s, populism in Latin America became a broadened notion because of the accessibility of media towards the masses, through which populists regulated their followers and new voters. In that period, the most significant role in affirmation and growth of populism in Latin America was with Argentinean leader Hipólito Yrigoyen. Furthermore, Chilean president Arturo Alessandri, during his mandate from 1920 to 1925, showed the populist tendency. The mayor of Rio de Janiero, Pedro Ernesto Batista, from 1931 to 1936, led populism in Brazil. In addition, populist policies were implemented by Adhemar de Barros during his first mandate as governor of São Paulo. In the first phase of populism in Latin America, we should not forget to mention the Mexican president Lázár Cárdenas, who ruled from 1934 to 1940. He is the perfect type of populist. Cárdenas was

¹ *Gaúcho* on Portuguese, *gaucho* on Spanish; name for the Argentinean cattle-breeders who can be compared with cowboys in North America. *Gauchos* have important symbolic role for citizens in Latin America, especially Argentina and Uruguay. They are seen as a symbol of fight against the corruption and Argentinean national tradition, as well as a symbol against the Europeanization of Latin America. *Gaúcho* is strong, honest, proud and calm type of person, capable to fight in the moments of threat.

holding the speeches in front of thousands of people, used the radio, travelled with airplane all over the country and hold the speeches. His reforms ensured better life conditions to workers and peasants and, what is unavoidable for the populist, he had unbeaten charisma.

The second phase of populism in Latin America was during the period of the 1940s up to 1960s. In that period, populists in Latin America reached the culmination of their power. Populism was the main characteristic of politics in most of the countries in Latin America. In 1944, many of Latin American leaders dedicated themselves to keeping the free elections and increasing citizen rights; the classic populist demands. Spreading the demarcation was encouraged by numerous triumphs of allied strengths in World War II. Populism reached the culmination in 1950s. After the war, women got the right to vote in most of the countries and became very important motivators for political changes.

During that period, Brazil was led by Getúlio Vargas, who implemented the first modern elections inside his country in 1950. Vargas continued with the politics that was developed by their predecessors Pedro Ernesto and Adhemar. At the elections, Vargas was provoked, not just from Adhemar, then also from other populists: Jânio Quadros, Juscelino Kubitschek and Carlos Lacerda. In late 1950s, the other populists joined them, such as Miguel Arraes, Leonel Brizola and João Goulart. Because they were all populists, Brazilian historians called the Brazilian period from 1945 to 1964 the period of populist Republic. The most prominent populist leaders in the region, Juan Perón and his wife Evita, started their political campaign in Argentina in 1944, and won the elections in 1946.

In 1960s, populism was not the main characteristic of Latin American politics. That was the result of the revolution with Fidel Castro in Cuba. The Cuban revolution divided the opinions and there was no more the unique way of leading the politics in Latin America. The army started to relieve the presidents who were seen as left oriented. That was the case with the coup against Peruvian president Haya de la Torre and Argentinean president Arturo Frondizi in 1962, as well as Brazilian president João Goulart in 1964. Besides that, most of the voters were registered by then, so populists didn't have chance to recruit so many new voters as previous years. Just those new voters were the key point for winning the elections. In short, in that period, conditions that helped the populists to get the authority in 1920s, 1930s and 1940s did not exist and the certain circumstances were not inclined any more.

Middle of 1960s was followed by many military dictatorships in most countries of Latin America. New authorities were *a priori* against the populism and stated that the countries need military leadership that would defend the nation from the populists who were causing strikes, inflation, corruption, and had communist inclinations. Military leaders promised to reform the administration and put the state in order, together with implementing the socio-economic reforms. That was the period of anti-populist authorities.

Some of the populist leaders and movements managed to keep the throne, but not to prosper. Juan Perón became again the president in 1973. However, soon after that, Perón passed away, and left his widow Isabela Perón, inexperienced in state works, to handle the growing crises in Argentina. Mexican president, Luis Echeverría (1970 – 1976), tried to continue with the reforms that Cárdenas successfully implemented during his rule, but that attempt completely failed. Some of the governors and congressmen in Brazil resisted the military authority and re-establish the populist rule. Populism in Latin American countries vivified again, after *aberutra* (democratization) in late 1970s. The best example is Peru, where APRA's² candidate Alan García, by leading the populist election campaign, won the elections after the military authority left the power. We can conclude that, even some populists succeeded to win or got back the authority, populism in Latin America, after 1960s, was not dominant way of ruling any more. The best times for populism were years after World War II. Some authors believe that populism, as a way of ruling, will disappear because of the following reasons:

- Most of the people today have the right to vote, which means no more recruitments of new voters
- Almost all candidates can make a positive image about themselves, by using the electronic medias and political marketing techniques, so being charismatic is not that influential on voter preferences
- Because of the global economy, appearance of new social and ecology politics, populism is outdated

However, some think that destiny of populism is not that negative. Namely, even today in Latin American countries exists the great respect towards populist leaders, such as Evita, Lázaro Cárdenas, João Goulart and others. Authors, who believe that populism has still not withered, state that some sovereign leaders, such as Menem and Fujimori, had the capability to adjust the populist politics to the new age and continue the populist tradition.

² APRA (Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana) is Peruvian left party left, founded by Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre in 1924

2.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF POPULIST PARTIES

Populist parties were different from other parties in region, because they recruited members from different social layers. Traditional parties represented the interests from only one particular social group, for example workers, peasants, middle class or similar. Populist parties had the approach “something for everyone” (Coniff 1999, 14). Often, they came up with vague and indefinite programs and doctrines, through which they identified with people from different economic sectors and social layers. However, we can classify them using similar criteria with which we classify parties in North America and Europe. The main characteristics of Latin American leadership - *personalismo*³ and centralization – are also present in populist parties. All initiatives and decisions are brought by a leader. There are no mechanisms for co-operated decision making, such as internal voting in the party or the division of responsibilities. Therefore, because of the leader’s dominance in some movement or party, after their death or removal from the political scene, the party was weakened and did not win the next elections. Even those not inclined to the bureaucratization of their parties, entered coalitions very cunningly. Populists attracted people from different social groups in their parties and therefore, for each group they had a different approach. As a result, they shaped numerous and heterogeneous followers and fellowships. As an example for this kind of movements, we can take Perón's *Justicialismo* and Vargas' *Trabalhismo*. Populists developed the new methods for recruitment of their followers, which replaced the traditional clientele. Clientele parties relied on personal interests. Each member had the certain level of autonomy. Comparing the populist parties, they were not that fast in recruitment of their new members, so the system was expensive to maintain and unstable in the time of crises. In populist parties, all the initiatives and responsibility was taken over the leaders, who attracted the new voters with their charismatic personality. Routine businesses, such as writing the speeches, communication with the media, organizing meetings or collecting the money, leaders delegated to their assistants. Those anonymous workers could not become the leader competitors, because their possibility for promotion was only if the party won the elections or the popularity of the leader increased. Using that way, populist came up with qualitative campaigns that helped them in getting the new voters and followers. Populist leaders had the possibility to react on the changes much faster than the classical leaders, because they did not need to consult with councils and committees in the party, than they made their decisions by

³ Term *personalismo* is relevant to extolling the leaders in Latin America. Because of the loyalty towards the particular leader, political interests of the parties were often sacrificed, together with lack of devotion to some ideology.

themselves. At the end, populism was popular in the time of crises, because the populist leaders had the power to spread the hope and comfort the adherents using their positivism and charisma.

2.5 ELECTIONS

Like most of the politicians and parties in the west, populists measured their success by number of votes their got on the elections. Elections were the center of attention for the populists. First, they needed to secure fair elections in their countries and after that, they developed innovative ways to get the voters. Without fair elections, populist did not have a chance to win and get the authority. At the beginning, populists needed to win over the voters to even go to the election. As elections were never organized before that time, people did not have the chance to vote and understand that their vote can really decide about who will rule the country. When populists succeeded in having fair elections, they tried to include women and young people in voting process, too. Therefore, populist won the elections easily, because the voters were grateful to the leaders for giving them the voting right.

In the time of 1950s and 1960s, populists managed to continue with free elections, which became very popular among more and more voters in the country. In that time, the independent law commissions were organized, in order to supervise the elections and confirm the results. During the 1970s and 1980s, the right to vote is spread on different groups of people. Peru, Chile and Brazil lowered the voting age line on 16 years and gave the right to vote to illiterately population. What is more, in most of the countries in Latin America, voting in elections is mandatory. For not attending the elections, people must pay additional fees, what contributes better voter response.

Even the populists obtained the fair, democratic elections, does not mean they ruled democratically. Many populists became dictators (such as Vargas from 1937 to 1945, and Perón from 1943 to 1945), some of them planned the conspiracies from exile towards the new leaders and majority of them violated the laws under which they were elected.

3 THE REGION OF GETULIO VARGAS IN BRAZIL (1930 – 1954)

3.1 TAKING POWER

Before the presidential elections in 1930, the earlier Brazilian president Washington Luiz proposed to Julio Prestesa, the governor of Sao Paolo, to be his successor. As Luiz himself was from the state of Sao Paolo, he violated the agreement according to which politicians from Sao Paolo and Minas Gerais should rotate at the presidential position. That is why the governor of the state of Minas Gerais Antonio Carlos established the opposition party Alianca Liberal and chose Getulio Vargas⁴ to be their presidential candidate at the presidential elections. Therefore, in the 1930 presidential elections Vargas ran for the opposition party Alianca Liberal against Julio Prestesa. During the election campaign he promised to implement reforms in the country, promised to adopt labour laws, open the iron industry and provide other social and economic reforms, which were supported by the middle class and people living in cities. The response to the presidential elections was greater than ever. The election was won by Vargas' opponent Prestes. Although it seemed as he accepted the defeat, in October of the same year Vargas agreed to be the revolution leader, organized by his supporters, in order to overthrow the old (oligarchic) republic. President Washington Luiz was relieved on October 24, and on November 3 Vargas becomes the president of the transition government. The day when Vargas came to power is considered the end of the Old Republic.

3.2 PERIOD OF DICTATORIAL RULE

During this period Vargas ruled without the Congress. The collapse of the New York Stock Exchange primarily prevented him in carrying out the reforms at the beginning of his mandate, because due to the financial crisis caused by the collapse of the stock exchange Vargas didn't have financial means to carry out the reforms or new job openings to decrease the unemployment in the country.

Soon, revolution after revolution began to break out in Brazil. A group of like-minded people that risked their lives trying to place Vargas into power, created a pressure group called "Club

⁴ Dornelles Getúlio Vargas was born in the town of São Borja in the Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul on April 19th 1883. In his youth he attended military schools and was thinking about a career in the army, but later decided to study law. In 1907 he completed his law studies at the Faculty of Porto Alegre, and shortly after, in 1908 got involved in politics. The upswing in his political career began in 1909 when he became governor of the state, to be elected to the National Congress in 1922. He spent four years at this position. In 1926 Vargas became minister of finances in the government of President Washington Luís Pereira de Sousa. He remained at this position until he was elected governor of Rio Grande do Sul in 1928.

3 de Outubro” (the Club of October 3rd) named after the date when the revolution began. They were called tenentes (lieutenants) as most of them were lieutenants dismissed in the twenties because of revolutionary activities. Tenentes put pressure on Vargas, and he was forced to choose between them and civilian reformers. In order to subsist in power Vargas choose the tenentes. During the first two years of his mandate as the temporary president he shared authority with tenentes. After a three-month rebellion in 1932 in Sao Paolo, he re-established discipline in the army, which enabled him to gain dominance over tenentes.

Before 1930 Brazil was a federation of autonomous states dominated by landowners and were mainly financed from the export of agricultural products. During the period of Vargas’ authority this system was destroyed. The tax law was changed in order to make the administration of federal states and local government dependant of the central government. “Although Vargas came from a family of landowners, he believed that Brazilian politics was to be shaped in such a way to support national development. He viewed the period of rule of the land-owning elite as being finished, and that the time has come for the rise of the new industrial elite and middle class” (Kos-Stanišić 2009, 161). Vargas’ mission was to increase the power of the federal government over federal and local authorities. For this purpose he created the position interventor, who was the officer of the federal government, and his duty was to overtake the authority in states and cities in which the governors and mayors didn’t obey the federal government. Often, members of tenentes were appointed as interventors, who wanted the government to overtake a more active role in the economical development of Brazil. In 1932 the new election law was adopted that allowed expansion of voting rights, and thus the number of voters quadrupled, guaranteed secret ballot that was allowed to persons over 18 years of age, and for the first time women got the right to vote. This law introduced proportional elections, “and a judicial body was created that would oversee the electoral process. The over-representation of the small and under-representation of the large districts was legalized” (Kos-Stanišić 2009, 161). Vargas also carried out comprehensive educational and social reforms, workers gained a range of rights including the right to a minimum wage, and the economy was stimulated by the program of rapid industrialization. In 1934 the new constitution was adopted, it reorganized the political system of the state. The constitution was liberal and eclectic, and it reflected the transition period in which the country was when the constitution was adopted. Vargas wanted the juridical bodies, besides federal governments, to represent the social sectors, which was made possible by the constitution. The old political parties returned to the political scene, the constitution allowed establishment of new parties,

including left and right extremist parties. In accordance with the provisions of the new constitution, the constituent assembly chose Vargas for president for a four year mandate.

3.3 VARGAS IN POWER AS THE ELECTED PRESIDENT

“In the mid-thirties of the 20th century, led by the charismatic president Vargas, Brazil stepped into the period of integralism (integralismo), a highly ideological right-wing movement similar to European fascist parties. The movement was based on Christianity, nationalism and traditionalism. The members of the movement were mainly members of the middle class, supported by the military officers” (Kos-Stanišić 2009, 161). The movement is different from European fascism only in terms of rejecting the racist ideas, even calling for the unity of races. One of the most important principles of integralism was the internal revolution or the revolution of one’s own personality, where people were encouraged to stop thinking only of themselves and to integrate in the idea of a large integralist family, becoming united with the homeland and to leave behind selfish values. In 1934 the integralists, in alliance with Vargas’ regime, commenced with aggressive battles against the members of ALN (Aliança Libertadora Nacional)⁵. A mass of their followers were engaged in street fighting, thus beginning a very rough period in the political life of the state. His government therefore organized a campaign against the ALN. Their response was in raising a revolution. Vargas and the army took advantage of the situation and in November of 1935 declared a state of siege and destroyed the left-wing party.

In 1937 the world was concerned about the spreading of Nazism and communism, so Vargas, citing the need to protect the country from extremists, got an approval from the Congress to declare a state of emergency that abolished many of the political rights.

The presidential campaign for the election of Vargas’ successor should have commenced in 1937, but, on November 10 Vargas carried out a coup with the help of integralists. The integralists hoped to succeed in performing a maneuver to overthrow Vargas from power, but, Vargas saw through them and prohibited their party, and when he quelled the rebellion raised in May of 1938, he completely shattered their movement.

⁵ A coalition of socialists, communists and rejected radicals who acted according to the strategy formulated by the Comintern

3.4 ESTADO NOVO (1937 – 1945)

After the coup in 1937 Vargas dismissed the Congress and established a semi-fascist regime named Estado Novo. This authoritarian regime was a hybrid of Salazar's Portugal and Mussolini's Italy. This period of Brazil's statehood is characterized by large state intervention. Vargas used his almost unlimited power to implement profound changes in the state. He abolished the autonomy of states, replaced governors with government officials and gave the army control over the federal state military polices, dissolved political parties and prohibited paramilitary organizations. Intelligence agencies have been given freedom of action to use all available means to combat “the enemy”. There was a censorship of the media, and the government agency was responsible for publishing the official version of events.

Trade unions, established based on the Labour Law, one of the first acts of Vargas' regime adopted in 1930, were forced to acquire their re-recognition. In order to achieve this, they had to agree to almost complete state control. During Estado Novo the practice of collective bargaining on wages through unions was abolished, and was replaced by the so-called labour courts. At this time Vargas founded the Administrative Department of Public Service (Departamento Administrativo do Servico Publico, DASP) in order to adapt the work of the civil service to new times. Before founding the DASP, only politically suitable persons were able to get a position in the civil services, which led to inefficiencies due to unskilled employees. DASP was the beginning of the professionalization of the civil services in Brazil. Noticing how the industrialization is changing labour relations in the country, Vargas adopted a new Labour Law, which for the first time guaranteed a minimum wage. The enactment of such laws that were beneficial to a large number of workers in the cities, he was often referred to as the Father of the Poor (Pai dos Pobres).

During the time of Estado Novo, the Second World War was going on. Vargas harbored sympathies for the Axis powers, but after Germany refused to give him weapons that he asked for, Vargas decides to declare war on Italy, Germany and Japan, accepts the offer of the USA and becomes an important U.S. ally. He did this mainly for financial gains, not for personal principles. Brazilians of Italian, German and Japanese origin were sent to concentration camps. Brazil supplied allies with raw materials, ceded air and naval bases and sent its army to the front in Europe. In return they were promised financial assistance in the development of heavy industry in Brazil. With this money he managed to build a steel plant in Volta Redonda

and to modernize the state, and he set the basis for founding state companies for oil and electricity production in the future.

Vargas' presidential mandate was to end in 1943, however, when the election time arrived Vargas announced that he will remain on the president position until the end of the war. He claimed that the elections will be held as soon as circumstances allowed this. He gave the same statement in 1944. After the end of the war, Vargas didn't have any other choice but to allow new elections. The electoral law of that time stipulated that a public official who wants to run in the presidential elections has to resign from the position a year before the election, in order not to have an advantage over other candidates. When the time came for Vargas to resign from the presidential position because of his electoral candidature, he did not do this. Members of the government and army doubted that he would again find some excuse to postpone the elections and remain in power. A delegation consisting of few military personnel came to confront Vargas in October 1945, with the fact that he has to give up power and was not allowed to run for president at the next elections.

3.5 SENATE TERM

While he was in power he founded two pro-government parties: Partido Social Democratico and Partido Trabalhista (PTB). The latter one was particularly active in promoting his staying in power and Vargas' movement was later called after it, Trabalhismo. At the elections in December of 1945 Vargas ran for a Senate position, on the PTB list in several different states, and finally became the senator of the state of Rio Grande do Sul. However, in the next five years he barely participated in the work of the Senate. He stayed at the family ranch in Rio Grande do Sul in arbitrary exile. He came out of the quasi-retirement in 1950, when he again ran for president. These elections were the first real modern elections in Brazil where Vargas confirmed his reputation of a true populist after stating that he desires to return to the position of president only if the people decide so. He left his ranch only few months before the elections. His consultants and friends came to the ranch, with whom he consulted and made plans for the campaign, and waited for the right moment to announce his candidature to the public. He was constantly in contact with his daughter Alzira Vargas do Amaral Peixoto who lived in Rio and was the manager and strategist of her father's campaign. Alzira brought together a team that raised funds for the campaign, communicated with other candidates, wrote speeches, organized trips, and gave press releases and other. Her apartment in Rio became Vargas' unofficial election headquarters. Her greatest contribution to her father's

campaign was her assistance in the making of his true image that people will like. The electoral campaign relied on his achievements in the past. During his previous mandate he facilitated the economic development and industrialization of the country, and more importantly, in this process he always protected the rights of workers. Under his leadership Brazil became an important subject of international relations. In his campaign, he particularly emphasized his contribution to the expansion of workers' rights and the introduction of social programs. Now, in his sixties, he desires to return to president position to finalize the job and protect his, now, rich country from covetous domestic elites and greedy foreigners. During the campaign, thousands of promotional flyers were distributed showing Vargas on his ranch, dressed in a gauchos outfit, drinking a traditional herb mate tea. He was always smiling on these photos, inspiring confidence, radiating consideration and satisfaction for being surrounded with friends. At the same time, his daughter coordinated the activities of the female branch of PTB. Vargas gave women the right to vote in 1932, making Brazil the third country in Latin America that equated women and men on this issue. In the 1940's women were already working in different positions in economy, industry and finances, to teachers and healthcare workers. Working women were specifically satisfied with their rights gained by Vargas' Labour Law from 1943. Surveys showed that Vargas enjoyed strong support among women. When he declared his candidature, he immediately started working on regaining his popularity. The central part of the campaign was a two-month tour of 84 cities across Brazil. He held speeches in every city, appropriate to that particular climate. Everybody saw him as a cheerful and smiling person, a father figure, and so, thanks to a well designed campaign, he became the most famous and popular person in the country.

3.6 LAST MANDATE

When the elections took place in 1950, he easily won winning 48% of the votes, the highest percentage of votes that a candidate ever had at presidential elections in the history of Brazil. However, during the next three years Vargas lost on his popularity, no longer possessed an autocratic power as during the Estado Novo. During this mandate his main priority was the economic policy. He wanted to encourage economic development by encouraging the flow of foreign capital and technology in the country. He even founded the National Bank for Economic Development, and mixed state-private enterprises PETROBRAS and ELECTROBRAS (which are today one of the largest enterprises owned by the state in the world), that had monopole over production of oil and electrical power.

During this period, life in Brazil was not easy: inflation became a chronic problem; worker's wages didn't keep up with the increase of prices, leading to a reduction in purchasing power, consequently reducing the standard of living. Vargas couldn't cope with such an economic situation in the country. Besides that, in 1953, after an awkward fall, he broke his arm and leg, and began to suffer from depression and insomnia during the period of rehabilitation. The depression was contributed to the fact that Eisenhower's administration did not intend to fulfill the promises of economic aid to Brazil, on which he reached an agreement with Roosevelt and Truman. For the USA it wasn't that important to keep Brazil as an ally as it was during the Second World War.

It was a difficult period for Vargas. Opposition leaders were becoming more successful in presenting criticism of Vargas' rule. One of the more successful critics was Carlos Lacerda, a politician, journalist and owner of the newspapers *Tribuna da Imprensa*. Lacerda's liberal-conservative critic of Vargas' rule was particularly effective. In 1954, there was an assassination attempt on Lacerda. He was only wounded; however, his bodyguard that was an officer in the Brazilian army was murdered. Among the public, an immediate suspicion arose that Vargas stood behind the assassination. Soon the police caught the assaulter. It was Gregorio Fortunato, chief of Vargas' bodyguards, who apparently without Vargas' knowledge and approval, decided to spare his boss of his criticism. Military investigators decided to search his office in order to find evidence of other crimes committed by him. They did not find any evidence on that, but did find evidence about corruptive actions of senior officials in Vargas' administration. Although the evidence did not refer to Vargas himself, he was regarded responsible for not taking account of what his administration was doing, so the army insisted on Vargas' resignation.

On the night of August 24, 1954, a crowd gathered in front of the presidential palace and asked for Vargas' resignation. When the army officers delivered him an ultimatum to take "leave" until the end of his mandate or that he will be ousted from power, Vargas decided to commit suicide. He left a note where he accused the "domestic reactionaries and powerful foreign interests for conspiracy which had prevented him from working in behalf of the Brazilian people and to defend the interests of the Brazilian nation. The letter ended with the sentence: I leave my life to enter into history" (Watkins, 2004)⁶. The letter was read to those

⁶ Getúlio Vargas and the Estado Novo

gathered in front of the presidential palace, after which the crowd began to shout: Getulio, Getulio, we want Getulio! Such a tragic end brought him sympathy in public, strengthening his reputation of the “father of the poor”. More or less spontaneously, the anniversary of his death has become a national holiday of remembering, when most newspapers in Brazil write about his life and the positive effects of his reign.

4 THE REGIME OF LAZAR CÁRDENAS IN MEXICO (1934 – 1940)

Mexican populism was oriented to the needs of people, specifically the poor. The populists offered a chance to improve the living conditions by advocating the introduction of national measures for a more equitable distribution of wealth. Mexican populism contained elements of nationalism and corporatism. The nationalism was reflected in the promotion of the idea of the country's economic progress using only Mexican capital. The elements of corporatism are evident in the efforts of the governing to create labour, agricultural, business and other organizations that were supposed to be intermediaries between the people and leaders. The most famous Mexican populist is certainly Lazaro Cárdenas (1934 – 1940), followed by President Luis Echeverria that ruled from 1970 – 1976.

4.1 TAKING POWER

Lazaro Cárdenas⁷ fostered sympathy for the revolutionaries, and joined the army of the leader of the peasant movement Emiliano Zapate in 1913 at the age of eighteen. He later ended under the commandment of the future Mexican president Plutarco Elias Calles to whom he remained loyal during the so-called Maximato⁸. For his loyalty, he was nominated for the governor of his homeland state and in 1928 wins this nomination. After this, he served as chief of the revolutionary party, and then he was Minister of Internal affairs. In 1933 he becomes the Minister of war, and in 1934 with extreme ease he won the candidacy for president. Calles gave him his support convinced that Cárdenas will be his puppet and that he will continue to rule Mexico from the shadows. Besides this, Cárdenas secured himself support from the association of farmers, trade unions and lower military officers. He brought together members of the party in order to create a platform for the electoral campaign. Modeled on the plans from the Soviet Union, for Mexico he designed a six-year plan (Plan Sexenal) to help the workers and peasants. Cárdenas was convinced that he had the support of his party and Calles for the implementation of his plan. He used the electoral campaign to

⁷ Lázaro Cárdenas was born on May 21, 1895 in the village Jiquilpan de Juárez in the state of Michoacán in a mixed white and Native American family. After he left elementary school, he worked at various jobs, was a tax gatherer, and prison guard. From 1910 to 1911 he was an editor in newspapers that supported the presidential candidacy of Francisco I. Madero. After his father's death in 1911 he began to support his mother and seven brothers and sisters.

⁸ Maximato is the period of Mexican history, between 1928 and 1935 in which the President Plutarco Elias Calles retained control of the land as Jefe Máximo, where the current presidents Emilio Portes Gil, Pascual Ortiz Rubio, and Abelardo Rodríguez served only as puppets.

build mass followers, “he travelled sixteen thousand kilometres and visited all federal states”⁹ (Conniff 1999, 76). His victory at the elections in 1934 was one of the most peaceful victories in that period of Mexico’s history. When he assumed the presidency in December of 1934, Cárdenas was very popular in his country. Even after the elections he continued the tour across Mexico to meet as many citizens as possible. Soon it started to be clear that he had no intention of being just another puppet of Calles. He gave orders to the federal police to deal with gambling and prostitution in the country, which was a blow for Calles, as most of the illegal casinos were owned by his followers. He decided to decrease his salary in half, and he rejected to live in the presidential palace Chapultepec. At the very beginning of his mandate Cárdenas announced that he will implement the promised land and labour reforms within the Plan Sexenal. Calles, who was in Los Angeles for treatment, returned to Mexico in 1935 and immediately disapproved Cárdenas’ initiatives, and named them “marathons of radicalism”. Cárdenas expected such reaction from Calles and for this reason he earlier secured support from military officers and soldiers for his plans. He dismissed Calles’ cabinet ministers and replaced them with anti-callists, and dismissed all other followers of Calles from the cabinet and army, and expelled Calles into exile. Now that he eliminated the possibilities of a coup, he could proceed with the implementation of promised reforms.

4.2 REFORMS

Cárdenas became extremely popular for standing up against Calles and for the implementation of land and labor reforms. During his mandate he gave fifty million hectares of land to, approximately, eight-hundred thousand families. That was more than all his predecessors gave all together. He even provided peasants with weapons so they could defend their new land from previous owners. However, the new owners were less productive than the previous ones, and were often unorganized. For this reason there was a decline in the traditional power of the landowning class and the weakening of the Haciendas. In order to replace the old system which was about to end, Cárdenas encouraged the expansion of smaller farms called ejidos. To show how the ejidos should function, he converted a large hacienda on the border of Coahuila-Durango, which he took from large landowners, in a sort of ejidos model. ”About thirty-five thousand people cultivated cotton, wheat and other crops and plantations on 226 ejidos” (Conniff 1999, 77). Cárdenas expected that the peasants will start

⁹ Wherever he came, he spoke with local elders, would meet with the commander of the local garrison and talk with the locals. He regularly spent hours and hours on the city squares, where the peasants and workers could come and sit beside him on a bench and talk about their problems. As he always protected and helped the Indians (he even founded the Ministry of Indian Affairs), he was nicknamed "Dad Lázaro."

to place their products on the market, and therefore decrease their need to import agricultural products. Actually, the entrance of peasants on the products market, produced by them, was the main goal of the agrarian reform.

Cárdenas invested a lot of money in the development of agriculture, but he also did not forget the implementation of social programs such as education and healthcare. He pleaded for expansion of education and educational reform. He wished to provide education to masses that would be based on the principle of common good that would be more important than individual success. In spite of low federal income, Cárdenas managed to increase the portion of educated people in society. “He built three thousand new schools and educated about a hundred thousand new teachers, coming mainly from the cities. The number of enrolled children in public schools increased from 1,7 to 2,2 million children during Cárdenas’ mandate” (Conniff 1999, 78). However, in spite of the educational reforms, the number of illiterate in Mexico increased due to the very high birthrate in rural areas. Trade unions became very important allies of Cárdenas. In 1933 Vicente Lombardo Toledana organized the General Confederation of Mexican workers and agriculturalists (CGOCM)¹⁰ and had great support from Cárdenas. In the next two years Lombardo and Cárdenas became close associates. In February 1936 Lombardo founded the Confederation of Mexican workers (CTM)¹¹ that gathered a million members and de facto became a government advisor. Lombardo was a convinced socialist, incorruptible, and pragmatic politician who has always thought of the interests of workers. He always fought for better working conditions for his workers, and always had Cárdenas’ support for this.

Cárdenas took all necessary measures to maintain the loyalty of the army and decisively put an end to the occasional revolts in the army. We can affirm that Cárdenas managed to depoliticize the army during his reign. Academically trained young officers who had not fought in the revolution, which at that time had come to commanding positions, were loyal to Cárdenas and his political agenda. In the period from 1934 and 1938 he cut the budget allocations for the army from 25 to 19%. In 1939 he adopted the Law on the reorganization of the army with which he tried to stop the creation of castes among the officers and encourage a desire to serve their own people. And finally, with the Law of military service from 1939 he made it possible to reduce the gap between the officers, soldiers and civilians.

¹⁰ *Confederación General de Obreros y Campesinos de México*

¹¹ *Confederación Trabajadores Mexicanos*

4.3 NATIONALIZATION OF OIL INDUSTRY

One of the most important episodes of Mexican populism happened in 1938 when Cárdenas nationalized most of the oil industries in the country. Two years earlier, the Trade union of oil workers joined the Confederation of Mexican workers (CTM). Although these workers were earning above average salaries, they were living in camps, separated from their families, and could buy food only in the company's stores. Oil companies that were in greater part owned by British and American companies refused any negotiations with trade unions about the matter of wages and working conditions. The Oil worker's trade union decides to call a strike in 1937, but it was ratified by CTM. The government decided to intervene in resolving disputes between the trade union and CTM, so the Ministry of Labor decided to give the right to workers. However, the oil companies did not agree with this, and forwarded the case to the Supreme Court. Cárdenas and other state officials were already angry with the oil companies for transferring their plants from Mexico to Venezuela in the 20's and 30's.

In the beginning of 1938 the Supreme Court brought a verdict in favour of the trade union, after which seventeen (mainly foreign) companies addressed to Cárdenas and told him that they have no intention of complying with the court's decision. Cárdenas was very angry, he called their act a threat to Mexican sovereignty, and he immediately expropriated these companies and put them in ownership of the earlier established state company Petroleos Mexicanos (PEMEX), whose task was to manage with the oil lands in state ownership. He even established the National Polytechnic institute where professionals required for managing PEMEX were educated. PEMEX remained even nowadays one of the most important sources of financing the Mexican state. Expecting that the US government will support them in their accusations against Mexico, oil companies claimed from Mexico 450 million dollars, claiming that the estimation of the existing and potential oil production in their companies is now in Mexican ownership. Cárdenas offered 10 million dollars, according to him that was the real value of capital investments.

During the next two years the oil companies led a vicious battle against Mexico, even threatening with military attack. The companies boycotted Mexican raw materials, putting serious pressure on the trade balance of payments. The oil lobby in the American Congress and the British government unsuccessfully pressured the U.S. government to invade Mexico or to boycott the trade with Mexico. The American ambassador in Mexico, Josephus Daniels, considered that the oil companies made a big mistake when they decided not to comply with

the decision of the Mexican Supreme Court. It was he who persuaded the American president Roosevelt to resist the pressure that was put on him. In 1940, when USA needed Mexico as an ally in the Second World War, Roosevelt's administration determined an arbitration commission to resolve the disputes over oil companies. A settlement was reached that 24 million dollars were paid to companies from the USA, that was paid in 1941, while the settlement with British companies was reached only in August 1947. Nationalization of the oil industry was a great victory of Mexican nationalism and earned Cárdenas the title of hero in the battle against foreigners, specially the detested gringos" (Kos-Stanišić 2009, 124). By nationalizing the oil companies, Cárdenas made Mexico economically independent.

4.4 PRM (Partido de la Revolucion Mexicana)

At the end of 1938, in expectation of the upcoming presidential elections, Cárdenas decided to reorganize the party in power PRN (Partido Nacional Revolucionario), that was established during Calles' Maximat, and renamed it in PRM (Partido de la Revolucion Mexicana). The party's new organization was formed by four functional sectors: association of workers (CTM), the State confederation of peasants (Confederacion Nacional Campesina, CNC), the army and the heterogeneous sector mainly consisted of the association of workers in civil services that were actually the basis of populist corporatism. The newly reformed party thus represented the majority of the politically active population of Mexico: "CNC had 2,5 million members, CTM 1,25 million, while the army and association of workers in civil services had 55000 member each" (Conniff 1999, 79). The same year, soldiers were given the right to vote, which was particularly important to officers that had influence on their recruits to vote, but also on their election preference. Hierarchical structures within PRM should have reportedly channeled information and the requirements of the people from the bottom up, but in most cases only transmitted orders from top down. There was no doubt that Cárdenas was ruling the party giving orders from above. In spite of this, he is today considered the only president connected with the PRM party (current PRI), that did not take advantage of his position for personal wealth.

4.5 END OF MANDATE

Cárdenas decided to support his minister of defense Manuel Avila Camacho on the upcoming presidential elections. The transfer of power was very intense in 1940, but there were no incidents. The party raised enough votes for the election of Avilo Camacho for the new Mexican president for the 1940-1946 mandate. Cárdenas continued to play an important role

in the Mexican politics until his death. Until 1945 he was the Minister of defence in Camacho's administration. He later withdrew to his modest home by the Patzcuaro lake from where he monitored irrigation projects and advocated for free education and healthcare for the poor. He also continued to express his opinion in public on various international issues and the need to propagate democracy and human rights in Latin America and elsewhere. In 1960, after a failed assassination attempt on the Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro during the invasion in the Bay of Pigs, Cárdenas stood on Castro's side, but avoided interference in the conflict. He always disappointed those that wanted to connect his name with violence and obstruction of political processes. In October of 1968, during the student protests, he sent a convincing message to the students to end violence. He was also a member of Russell's court for investigating war crimes in Vietnam. To the end of his life, he remained a supporter of the implementation of rapid reforms, but in a nonviolent way. From the end of his mandate to his death, for the Mexicans, Cárdenas remained the voice of the past and reminder of all for which the revolution fought. He died of cancer on October 19, 1970 in Mexico City. After his death, in his honour, many cities, places and streets in Mexico and in the world were named Lazaro Cárdenas. In 1955 he received the Stalin prize for peace that later, during de-stalinization, begun to carry the name of Lenin.

In his political testament, that was written a year before his death and published posthumously, Cárdenas admitted that during his mandate he failed to combat corruption and achieve a fair distribution of wealth in society, which was the main focus of his rule and revolution. He expressed his regret that still some individuals and groups who are a minority in society make a fortune at the expense of the majority of mainly poor people.

5 THE REGIME OF JUAN PERÓN (1943-1955, 1973-1974)

5.1 TAKING POWER

After years of military education Juan Domingo Perón¹² became a Major in 1931, after which he started to teach at a military school where he wrote several books on military history and developed talents crucial in his later political career. Until the end of the 1930's Perón became an influential officer in the Argentine Army. In 1938 he was sent to Europe for 22 months where he, as a military observer, visited Italy, Spain, France, Germany and some other countries. During his stay in Italy he was thrilled by Mussolini's political style and rhetoric's. Some historians state that Perón's fascist tendencies date from this period. When he returned to Argentina in 1941 he was assigned to the mountain troops in Mendoza province. At this time, Argentina was in chaos. The military regime of President Castillo began to downfall. Corruption became an omnipresent occurrence in society, and soon everyone began to speculate that Castillo arrived to presidential position by deceit. The beginning of the Second World War brought a split in society. Some thought that Argentina needs to support Germany and the others that the country should remain neutral. In such circumstances Perón formed a group of united officers (GOU), a secret organization whose main goal was to prevent the upcoming elections, after which Castillo's chosen person would come in power. On June 4, 1943 GOU carried out a military coup which ousted Castillo from power and set General Pedro Pablo Ramirez for president.

5.2 THE RELATIONSHIP WITH TRADE UNIONS

For his merits while placing Ramirez in power, Perón was awarded the position of Minister of War, and later became the Minister of Labor and Social Welfare in the military government. During his ministerial mandate he won sympathies of many voters, mainly among the urban and rural working class. Perón took advantage of his ministerial position, where he had little authority, to win over the majority of voters of the working class in the country. He had at his

¹² Juan Domingo Perón was born on October 8, 1895 in Lobos, a small town near Buenos Aires. His father, Mario Tomas Perón was of Italian origin and his mother Juana Sosa Toledo was of Indian origin. In 1900 Juan and his older brother, Mario moved with their parents to Patagonia, where their father had bought some land and where they later built a ranch. Shortly after moving to Patagonia their father left the family after which their mother remarried. In 1904 Juan and his brother were sent to school to Buenos Aires. Because of his early departure from home Perón matured quickly and was more serious and more mature than kids his age. At the age of 16 he started attending a military academy, and after completing the Academy in 1913 joined the army and decided to build a military career. He continued military training at the High Military School (Escuela de Guerra) in 1926 and in 1928 became a commander. During this period, Perón met a young teacher Aurelia Tizón whom he married in 1928. Although he later rarely spoke about her, apparently, they had a happy marriage until her death in 1938.

disposal the ministry's staff that had good connections with trade unions and knew well the needs and desires of workers. In January 1944, while he was helping those afflicted by the earthquake, he met his future wife Eva Maria Ibarguren Duarte, singer and actress, who will later become the favorite of Argentina's people, known as Evita. They soon became lovers. However Perón never tried to hide their relationship, and treated Eva as his wife from the beginning. Their affair raised a lot of dust, but Perón never cared for that. As a result of good relations with the trade unions and workers, but also due to his relationship with Evita, Perón became a very popular person in Argentina.

Perón's policy towards workers was a policy of carrots and sticks: on one side he helped the trade unions in achieving their long-desired goal, while on the other side he carried out reprisals against organizations that did not obey. During his ministerial mandate for the first time the government adopted the Labour Law. With the support of the state more and more contracts were signed between workers and employers. In many of these contracts only agreements on the salary were achieved, but some dealt with some crucial matters. The contracts prescribed seemingly minimal changes in the rules of work, however, have provided more dignity to workers, as for example, separate dressing rooms for male and female employees. For the first time workers had rights in determining rules.

Before 1944 it was extremely difficult to establish trade unions out of Buenos Aires. This changed when the Ministry of Labor, led by Perón, commenced to encourage their establishment. For a long time workers in telecommunications in Buenos Aires tried to help their colleagues in other regions to establish trade unions, but did not succeed in this."During 1944 and 1945 thirteen trade unions of workers in telecommunications were established all across Argentina, some having direct government assistance" (Conniff 1999, 30). However, on the other side, Perón applied repression on all trade unions affiliated with the Communist Party who had to go underground if they wanted to survive. The government supported the rival anti-communist trade unions. Due to this, many important trade unions, including the trade unions of textile workers, meat processing industry and metallurgy, were shut down. Repression was directed towards trade unions that wouldn't cooperate with the government. The leaders of these trade unions were threatened to be arrested and tortured. The relationship with trade unions provided Perón sympathies and legitimacy from the working class, that he normally would not have because workers were always suspicious towards the army. The trade unions later offered great help in mobilizing voters. On the other side, the trade union

leaders took advantage of the moment to achieve their goals as Perón needed them as much as they needed him. For the first time in Argentina's history the trade union leaders were placed on important political and administrative positions. Perón developed an intensive personal relationship with members of the union. Because of his charisma, every move he made seemed categorical and thoughtful. His approach to workers was very effective as they were politically and socially isolated before 1943, and they were flattered by the attention he devoted to them.

5.3 THE FOUNDING MYTH OF PERONISM

The relation between Perón and a large number of workers led to dramatic events in October 1945 that became the founding myth of Peronism. While Perón was gaining adherents within the working class, he became very unpopular among other social sectors. In the minds of many, the military regime in Argentina was identified with Nazi Germany and fascist Italy. The end of the Second World War forced the military power to ease up, and they were forced to decrease the repression and censorship in society. Students and members of the middle class began with frequent demonstrations against the regime. Many military officers started to be bothered with Perón's policy, so they removed him from all functions on October 9, 1945. His removal created a political vacuum. His enemies were hesitant because they did not know what to do next. However, workers and trade union leaders reacted quickly in fear of losing privileges that were earned over the past two years. On October 16, 1945 the National Worker's Federation (CGT) voted on holding a general strike in the next two days. The following day, on October 17 thousands of workers flooded Buenos Aires. They started from the worker's suburbs towards the south of the city, and when the bridge over river Riachuelo was elevated to prevent them from passing, they crossed the river on improvised rafts. The crowd gathered on the square in front of the presidential palace and demanded Perón's return. They were well behaved and dressed nicely: the photos taken at that time show most of the men in suits with ties, in spite of the heat that day. Some took off their jackets and shirts, some threw themselves in fountains. For this reason Perón's supporters were later called *descamisados* (without shirts). Soon it became the symbol of Perónism and people often took off their shirts at various meetings as a sign of solidarity and pride for belonging to the working class (although many were not workers). Those belonging to the political elite and middle class became disturbed, not as much as for the actual behaviour of the mass, but because the city was no longer in their hands. This type of social tension is very important for understanding both, attraction and repulsion of populist programs. Faced with the need to

clear the square occupied with Perón's followers, the army gave in and Perón was released. He was thus enabled to participate on the upcoming presidential elections.

What exactly happened on October 17, 1945 in Buenos Aires? The legend says that Perón's future wife Eva Duarte gathered workers on her own initiative. However, it is impossible that she did this herself as at the time she did not have so many contacts with workers and was not as famous to be listened to. The demonstrations were planned, because during the demonstrations in front of the presidential palace there were other demonstrations taking place in worker's suburbs and in different places all across the country. That couldn't have been an immediate result of CGT's call for strike from the previous day. Namely, some trade union leaders started calling for strike right after Perón's dismissal on October 9, and workers were prepared for action. During the 1930's the unionism received its legitimacy and contacted all workers in the Buenos Aires area. The unions needn't to persuade workers to take to the streets. For the first time then, the working class changed the history of Argentina. Events that took place October 17, 1945 created a link between Perón and workers, which also exists nowadays. With Perón's return to power the workers changed the direction of policies, received a greater sense of pride and new identification as Peronists.

The presidential elections were set for February 1946. Although Perón was a candidate at the elections, his victory was not expected. Almost all traditional parties supported the candidate of the radical party Jose Tamborini at the elections. The USA openly opposed to Perón's arrival to power. It was considered that workers will be loyal to parties they always supported, that is the Communist and Socialist party. Perón's candidacy was supported by the Labourist party (Partido Laborista), established after the demonstrations of October 17, and the Catholic Church and by dissidents from the Radical party. With great assistance of the Radical party and support of the trade union, Perón won the elections with 52,4% of votes. Besides that, the candidates from his list won a majority in both Houses of Parliament.

5.4 PERÓN IN POWER

Perón had the possibility to rule in a democratic way, he had the majority in the Congress that allowed him to do nearly anything he pleased. But, in the true populist manner, he got power, but refused to share it with those who did not support him. Gradually, his regime became increasingly authoritarian, particularly after 1950 when the economical situation in the country started to worry him. This process started much earlier and developed slowly. In May

1946, under great pressure of Perón, the Labourist party (Partido Laborista) was dissolved. Perón establishes the Perón party (Partido Peronista) known as Partido Justicialista (PJ) after what the entire movement will later be called Justicialismo. CGT had to dismiss their independent secretary Luis Gay, and he fell under Perón's direct supervision. There was no place in Perón's regime for people that were not fully loyal to him. In 1951 he prohibited the newspaper La Prensa, serious newspapers with a long tradition that were for years the reading of the higher class. The only serious daily newspapers that continued to be published and remained independent were La Nacion. It became extremely dangerous to oppose the regime because arrests and repression of his opponents became widespread. But, Perón never wished to become a dictator. He was a populist; he constantly sought to increase the number of his followers and was very successful in this.

An important cause of Perón's increasing popularity was rapid economic growth that occurred during the first years of his mandate. For example, "the average workers' hourly rate increased by 25% in 1947, and the next year for just as much" (Conniff 1999, 34). The economic situation was going his way, and he continuously succeeded to increase the number of his followers. Many business people have started to support him because of the new opportunities he offered. He got even closer to workers by passing the law that enabled better conditions for retirement, better health insurance and possibility to use state resorts with their families during vacation. All this was available for use through unions.

During the 1930's in Argentina dissatisfaction spread over the foreign ownership of companies in key sectors. Perón decided to buy many of these companies with the money earned by the country during the Second World War, including telecommunications and the railway. His popularity with citizens of different social strata throughout the country grew for these decisions.

Eva Duarte de Perón (Evita) played an important role in the development of the symbolic side of Peronism. When she met Perón in 1944 she was an actress, but soon developed interest for politics. In a society where women had no suffrage and where the woman's role in society was still traditional, Perón and Evita distinguished themselves as people who are willing to defy social norms. Perón never minded Evita's interest for politics and for being actively involved in the political life of the country. Moreover, he opposed to the tradition and married Evita, a woman with a "past", a few days after the event on October 17, 1945. Soon after

Perón became president, Evita also started to represent a powerful political force in the country. She assumed Juan's role of attracting as many followers, what he was doing during 1944 and 1945. She was particularly loved by the poorest strata of society who looked at her as their patroness. Although she was not a particularly good actress she managed well in the public arena. Her speeches were very effective and touched the hearts of people. In 1947 Evita established the Foundation Eva Perón that was financed mainly from tax revenues and from donations that some gave voluntarily, and some because they were forced. The Foundation took over the leadership over institutions for social welfare, which until then was negligently led by women from higher classes. The Foundation dealt with many things, from building hospitals and orphanages, to organizing football games for boys. The Foundation thus became the bridge that connected the people with Evita. It was quite easy to approach Evita. On photos she always represented herself as a quasi-saint, which was extremely important in a predominantly Catholic nation. There are photos on which, for example, she is kissing a woman on her mouth, infected with syphilis, not being afraid of getting contracted. Evita thus became the object of the Perón propaganda, and influenced the shaping of public opinion.

Women in Argentina received their right to vote in 1947. Evita contributed a lot to the struggle for women's suffrage, especially in the last phase. After women got their suffrage, Evita insisted on the establishment of a separate women's branch of the Perón party. Such branches were quickly formed throughout the country. Since the electoral reform of 1947 allowed consecutive re-election to the presidency, at the next election in 1951 Perón once again ran for president and won thanks to women's votes. Specifically, in the 1951 elections, Perón got a much higher percentage of votes from women than from men. Evita played a major role in this.

As a true populist, Perón wanted to establish a cultural hegemony in Argentina and wanted the Argentines to change their vision of their country. This was very difficult because Peronism, like other populist movements, was not based on one consistent ideology. Rituals, as the celebration of May 1st, Labor Day, were renamed and peronised in order to emphasize the privileges that workers got from Perón and the harmony during Perón's reign. The school curriculum emphasized the catholic values and the family Perón was glorified. Entire cities, even entire regions were named after Perón and Evita, and monuments were erected to them everywhere. Perón's efforts to redefine cultural values produced great dissatisfaction of some

social groups. The Catholic Church, that was Perón's ally in the beginning, considered that the peronist values are inconsistent with Catholic teaching, and slowly begun to distance themselves from Perón's regime. The Peronists led mass demonstrations against the Church, the divorce was legalized, and catholic schools were placed under supervision of the Ministry of Education, to which Vatikán responded with Perón's excommunication and his entire cabinet. The majority of the middle class and elite believed that Perón's measures are inconsistent with their vision of the argentine society. Perón's policies threatened their dominance in society because the members of the working class were getting all the important positions in the state. After 1948, the economic situation in the country was getting worse. Those that became Perón's followers due to the economic growth, for which Perón was meritorious, withdrew their support. Parts of the military forces also turned their backs to him. After Evita's death in 1952 there was nobody left with Perón to give him a wise advice. In June 1955 a part of the military forces, the navy and air force, tried to attempt to perform a coup, but because the land forces remained loyal to Perón, the attempt failed. "In fear for his own security Perón armed his followers descamisados, and thus turned towards himself the entire army forces, that threw him from power with a new coup in September 1955" (Kos-Stanišić 2009, 145). The influence of Perón's populist regime on the argentine society did not disappear after his descent from power. Society has become even more divided into those who thought that Peronism should be erased from the Argentine political scene and those who wanted Perón's return to power.

5.5 EXILE AND RE-ENTRY INTO POWER

After he descended from power, Perón kept quiet for a while and went into exile to Spain. From there he continued to lead his party and the unions. When the army took over power they wanted to stop the disintegration of the economical and political system of Argentina. They started to restructure and rationalize the economy. They prohibited the unions approach to politics and tried to restrain their power. A combination of political and economical frustrations led to a series of urban riots in the late 60's. The peak was in Cordoba in 1969. The street riots lasted for two days and left 60 dead behind. That was a serious blow to the ruling regime. The revolutionary groups started to kidnap business people and were requesting high ransom. Guerrilla began with frequent attacks to which the army did not know how to respond appropriately. The government responded to violence with even fiercer violence, and a civil war erupts in Argentina. With time all social groups, including the elite and the army, started to advocate Perón's return as they felt that he was the only one who

could control the situation in which the country was in. In 1971 general Alejandro Lanusse comes to power wanting to create a new political agreement, and allows Perón's return to the country. The army finally gives in due to their fear of eruption of even more violence and calls for elections in 1973, where all political parties could participate. Perón returned to Argentina and supported the candidacy of Hector Campora who won with 49,6% of votes. The Perón party got 20 of 22 gubernatorial positions and most of them in both houses of Congress. Campora however does not end the violence and kidnappings, and descends from power only a few months after the elections. The Perón party names Perón for president, and his third wife Isabel Martinez de Perón for vice-president. Perón wins the elections with 61,8% of votes. He offered the same solutions to get the country out of crisis as in his previous mandate, although, times have changed and this no longer functioned. Workers and industrials have become autonomous political forces, and Perón's corporative methods had no longer any sense. Some fractions appeared in the Perón party and there was no possibility to reconcile the right and left faction within the party. For this reason Perón dismissed the supporters of the left wing from the party. The oil crisis, that seriously threatened the Argentine balance of payments, erupts in 1974. Shortly after, just over some eight months from return to power, Perón dies and leaves behind his widow Isabela to cope with the serious problem in the country. However, Isabela did not have Perón's charisma and wisdom and did not get by in the role of president. Her reign was marked by rising inflation and political violence. In March 1976 the army removed her from power, after which a period of terror that was never seen before in the history of Argentina started. Military power started with "dirty war" against guerrilla and the opposition in which, according to official data, 10000 desaparecidos¹³ were murdered, but it is considered that the actual number of murdered is around 30000 (Conniff 1999, 39).

¹³ The literal translation from the Spanish word means disappeared.

6 CONCLUSION

In comparing the rule characteristics of three Latin-American presidents: Getulio Vargas, Lazar Cárdenas and Juan Perón with the populist features mentioned in the first part of the thesis, I can conclude that all three of them were populists, at least in some periods of their rule. Some of the main characteristics that represent the populist leaders and movements are: using the new technologies (transport and media), charismatic leadership, army empowerment, nationalistic tendencies, appeal to several ideologies (not choosing one specific ideology), using elections to obtain power, protecting workers' rights, expanding election rights, promoting the ideas of external enemy, and a reluctance of foreign capital entering the country.

The rule of all three presidents shared most of those characteristics. However, considering my research, we can easily conclude that Peronism is one of the best examples of a populist movement. If we study Perón's movement closely, we can notice that it covers the most populist characteristics mentioned in the previous paragraph. That also includes Perón's character and personality. Comparing Perón with other two presidents, it is not hard to notice how his singular charismatic leadership distinguished him from the other two presidents. .

Perón and his wife Evita (who was also a very charismatic person and a good public speaker) succeeded in developing the strong personality cult and emotional connection with their followers. Perón made wide succession because of the good connection with trade unions, founded in Argetina upon his impulse. He got the authority through elections, as it is expected from populist rulers. During Perón's rule, the right to vote has been expanded, what also gave the women the opportunity to vote for the first time in Argentina. He conducted the social and educational reforms, brought the law about workers' rights and tried to reintegrate the cultural hegemony in the country. Perón often held the speeches in front of the thousands of people, fought against foreign capital in the country and nationalized telecommunication and railway. At the beginning of the mandate he ruled dictatorial, but the most of the time he ruled following the populist features. After his death, Perón's and Evita's figure and deed became a myth. Even today, there are Perón's followers in Argentina who remember those times with melancholy. Still, Peronism as a movement was never that successful as it was during the Perón's life.

In Cárdenas' populist career, one of the most important movements was the nationalization of foreign oil companies by the end of '30s. That was pronouncedly populist action that marked his entire career. Cárdenas also created his own election base that included workers and peasants, whose life conditions were improved by Cárdenas' Sexenal plan. Cárdenas increased his succession by traveling all over the country, where he tried to close the gap between "small man" and government power. Cárdenas, the same as Vargas, got the power through elections. They both expended the right to vote by implementing new laws and enabled women to have a right to vote. They enforced social and educational reforms, instigated the trade unions establishment and passed laws establishing work and workers' rights. One characteristic that is similar for all three presidents is the character of their economic policy responses to the economic and oil crises in the world. Their policies lead to inflation and a decrease of quality of life standards in their countries. All of this was a result of the decadence of their popularity. However, after Cárdenas' removal from authority and Perón and Vargas' death, their people decided to remember them only by positive movements they did during their rule, while forgetting the periods of dictatorship, repression and unpopular measurements. The countries needed a lot of time to recover after their expansive politics, mostly directed towards spending the state money in order to bribe the masses and increase the popularity. There is no doubt that populist rule of Vargas in Brazil, Cárdenas in Mexico and Perón in Argentina, influenced the future politics and social development in their countries in positive and negative ways. Positive ways were declared in expansion of voting rights, forming the trade unions, industrialization, expanding the social and political rights and nationalization foreign companies that are one of the leading contributors of state budget even today (such as PEMEX company, found by Cárdenas). Among all negative outcomes caused by populist rule, one of the most important is damage of the state economy, and torture and repression perpetrated over non-sympathizers. Although today there are still populist leaders in Latin America, such as Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, populism has reached its culmination precisely throughout the rule of Vargas, Cárdenas and Perón in the middle of 20th Century.

Latin America's populist political movements present how powerful elites continue to dominate region's economic and political structures. Rich have become much richer, while Latin America's less-favored inhabitants remain decidedly unsatisfied with the status quo. Comparing to China or India, Latin America's economic growth has lagged far behind. Therefore, it is easy to conclude that today's leftward incline of Latin American politics has taken a populist character, too.

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8 DALJŠI POVZETEK - Populizem v Latinski Ameriki - primerjava Brazilije (Vargas), Mehike (Cárdenas) in Argentine (Perón)

Populizem se je v Latinski Ameriki pojavil na začetku 20. stoletja in sicer kot reakcija na globoke spremembe v družbi. Večji del držav je pričel z izvozom svojih izdelkov v Evropo in tako so si pridobile denar za industrijski razvoj in razvoj mest. V ta mesta se je pričelo priseljevat na tisoče migrantov, ki so v iskanju službe, postali tarča aktivistov, ki so jih vabili v svoje vrste. To so bile delavske organizacije, sindikati, vojska, menihi, politiki in drugi.

Lahko bi rekli, da je populistična politika, vse od začetka Prve svetovne vojne pa do šestdesetih let 20. stoletja, oblikovala politične spremembe v državah Latinske Amerike.

To obdobje se imenuje klasična era populizma v Latinski Ameriki. V tem obdobju se je populizem širil predvsem zahvaljujoč razvoju novih tehnologij. To se nanaša v prvi meri na sredstva množične komunikacije in na transport. Mediji so politikom omogočili, da jih slišijo široke mase volivcev. Populisti so bili tudi bolj vešč pri govorih na radiu in televiziji od svojih tekmecev in so bili zato v stanju, da si pridobijo podporo, tako volivcev iz velikih mest, kot tudi tistih iz manjših mest in ruralnih področjih. Skoraj vsi populistični govorniki in veščina nastopanja v javnih medijih jim je služila kot volilno orožje. Politike, ki so se v tem času pojavljali v medijih, so volivci doživljali kot moderne, kompetentne, prepričljive in usmerjene v prihodnost. V 1920-ih in 1930-ih letih je bil radio glavni medij, ki je igral pomembno vlogo pri volilnih kampanjah populistov. V zgodnjih petdesetih letih so gospodinjstva že imela televizijo, tako da so se populistični kandidati hitro usmerili v ta medij in izkoristili njegove prednosti, ki jim jih je ta ponujal. Televizija je omogočila politikom še bolj tesen stik z volivci, ki so sedaj lahko videli geste in izraze na licih politikov. Zaradi tega so zveneli slogani in sporočila še bolj prepričljivo in so imeli večji vpliv na volivce. Populisti so posvečali veliko pozornosti estetiki, kajti vizualen vtis, ki so ga puščali, jim je bil zelo pomemben. Fizična privlačnost kandidata je bistveno vplivala na preferenčnost volivca. Populisti, kot Perón, Gaitán in Arias so negovali kult mača in zato ni bila izjema, da je ženski del populacije glasoval za njih samo zaradi njihovega videza. Prav tako so jim omogočala nova prevozna sredstva in boljše prometne povezave, da med volilno kampanjo prepotujejo celo deželo in da imajo govore celo v majhnih mestecih in vasicah, čigar prebivalci so imeli tedaj priložnost prvič slišati in videti enega nacionalnega politika.

Poleg medijev in novih prevoznih sredstev se za pojav populizma v Latinski Ameriki omenja tudi urbanizacijo in industrializacijo, zaradi katerih se je v mesta natrlo milijone ljudi. Politiki so se na njih lažje obrnili, ker so bili skoncentrirani v enem mestu in ne razpršeni po veliko majhnih vasicah po celi deželi. Vsekakor pa ne moremo trditi, da obstaja med urbanizacijo in industrializacijo ter populizmom direktna povezava. Razvoj mest in industrije ni vedno vodil k populizmu in prav tako se je populizem razcvetel v nekaterih deželah, kjer še ni bilo urbanizacije in industrializacije. Kljub vsemu pa lahko trdimo, da so ti pogoji ustvarili družbeno-politične pogoje, ki so bili zelo ugodni za nastanek populističnega vodstva z deželah Latinske Amerike. V novonastalih velikih mestih se je občutek odtujenosti dotaknil skoraj vseh družbenih skupin: delavcev, imigrantov, mladine, staroselskih prebivalcev, žensk, migrantov in ruralnih sredin in ostale. Vsi ti so imeli malo upanje v izboljšanje življenjskih pogojev in so se mnogokrat medsebojno bojevali za pridobitev še tako majhnih ugodnosti s strani države. Kljub temu, da je imelo urbano življenje mnogo prednosti v nasprotju z ruralnimi sredinami in majhnimi mesti, pa je bilo življenje v industrijskih mestih, na začetku 20-ega stoletja, zelo kruto. V tem času je politična elita povečala svoj nadzor nad srednjim in delavskim slojem. Pogosto so ponarejali volitve in potem s pomočjo policije ohranjali mir in red v mestih, tako da ne bi prišlo do stavk ali demonstracij na ulicah. Prav tako so plačevali ljudem, da so ti ustražovali volivce na dan volitev, da bi si s tem ohranili svoj obstoj na oblasti. Torej je večina Latinoameričanov na začetku 20-ega stoletja živelo, za današnje pojme, v nedemokratičnih razmerah. Latinskoameriške države so zaostajale za Evropo in Severno Ameriko v širitvi individualnih pravic. Takšni pogoji so bili idealni za vzpon vodij, ki so ljudem ponujali občutek pripadnosti in so delali spremembe, katere bi izboljšale vsakodnevno življenje. Takšen stil volilna kampanje in vladavine je bil kasneje označen za populizem.

Idealna priložnost za uspeh populistov, je torej takrat, ko se morajo posamezniki in skupine ljudi prilagajati na krizo ali slabo stanje v državi. V takšnih situacijah se ljudstvo mnogokrat odloči, da bo dalo svoje zaupanje politikom, za katere menijo, da jih bodo znali voditi v takšnih okoliščinah. Populisti so bili bolj uspešni od svojih konkurentov pri prepričevanju volivcev, da so prav oni idealne vodje za krizne in težke situacije.

Uspeh populističnih vodij je bil odvisen od njihove sposobnosti, da laskajo masam in si pridobijo njihovo naklonjenost in spoštovanje. Karizmatičnost populističnih vodij je bila vedno odločujoča za to, da jih je narod sprejel. Pod pojmom karizmatično vodstvo razumemo

povezanost med vodjo in skupino privrženecv. Za to so značilne sledeče karakteristike: 1. privrženci dojemajo vodje kot nekakšno vrsto »super junakov«; 2. privrženci slepo verjamejo v to, kar vodja govori; 3. privrženci brez ugovorov sprejemajo navodila od vodje glede tega, kako naj se obnašajo; 4. obstaja popolna čustvena predanost vodji (Willner 1984, Conniff 199: 192). Ljudje so bolj podvrženi karizmatičnemu vodstvu, kadar imajo pomanjkanje samozavesti in kadar so mnenja, da sami ne bodo kos izzivom in nevarnosti iz okolice. Taka nemoč in strah povzročijo pri ljudeh zaskrbljenost in strah. Če se celotna nacija tako počuti in večina prebivalcev Latinske Amerike se je tako počutila na začetku in v sredini 20-ega stoletja, potem to predstavlja idealen predpogoj za vzpon populizma. Takrat namreč ljudstvo vidi populiste kot rešitelje, ki bodo rešili njihove probleme in jim omogočili boljše življenje.

Konec hladne vojne, pojav globalizacijskih trendov, svoboden trg, širitev demokratičnih vrednot in povečana konkurenčnost na ekonomskem trgu so spet bili vzrok za ustvarjanje plodnih tal za uspehe populistične politike in populistične vodje.

V 20-em stoletju je bila večina latinskoameriških vodij populistov. Od najbolj zgodnjih let 20-ega stoletja v regiji La Plata, pa vse do 1990-ih, so bili populisti zelo uspešni pri pridobivanju glasov in pri zmagah na volitvah, še posebej uspešni so bili pri osvajanju množic (na primer delavskega razreda) da so te glasovale za njih. Prav tako so znali kako ostati na oblasti in kako zadržati svoje privrženecv, da so jim bili verni. Prav tako so bili mnogi uspešni pri ponovnih izvolitvah na volitvah, tudi po tem, ko so že enkrat izgubili volitve ali pa bili vrženi z oblasti, kot na primer Perón v Argentini, ki je bil vržen z oblasti leta 1955. Po svojem bivanju v izgnanstvu je bil ponovno izvoljen za predsednika leta 1973. Vpliv populističnih vodij na politiko in vsakodnevno življenje v Latinski Ameriki je res zelo velik in še zdaj ni do konca raziskano na katere vse načine je populizem vplival na različne sfere življenja. Populizem je imel mnogo pomanjkljivosti, toda tudi nekatere pozitivne plati. Nekateri populisti so bili podkupljivi, nekateri so manipulirali s svojimi privrženecv in podobno. Toda njihov poskus, da bi čim večje število državljanov imelo pravico do glasovanja in tudi ustvarjanje zavesti o pomembnosti udeležbe na volitvah je imelo pozitiven vpliv na ustvarjanje državljanske zavesti v državah Latinske Amerike. V tem času so pravico do glasovanja dobile v mnogih državah tudi ženske. Populisti so dali pravico do glasovanja ženskam prvotno zaradi tega, ker so ženske bile največja skupina v državi brez pravice do glasovanja in zato so jim bili njihovi glasovi koristni pri zmagovanju na volitvah. Poleg tega so populisti tudi na splošno širili pravice žensk. Ena največjih zagovornic ženskih pravic je

bila soproga argentinskega populističnega predsednika Juana Peróna – Eva Duarte Perón, med ljudmi znana kot Evita.

Michael Conniff (1999) trdi, da ne moremo na populiste gledati kot le na neodgovorne vodje, ki so zapravljali državni denar, da bi obdržali podporo množice. Potrebno jih je preučevati kot politični fenomen in si postaviti vprašanje, na kakšne načine pridejo take vodje na oblast in kako vladajo. V tej nalogi bom poskušala odgovoriti na ta vprašanja.

Po tem, ko sem prikazala, značilnosti vladavine treh latinskoameriških predsednikov: Getulia Vargasa, Lazarja Cárdenasa in Juana Peróna z značilnostmi populizma, navedenimi v prvem delu naloge, lahko zaključim, da so bili vsi trije populistični, vsaj v posameznih obdobjih svoje vladavine. Nekatere od glavnih značilnosti populističnih vodij in gibanja so: uporaba novih tehnologij (transport in mediji), karizmatično vodstvo, povečevanje vojske, nacionalistične tendence, se ne obračajo na eno konkretno ideologijo, na oblast pridejo z volitvami, ščitijo pravice delavcev, širitev pravice glasovanja, promoviranje ideje zunanjega sovražnika, upiranje proti tujemu kapitalu v državo in drugo. Vladavina vseh treh analiziranih predsednikov vsebuje večino teh značilnosti, vseeno pa lahko rečeno, da je peronizem primer čistega populističnega gibanja. Kajti vseeno je imelo Perónovo gibanje največ značilnosti populizma, kot tudi pri samem Perónu, pri katerem se bolj kaže posebna karizma, kot pri ostalih dveh. Perón je skupaj s svojo soprogo Evito, ki je tudi bila karizmatična osebnost in dobra govornica, uspel razviti močan kult osebnosti in se je čustveno povezal s svojimi privrženci. Veliko privrženost je ustvaril zaradi dobre povezanosti s sindikati, ki so se pričeli ustanavljati v Argentini prav na njegovo zahtevo. V pravem populističnem stile je prišel na oblast z volitvami in ne z revolucijo. Prav tako je razširil pravico glasovanja, v času njegovega mandata so dobile ženske prvič pravico do glasovanja v Argentini; izvedel je mnoge socialne in šolske reforme; sprejel je zakon o delu, ki je delavcem dal mnoge pravice, poskušal je vzpostaviti kulturno hegemonijo v državi; pogosto je imel govore pred tisočimi ljudmi, boril se je proti tujemu kapitalu v državi in nacionaliziral je telekomunikacije in železnico. Skoraj celoten svoj mandat je vladal populistično, le na začetku mandata najdemo značilnosti diktature. Po njegovi smrti so njegov in Evitin lik in njuno delo spremenili v mit, zaradi katerega še danes v Argentini obstaja mnogo njihovih privržencev in večina Argentinev se z otožnostjo spominja tistih časov. Po njegovi smrti samo Perónistično gibanje ni nikoli več doživelo takšnega uspeha kot za čas življenja Peróna.

V Cárdenasovi populistični karieri je še posebej pomembna poteza bila nacionalizacija starih naftnih podjetij iz konca tridesetih let. To je bilo izrazito populistično dejanje, ki je celotni njegovi karieri pustilo pečat. Tudi on si je ustvaril svojo volilno bazo iz delavcev in kmetov, ki jim je s pomočjo *načrta Sexenal* omogočil boljše življenjske pogoje. Stalno je povečeval število svojih privrženecv in pri tem so mu pomagala potovanja po celi državi, v katerih se je približal »malemu« človeku. Cárdenas in Vargas sta prišla na oblast s pomočjo volitev, razširila sta pravico glasovanja z novimi zakoni o volitvah in pravico do glasovanja sta dala ženskam, izvedla sta socialne in izobraževalne reforme, podpirali ustanavljanje sindikatov, ter dosegla sta zakon o delu in razširitev pravic do glasovanja za delavce. Za vse tri predsednike je značilno tudi to, da so njihovi ekonomski ukrepi, v kombinaciji z ekonomsko in naftno krizo po celem svetu, pripeljali do inflacije in padca življenjskega standarda v njihovih državah, kar je tudi pripeljalo do upada njihove priljubljenosti. Vseeno pa se je ljudstvo, po odhodu Cárdenasa z oblasti in po smrti Peróna in Vargasa, odločilo, da se jih po spominjalo po dobrih potezah, ki so jih naredili, dokler so še bili na oblasti, medtem ko se je pa ljudstvo odločilo, da bo obdobje diktature in represije, ter na nepopularne odločitve pozabilo. Te države so dolgo časa okrevale od njihove razsežne ekonomske politike, ki je bila usmerjena prvotno v porabo državnega denarja, da bi se s tem podkupila masa ljudi in da bi s tem pridobili na popularnosti.

Brez dvoma je populistična vladavina Vargasa v Braziliji, Cárdenasa v Mehiki in Peróna v Argentini vplivala na bodočo smer politike in družbeni razvoj v njihovih državah, tako v pozitivnem, kot tudi v negativnem smislu. Pozitivni vplivi so se kazali v širjenju pravice do glasovanja, pri ustvarjanju sindikatov, industrializaciji, širitvi socialnih in političnih pravic, ter v nacionalizaciji tujih podjetij, od katerih so nekateri še dandanes glavni polnilci državnega proračuna, kot na primer podjetje PEMEX, ki ga je ustanovil Cárdenas. Med negativne posledice je potrebno predvsem poudariti škodo, ki so jo storili državni ekonomiji, ter mučenje in represijo, ki so jo izvajali nad neprivrženci. Čeprav tudi danes v Latinski Ameriki obstajajo populistične vodje, kot na primer Hugo Chávez v Venezueli, je vseeno dejstvo, da je populizem dosegel svoj vrhunec prav v času vladavine Vargasa, Cárdenasa in Peróna v sredini 20-ega stoletja.