Populism and Democratic Representation in Latin America

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of representation ... is a continuing tension between ideal and achievement. This tension should lead us neither to abandon the ideal, retreating to an operational definition that accepts whatever those usually designated as representatives do; nor to abandon its institutionalization and withdraw from political reality” (Pitkin 1967, 240)

What is the relationship between populism and democratic representation? At first glance, the question seems redundant since the study of populism and democracy has a long and rich tradition (Canovan 1999, Urbinati 1998, Mair 2002, Mény and Surel 2002, Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012a). However, most of the current literature, considers the relationship between populism and liberal democracy, defined in largely procedural terms as contestation, participation, and a set of supporting institutions designed to uphold individual liberties and minority rights.

The study of democratic representation gets at something broader that in many ways cuts across the institutions of liberal democracy, although there are clear points of
intersection. It is a question about the relationship between the inputs and outputs of democratic institutions and whether these, in the end, embody something really democratic, in the fundamental sense originally defined by Dahl as “the quality of being completely or almost completely responsive to its citizens” (Dahl 1971, 2). Although this responsiveness can mean many things (Mair 2011), here we take it as a core characteristic of modern representative democracies (Manin, Przeworski, and Stokes 1999b), i.e. the idea that democracy, in Hannah Pitkin’s words, “re-presents” citizens and their aspirations (1967). We accept the fundamental distinction enshrined by Dahl and others concerning the difference between democratic procedure and policy outcomes, and sympathize with the claim that (liberal) democratic procedures are most likely to achieve these outcomes (Collier and Levitsky 1997, Schumpeter 1950). Populism essentially challenges liberalism's claim to best achieve representation; hence, it is a question worth exploring even if we think the questions about populism and liberal institutions have been fully answered.

Ultimately, we argue that populism’s impact on democratic representation is more ambiguous than the current literature suggests. Populist ideas specifically address the lack of representativeness of political elites and claim to remedy the lack of correspondence between government outputs and citizen preferences; where the lack of correspondence is greatest, those ideas are most likely to be successful and have their largest impact. But populist ideas in practice also have strong tendencies towards exclusion that make any project at building democratic representation difficult. The impact of these ideas depends much less on the ideological flavor of populism (left or right) than on the size of populist coalitions and the strength of their opponents.
In this chapter we study the relationship between populism and representation with a specific focus on the Latin American region. We do so for several reasons. First, the region has been very prominent in the scholarly literature and informs much of our thinking on the association between populism and representation. Second, left populists in the region are thought to be important examples of democratic inclusiveness, and thus provide "most likely" cases for testing our argument. Our descriptive analysis shows that not all populists in the region adhere to a leftist ideology, nor that left populists always achieve their lofty goals. Against the background of Pitkin's (1967) concept of representation, our analysis indicates that they are more capable of providing some types of representation than others. At the end of the chapter, we suggest some ways forward as scholars apply these insights from Latin America to Europe and elsewhere.

**The Poorly Studied Relationship of Populism and Democratic Representation**

What is democratic representation? In this chapter we draw heavily from the classic framework of *The Concept of Representation* laid out by Pitkin (1967). She sees representation as a possible function of any government, but a crucial one for democracy. Following Pitkin, representation can be conceived of in four different ways. The first refers to a mere formalistic view on representation, which alludes to procedural definitions of democracy, seeing elections as instruments that enable citizens to authorize elected officials and hold them accountable for their actions (see also Powell 2000, Manin, Przeworski, and Stokes 1999a). The other three views on representation, on the other hand, focus on the content of the representative link between citizens and their representatives: descriptive, symbolic, and substantive representation. Pitkin (1967)
argues that from a descriptive view of representation, the link between a citizen and its representative is based on resemblance (see also Mansbridge 1999), i.e. "it depends on the representative's characteristics, on what he is or is like, on being something rather than doing something" (1967, 61, italics original). Relatedly, symbolic representation is also referred to as an act of standing for something; however, in this view the representative does not have to be a person or resemble the represented (as in the type of descriptive representation). Instead, the represented may be a group or a whole nation who is represented via a symbol, e.g. a political leader or a flag (see Pitkin 1967, 92ff). The idea is that the group is dignified, or recognized in a normatively positive way as helping constitute the democratic sovereign. Substantive representation, in contrast, is defined as "the nature of the activity itself, what goes on during representing, the substance or content of acting for others, as distinct from its external and formal trappings" (Pitkin 1967, 114). While the former two views on representation center on representing through mirroring either the different parts of society based on identity or class markers or through symbolizing the society as a whole, the latter centres on representation as acting in the interest of citizens (see also Saward 2008). This latter view lies at the heart of most theories of democracy, although envisioned institutionally in many different ways (Dahl 1971, Manin, Przeworski, and Stokes 1999b, Schmitter and Karl 1991, Riker and Ordeshook 1968). Underlying this is the broader claim that democracy can be conceived of in part as an institutionalized effort at representation. We return to these views below when we flesh out our (ideational) theory of populism and representation.
Populism, as understood by almost any of the definitions highlighted in this handbook, ultimately makes an argument not for any particular set of institutions but for the ideal of democratic representation (see also Caramani forthcoming). In the discourse of populist actors, the citizens are the rightful sovereign and the government should reflect their interests and identities. As such the rise of populism is closely related to a perceived "crisis of representation" (Kriesi 2014, Mair 2002, Taggart 2002), i.e. the claim that governments have ceased to be representative: citizen interests are consistently harmed (substantive representation), and their views and voices are suppressed, fragmented, and delegitimated (descriptive and symbolic representation). This lack of representation is the result of selfish machinations by the very elite that was supposed to be representing the people; hence, a drastic response is required, one that can restore a rightful representative government. Liberal institutions such as nominally competitive elections are still important for registering the voice of the people (formal representation), but they may be temporarily compromised as the people struggle against the domination of powerful elites who manipulate these rules. Ultimately the function of democratic government is to represent the people, and liberal institutions (or any other set of policies—note this, economists!) are seen as means to this end.

Over the past two centuries, actual populist parties and movements have won elective office in many countries, both as principled opposition parties as well as to highest government positions. Naturally, the question is whether these populists really are responsive to their claims of improving representation and, furthermore, whether we should have expected them to. One answer to these questions comes from Latin Americanists, who have historically taken a positive view of populism and
representation. If we ignore the voice of some early naysayers who saw populism as a sham that ultimately failed to deliver on its promises (Di Tella 1965, Dornbusch and Edwards 1991, Germani 1978, Ianni 1975, Weffort 1978), we find a number of scholars who see populist forces in a positive light precisely because those forces increased not just formal representation (especially through extension of the franchise and the legalization of civil society organizations created by middle and lower sectors) but descriptive, symbolic, and ultimately substantive representation. Populist forces have brought excluded racial, socioeconomic, and gender-based groups into elected positions while redistributing important state benefits, all while rhetorically dignifying popular voices and acknowledging them as part of “the people.” The products of these governments—in the early twentieth century, radicalism; in mid-twentieth century, Peronismo, Varguismo, and Velasquismo; and in recent decades, Chavismo and its Bolivarian allies—have supposedly brought profound changes that reduce inequality and heralded critical junctures in these countries’ democratic institutional histories (Chalmers et al. 1997, Collier and Collier 1991, Laclau 2006, Drake 1978, Stein 1980).

However, many of these studies on Latin America have not focused primarily on populism, and those that do often use older, structuralist definitions that make it hard to pinpoint whether it was populism that brought about these changes or some traditional ideological component of the leader’s programmatic vision. Furthermore, most of these studies have selected on the dependent variable, identifying and analyzing cases of populism that brought about successful change, while ignoring other populist movements that failed at these attempts, or non-populist movements that brought about the same improvements through pluralist means.
European scholars, in contrast, are more focused specifically on populism, and most of them use ideational or political-institutional definitions that at least in theory would allow them to analyze these connections. Most of their work studies the relationship of populism to democracy’s liberal elements, especially contestation and occasionally participation. As Huber and Schimpf outline in their chapter, this literature either sees populism as an entirely negative force (Abts and Rummens 2007, Urbinati 1998) or as both a threat and a corrective for liberal democracy (Arditi 2004, Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012a, Panizza 2005). On the one hand, populism’s presumption of a unified popular will closes off the space required for opposition, and its faith in popular know-how, together with the assumption of charismatic leadership, encourages the elimination of independent government institutions; thus, contestation declines (Panizza 2005, Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012a, Albertazzi and McDonnell 2008, Houle and Kenny forthcoming, Huber and Schimpf 2015, Allred, Hawkins, and Ruth 2015). On the other hand, populism can have a beneficial effect on democratic participation, insofar as it incorporates the views of previously ignored segments of the electorate or mobilizes their vote. Furthermore, the negative impact of populism on contestation is not a given; it is more likely when populists are in government and have the ability to capture and control institutions, while populist challengers may force incumbent traditional parties to become more attentive without having a direct, negative impact on the political system (Heinisch 2003, Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012a, Otjes 2012, Allred, Hawkins, and Ruth 2015, Ruth 2015, Ruth and Welp 2014).

Although these more recent arguments have obvious implications for democratic representation, scholars who make them avoid framing their claims in these terms.
Instead, they focus on the procedural elements of liberal definitions, or what Mény and Surel (2002) call the “constitutional” pillar of liberal democracy. The focus on liberal democracy is valuable, and we contribute to this conversation in some of our own work elsewhere (Allred, Hawkins, and Ruth 2015, Ruth 2015). But it struggles to address questions about democratic representation, because liberal arguments frequently leave untested the assumption that liberal institutions achieve the goal of connecting popular inputs with outputs or outcomes.

One exception to this trend is the work of Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2013). Although their book (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012b) conceives of this impact in liberal terms, in a later article they reconceive of this impact more broadly in terms of democratic inclusion and exclusion. Their focus on material, political, and symbolic inclusion (or exclusion) roughly parallels Pitkin’s notions of substantive, descriptive, and symbolic representation (although they are not spelled out this way). Specifically, an inclusive regime represents the material interests of citizens (substantive representation), accords them political participation in a way that ensures they have a real voice in how government is constituted (formal representation and descriptive representation), and dignifies them symbolically by making clear that they are part of “the people” (symbolic representation). Through a rough comparison of four countries, Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2013) show that populist regimes in Latin America (Hugo Chávez’s Bolivarian movement in Venezuela and Evo Morales’ MAS in Bolivia) are much more inclusive than populists in Europe (the Front Nacional in France and the FPÖ in Austria). Although Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser’s work is a clear step forward in the study of populism and representation, they do not engage Pitkin’s framework directly. In

\[\text{\textsuperscript{1}}\text{See also Caramani (forthcoming) on a comparison between populism, technocracy and party government.}\]
particular, they stop short of providing an explanation for populism’s effects in each of these three areas of inclusiveness. That is, they describe the effects with reference to their four cases, but they do not propose a clear set of causal mechanisms linking populist ideas to representational consequences. Consequently, they get some of these effects wrong.

A Theory of Populism and Democratic Representation

Our argument is that populist ideas per se matter for representation. Although these ideas interact with other features of the political environment, the ideas themselves have significant, traceable effects that are at least partially independent of the populists’ left or right ideology. Hence, to explain the impact of populism on democratic representation we build on the ideational approach to define populism.

In line with other scholars who use this approach (Mudde 2004, Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012a), we define populism as a political discourse that posits a struggle between a unified will of the common people and a conspiring elite. Elsewhere in this volume it is referred to as [need the editors’ label here]. Whether we refer to populism as a discourse, discursive frame, or thin-centered ideology, all scholars using this approach see populist ideas as the main driving force behind the (un)democratic behavior of populist leaders and followers, providing the motivating force for their policy choices (Heinisch and Mazzoleni forthcoming, Rooduijn 2014). This approach does not discard the impact of material constraints, but it sees those constraints as moderators of populist ideas (Hawkins and Rovira Kaltwasser 2014). And while it does not claim that
politicians always use the discourse sincerely, it assumes that the support of voters generally forces politicians who do use the discourse to act as if they were sincere.

Using the ideational approach, we start more or less as other scholars have, with an appreciation of the likely positive effects of populism on representation. Populism is essentially an argument that traditional political actors are undermining democratic representation, and populist actors make some effort to rectify this gap in the link between representatives and citizens. Additionally, we can identify two aspects of populist ideas and their connection to the material environment that - irrespective of the region or host ideology - should influence populism’s relationship to representation. The first is that—as the literature on populism and liberal democracy already argues—populism is never an entirely benign force. While the liberalism literature frequently emphasizes the impact of charismatic leadership and populist ideas on horizontal accountability and the quality of electoral contestation, here we draw attention to its impact on civil liberties and minority rights. Populism may champion unrepresented sectors of citizens, but it also vilifies what it perceives as the elite and their cronies. Once in power, populists promise to systematically exclude them, i.e., to “unrepresent” them in all four ways: formally (by circumventing legal rights, especially the vote or the right to form political associations and run for office), descriptively (by removing them and “their kind” from office), symbolically (through rhetoric that dehumanizes them) and substantively (by imposing conditionality on government benefits or rewriting policy to systematically disadvantage former insiders). Thus, populism is good for democratic representation of “the people” but bad for that of “the elite.”
This leads to a second aspect of populism’s impact on democratic representation: size. Actual populist movements rarely represent a majority, and they certainly do not represent all of the citizenry. How large “the people” and “the elite” are matters a great deal. Smaller, niche populist parties such as radical right populists in Western Europe are more likely to alienate large segments of the citizenry, while larger majoritarian movements that win office with supermajorities such as in Latin America or Southern Europe may in fact improve representation for much of the population. Thus, the benefits of populism for democratic representation should be greater (but still incomplete) where populists win complete control of government through free and fair elections.

Although this provides our background argument, we also expect populism to have distinct, specific consequences for different types of representation. Starting with formal representation, we expect populism to be somewhat negative—but not entirely. As some critics have argued, populism has a difficult relationship with formal representative institutions, seeing elections as imperfect means of knowing the popular will, and discounting the importance of institutions that enshrine minority rights or enforce a separation of powers (see, for example, Caramani forthcoming). Relatedly, Taggart points out that populists "challenge the functioning of representative democracy … while at the same time championing the virtues of representation" (2004, 269). However, we disagree with arguments that populism leads inexorably to fully autocratic or even totalitarian regimes that eschew competitive elections in favor of purely plebiscitary, symbolic experiences (Abts and Rummens 2007, Urbinati 1998). Populist actors mainly argue against horizontal accountability mechanisms - which are a core principle of liberal constitutionalism - and in favor of an expansion of vertical
accountability mechanisms, especially majoritarian ones (Taggart 2004, Ruth 2015, Ruth and Welp 2014). They value the seal of popular approval that only a formally open, competitive election can provide, and they frequently champion direct participatory mechanisms such as recall, initiative, and referenda—including those that can be initiated by citizens (Ruth and Welp 2014). Thus, we see a strong ambivalence among populists towards formal democratic institutions. The quality of electoral competition may decline (as defenders of the liberal perspective have empirically demonstrated), but committed populists should support regular elections in which there is still some possibility of the populist incumbent losing. The result is hybrid democracy rather than outright autocracy or totalitarianism (Levitsky and Loxton 2013, Allred, Hawkins, and Ruth 2015).

In terms of descriptive and symbolic representation, we expect populists to do unambiguously well. This is not because populism is really all that inclusive (again, even highly popular populists vilify a non-insignificant subset of the population) but a matter of demographics. Most of the traditional political class comes from an intellectual and economic elite that embodies a small segment of society. There are few secretaries or plumbers winning public office, and when race or identity-based categories overlap with economic ones, whole segments of the population may go unseen in government. The populist emphasis on the virtues of ordinary citizens and their know-how, together with its tendency to exclude the most privileged sectors, means that a populist movement in power may bring a more diverse cross-section of the population into office and celebrate their democratic virtues in its rhetoric (see also Caramani forthcoming, Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2013). This is not to say that the size of the coalition is unimportant. Populist niche parties will naturally draw on a smaller cross-section of the population
than a majoritarian populist party, and their definition of “the people” will accordingly shrink. But trading a few Ivy League lawyers for members of the middle class, even if they are white and male, may represent a dramatic improvement for a population craving leaders that look more like them.

Finally, we expect populist parties and movements to have very mixed consequences for substantive representation. On the one hand, populist parties and movements raise high expectations about the performance of democratic systems, since populist actors usually campaign for complex and extensive economic policy change (see Ruth 2015). In line with the inclusive way of defining 'the people' in Latin America, this should lead to increased welfare spending to the poor, while the same logic applies to welfare chauvinism by the rather exclusivist populist parties in Europe (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2013, 2015). However, the success of these programs not only depends on the availability of public resources to fund social programs but also on the efficient and impartial implementation of these funds, i.e. their distributive impact. Populist parties in Latin America, are much closer to clientelistic systems of representation that distribute most goods and services conditionally, based on partisan criteria, than they are to programmatic ones that distribute goods using universalistic criteria (Ruth 2012, Kitschelt et al. 2010). Here, the size of the populist coalition looms large. We expect majoritarian coalitions like those in Latin America to be better at redistributing wealth or changing the policy agenda to address broadly felt needs. But Latin American populists are not entirely inclusive; even those winning large majorities have failed to capture a significant portion of the population (up to one-half), and their populist discourse means they tend to see this opposition as a diabolical elite that must be
isolated and reformed. This brings a conditional, partisan logic to their policymaking that is unlikely to offer the fully universalistic public goods of programmatically oriented parties and coalitions.

Empirical Analysis: Patterns of Populism and Representation in Latin America

To subject these arguments to a first empirical test, we now turn to the descriptive analysis of contemporary representative governments (both populist and non-populist) in contemporary Latin America (1999-2014). We focus on Latin America not only because this is traditionally one of the most widely studied regions in terms of populism, but because it offers a number of contemporary populist governments in power. These are majoritarian movements that represent “easy” cases for many of our arguments.

To measure the degree of populism we rely on a unique polity-level dataset that captures the populist discourse of chief executives (see Hawkins 2009, Hawkins and Kocijan 2013, Allred, Hawkins, and Ruth 2015). This dataset covers 36 Latin American leaders in 18 countries from 1999 until 2014. Thus, it captures much of the current variation of populist and non-populist regimes in Latin America. The indicator measures populist discourse through a human-coded content analysis of political speeches, using the ideational definition mentioned above as its point of comparison. The score for each leader is an average of four speeches using a quota sample to ensure comparability across chief executives; sampling techniques and the coding procedure (including the rubric and anchor texts) can be found in Hawkins (2009) and Hawkins and Kocijan (2013). The interval scale runs from 0 (no populism) to 2 (intense populism). By way of note,
intercoder reliability for the codes is quite high, and correlations with other data from the scholarly literature are also high (Hawkins and Castanho Silva 2015). The measure of the populist discourse has a mean of 0.35 and a standard deviation of 0.47 in our sample.

To measure the different types of political representation discussed above we build on several other sources. To capture formal and descriptive representation we use data from the Democracy Barometer project (DB, Merkel et al. 2016). This project provides panel data (countries and years) on a variety of institutional and behavioral measures capturing different principles and functions of democracy, including several aspects of representation, and is available for 18 Latin American countries with more than 250,000 inhabitants (Merkel et al. 2016). Hence, it covers all the chief executives included in our populist discourse dataset. More specifically, we use the following three composite indicators from the DB dataset that most closely resemble the democratic aspects theorized above: First, we measure formal representation through two aggregated indices of the structural opportunities for the inclusion of citizen preferences into the political process (items REP_SR1 and REP_SR2), such as electoral disproportionality, a high number of parliamentary seats, and direct democratic institutions (Bühlmann et al. 2012, Bochsler and Hug 2015, Merkel et al. 2016). Second, we measure descriptive representation through on the one hand, an aggregated index of political participation (item PARTICIP) which contains different indicators that capture both the effectiveness of institutional and non-institutional forms of participation - e.g. rules facilitating participation or the frequency of petitions - as well as the equality of participation rights and their use among different segments of society - e.g. the percentage of registered

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2 The 2011 Latin American update has at least 89 percent agreement, a Cohen’s kappa of between 0.66 and 0.72, and a Krippendorff’s alpha of 0.75 to 0.82, depending on the coders (Hawkins 2012). All of these are moderate to high levels of reliability (Krippendorff 2013, 241-242, Landis and Koch 1977).
voters or the distribution of turnout according to education and income (Paxton et al. 2003, Teorell 2006). On the other hand, we use an index of descriptive representation that captures the access to political office for ethnic and structural minorities, including the absence of legal restrictions or constraints as well as the adequate representation of women and ethnic groups in national political institutions (see also Bochsler 2010, Hänni 2016).³

To capture substantive representation we use data on social spending (as a percentage of total public spending) from CEPALSTAT (ECLAC 2016) and data on the control of corruption from the Worldwide Governance Indicators project (Kaufmann and Kraay 2016). For all of these indicators we calculate the change over time for each chief executive's first term (as well as completed consecutive terms, if applicable). We use the year before an incumbent assumed office and the last year in office as reference points⁴.

Note that, to the best of our knowledge, we are not aware of any dataset that captures the degree of symbolic representation. We suspect that the populist discourse dataset we use captures at least some aspects of symbolic representation. Many of these political leaders become symbols of the popular will themselves and their rhetoric typically identifies previously excluded groups as part of that will (Hawkins 2009). For example, in this passage from a speech used in our coder training, Evo Morales of Bolivia reacts to perceived attempts to symbolically exclude indigenous peoples from the category of legitimate citizens:

³ For a detailed description of the indicators included and the construction of the indices see (Merkel et al. 2016)
⁴ In case an incumbent assumed office after June 30th, we use the same year as the reference point. Likewise, we use the previous year as a reference point if an incumbent left office before July 1st.
They have tried to impose policies of hunger and poverty on the Bolivian people. Above all, the “rule of law” means the accusations that we, the Quechuas, Aymaras and Guaranties of Bolivia keep hearing from our governments: that we are narcos, that we are anarchists. This uprising of the Bolivian people has been not only about gas and hydrocarbons, but an intersection of many issues: discrimination, marginalization, and most importantly, the failure of neoliberalism.

Likewise, in a 2010 speech to a Tea Party convention (also used in coder training), former Republican vice-presidential candidate Sarah Palin applauds the “real people – not politicos, not inside-the-Beltway professionals – [who] come out and stand up and speak out for common-sense conservative principles.” For her, these “real people” are:

everyday Americans who grow our food and run our small businesses, teach our kids, and fight our wars. They’re folks in small towns and cities across this great nation who saw what was happening.

However, describing this rhetorical effort and measuring its impact requires a more systematic analysis than we can provide here.

**Formal Representation**

Figure 1 shows the bivariate correlations for the degree of populism and two indicators capturing vertical accountability mechanisms: the proportionality of electoral institutions (left panel) and the provision of direct democratic institutions (right panel). While we initially find a positive correlation between populism and these two measures of formal
representation, the direction and significance of each correlation is highly dependent on one individual case. Ultimately, the relationship is largely nil.
Figure 1: The Impact of Populism on Formal Representation

With respect to the proportionality of representation, the case of Rafael Correa in Ecuador drives the relationship. The Ecuadorian electoral system reform introduced through the new constitution in 2009 increased both the number of seats in the legislature and introduced the election of some legislators in a nationwide district through proportional representation (Bowen 2010). Paradoxically this increase in the proportionality of the electoral system led to the continued majority control of the president's party (Alianza Pais) in the unicameral congress, a situation unprecedented in the highly fragmented and polarized Ecuadorian party system before 2009 (Mejía Acosta and Polga-Hecimovich 2011, Mejía Acosta 2006). While other countries in the region experienced electoral reforms as well, these reforms did not lead to a considerable increase in the proportionality of electoral rules. Moreover, many reforms rather
strengthened majoritarian vertical electoral accountability through the abolishment of presidential re-election bans, a trend that took place under both populist and non-populist rule and was rather related to the popularity of presidents than their populist discourse (Corrales 2016). In line with the expansion of consecutive presidential re-election rules, the introduction of direct democratic instruments is also considered to strengthen vertical accountability in a majoritarian way (Breuer 2007).

As can be seen in Figure 1 (right panel), with respect to the provision of direct democratic mechanisms, the correlation is highly dependent on the case of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, who introduced several direct democratic mechanisms for the first time in this country through the writing of a new constitution in 2000, shortly after his rise to power. If we exclude this influential observation, the relationship changes signs and becomes insignificant. This highlights the importance of being cautious with respect to generalizations based on only a few cases and the need to compare populists to non-populist cases as well. For example, we find Ricardo Maduro in Honduras also increased the provision of direct democratic mechanisms in his country (Altman 2011). Moreover, the provision of direct democratic mechanisms does not necessarily mean that these instruments are also practiced. As can be seen with respect to the introduction of direct democratic mechanisms in Bolivia (by Morales and his predecessor Carlos Mesa), apart from the use of these instruments in the approval process of the constitution in 2009, these instruments have not (yet) been used effectively to influence policy-making in a bottom up process (see Welp and Ruth forthcoming). Hence, while individual cases may improve the structural opportunities for citizens to introduce their preferences into the
political process, we cannot identify a clear pattern between the two concepts and the degree of a chief executive's discourse.

**Descriptive Representation**

Figure 2 (left panel) shows the bivariate association between the degree of populism and the change in the effectiveness and equality of participation at the end of a president's (combined consecutive) term (mirroring Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser's (2013) dimension of political inclusion). Here, as we expected, the relationship is highly positive.

**Figure 2: The Impact of Populism on Descriptive Representation**
With the exception of Alan García's second presidential term in Peru, all populist presidents have a considerable positive effect on democratic participation (including both electoral and non-institutional). The correlation is positive and moderately strong with a correlation coefficient of $r=0.51$ (at the 99% confidence level). Moreover, these changes are by no means minor, as the case of Morales in Bolivia indicates. Morales considerably improved the effectiveness and equality of participation by including large groups of marginalized voters, i.e. ethnic minorities, low income voters, as well as women (Madrid 2008, Rousseau 2010). Considering the range of the participation function in our sample (which runs from a minimum of 36 to a maximum of 63), an increase by more than 20 points is a substantial improvement in the quality of participation. Figure 2 (right panel) shows the relationship between populism and the political representation of ethnic groups and other structural minorities. Again we find a significant positive correlation between populism and descriptive representation ($r=0.40$, $p<0.05$). In line with our findings on participation, this effect is considerably dampened by the case of García in Peru. If we exclude the observation for García the correlation increases to 0.52, significant at the 99% confidence level. All other populist presidents affect descriptive representation in a positive way (irrespective of their ideological leaning).

These patterns also reveal another potential finding. In line with the case study literature, we find that García - who governed the country as a left-wing populist president already in the 1980's (Graham 1990) - ran for office in 2006 for a second time deploying a populist discourse. However, he abandoned his populist appeal right after assuming office for his second term and took a turn to the right, especially with respect to economic policies (Schmidt 2007). Hence, Figure 2 potentially highlights the distinction
between a sincere and a strategic use of the populist discourse (Heinisch and Mazzoleni forthcoming, Weyland 2001, Mair 2002).

Substantive Representation

As expected, we also find a mixed pattern with respect to substantive representation. On the one hand, Figure 3 (left panel) shows that presidents with a strong populist discourse tend to considerably increase social spending (as a percentage of total public spending). Note that social spending is not significantly correlated with left-right ideology. In separate calculations, we find that the correlation between ideology and social spending is only moderately negative ($r=-0.248$) - i.e. the more leftist a president the higher the change in social spending - but the correlation falls short of reaching conventional significance levels in our sample ($p=0.145$). Moreover, we also find a mixed pattern with respect to the control of corruption (Figure 3, right panel), one of the main representative claims populist challengers advocate to improve once they replace the "corrupt elite." We find no significant correlation between the two concepts. Moreover, we can find improvements and setbacks in the control of corruption for both populist and non-populist presidents.
Figure 3: The Impact of Populism on Substantive Representation

This highlights some of the reservations mentioned in the case study literature on populism in power. For example, while Correa introduced redistributive social policies that benefited the poor, these policies fell short of tackling the highly unequal distribution of income and property in the country (de la Torre and Ortiz Lemos 2016). Moreover, his top-down style of governing sidelined large groups in society that contested his leadership, such as indigenous social movements and conservative subnational movements (de la Torre 2013, Eaton 2014, 2011). In a similar fashion, the Morales administration has considerably increased spending to the poor as part of a progressive economic policy agenda (Gray Molina 2010). Nevertheless, Morales has also increased the nationalization of natural resources to finance social spending, which remains a highly contested issue between the government and its opposition (Eaton 2014). Both of
these substantive changes took place in a highly conflictive and polarized political context, in which both sides denied their opponents the right to make legitimate, representative claims (Gray Molina 2010, Schilling-Vacaflor 2011). Perhaps the case that best highlights these ambiguities is that of Chávez in Venezuela. His government redirected billions of dollars in oil revenues to a series of social programs (the *Misiones*) and community development projects (the *Consejos Comunales*) designed to advance participatory democracy. Although these programs had palpable effects on poverty levels, reducing these by over 50% in just a few years (Weisbrot 2008), several studies found evidence of partisan conditionality in the distribution of program benefits (Handlin 2016, Hawkins, Rosas, and Johnson 2011, Penfold-Becerra 2007). Furthermore, the ultimate impact of these programs on key outcomes such as literacy rates was highly disputed (Ortega and Rodríguez 2008), and weak management of funds contributed to an increase in corruption during this period, evident in Figure 3 (right panel).
Conclusion

Our chapter shows that the concept of representation proposed by Pitkin (1967) serves as a useful analytical tool for theorizing the ambiguous relationship between democratic representation and populism. In doing so, we seek to augment the current focus of the literature on the institutions of liberal democracy. If we look more closely at the multiple aspects of representation, we may find that populism influences some of them positively but not others; this influence depends more heavily on the nature of populist ideas and the coalitions that embody them than on left-right ideology or region. In particular, our analysis shows that the degree of the populist discourse of Latin American presidents is positively correlated with descriptive representation, i.e. the political inclusion of minorities, but the relationship is more ambiguous with respect to formal and substantive representation. Thus, even in a region with predominantly left populism representing large numbers of excluded citizens, the effects of populism on representation are mixed.

However, our goal in exploring the relationship of populism to democratic representation empirically is to do more than present another dataset; we want to provide future directions for research. We see four such avenues. First, while our analysis forms a first step in getting at the empirical connection between these concepts, we still lack adequate measures for all types of democratic representation, e.g. symbolic and substantive representation. Future research needs to tackle this data availability problem and generate indicators that more closely resemble our theoretical concepts. Second, while we concentrated our analysis on a most likely region - Latin America - scholars need to test these arguments across regions and time. Obvious possibilities are to include European cases of populist parties (in government and opposition) and to compare
contemporary cases of populism with historical ones; the former may especially allow us to investigate the impact of other intervening or mediating factors like ideology or coalition size. Finally, taking Pitkin's (1967) own suggestion seriously, future research has to highlight how different types of representation are related to each other to get at the overall effect of populism on democratic representation.

Against the background of the rise and growing importance of populist parties around the world as a symptom of the ongoing crisis of representation, it is especially important to continue studying the relationship between populism and any type of representation.