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Latin American populism from an international comparative perspective\*

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Abstract: Populism is a political phenomenon worthy of attention. Populism has spread in Western societies in recent decades. We should think about this common problem faced by Western societies from the perspective of the entire Western society, and then pay further attention to some aspects of Latin American populism. It is incomplete to study populism only as a unique "political characteristic" of Latin America. Populism is endogenous to representative democracy and originates from the crisis of representation in political establishments. Populism thrives in Latin America because of this This is the result of the superposition of multiple factors such as low inclusiveness of the regional political system, high degree of social differentiation, unstable economic development, and fragile democratic systems. In addition, Latin American people are willing to follow "Charisma"-style political leaders and lack trust in public institutions. This political culture also provides a social foundation for the "monist" political practice of populism. Since the above factors cannot be eliminated in a short time, populism will remain the "shadow" of Latin American democratic politics. For all countries that adopt representative democracy, As far as Western countries are concerned, as long as the capacity of the political establishment does not meet the needs of public participation, there is the possibility of populism breaking out. Populism is not a feasible solution to the political dilemma of modern democracy. A representative democracy constructed under liberal principles must Only by facing our own problems and striving to build a political mechanism that can accommodate and integrate different interest demands can we effectively eliminate the adverse effects of populism. Keywords: populism, Latin American democratic system, political establishment, unitary politics. About the author: Zhou Nan, Ph.D. in political science, Renmin University of

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In the past thirty or forty years, the rise of populism has had a profound impact on political democracy, economic progress, and social integration in Western countries. Judging from the practical results, the performance of populism is unsatisfactory, and most people regard it as a negative politics. Phenomenon. Almost all politicians refuse to admit that they are populists, and prefer to label their opponents as "populists." Unlike European and American countries, populism in Latin America has a longer history, and its recurring appearance is closely related to the The national conditions and people's conditions in the region are closely linked: populism is a strong protest by the civilian class against the long-term lack of fairness and justice in the political establishment. At the same time, some political elites lead the people to explore a new development model that is different from the traditional one. In view of the above situation, although populism Socialist practice has failed to provide Latin American countries with beneficial development plans. The academic community still has more sympathy for Latin American populism. For example, some scholars believe that due to imperfect political systems, marginalized groups and lower-class workers in Latin American countries cannot enjoy their dues. political rights, and populism integrates them into the political process, promoting the transformation from oligarchy to mass democracy. ÿ

Many scholars in domestic Latin American circles translate Latin American "populism" into a neutral "populism". Some opinions It is believed that Latin American populism "relatively solves the contradiction between economic growth and income distribution" and is conducive to political and social stability.ÿ

This article believes that the populist trends in Latin America and Europe and the United States have the same essence and similar internal laws, and the practice of populism in Latin America is combined with the region's historical development, social structure, cultural traditions and other factors to form a distinct Regional characteristics, such as the cyclical nature of outbreaks and serious personalization tendencies. Only by taking into account the nature of populism in a general sense and the impact of the special Latin American context on populist practice can we form a clear understanding of Latin American populism.

## 1. Populism as a "problem" in Western society

The most intuitive impression of populism is that of anger and anxiety, using extreme emotions to express and vent dissatisfaction with reality. Although the specific situations and political opinions of each populist trend of thought are different, populist politics follows similar principles. The internal logic of populism, and its ability to break out in many regions and countries in a relatively short period of time, and evolve into a political trend, also shows that the anger and extremes of populism have a relatively broad social base, and there are also countries and societies where populist waves have broken out. Common issuesij

ÿ Zeng Zhaoyao: "An Outline of Development Issues in Latin America", Beijing: Contemporary World Press, 2011, pp. 208-212.

(1) The outbreak of populism is the product of irreconcilable social contradictions. In the

past three to forty years, right-wing populist trends have emerged in many Western countries. In the context of economic globalization, the transnational flow of capital and population has increased significantly. Multinational enterprises in developed countries transfer production factors to developing countries with low production costs. People of different races and religions migrate from poor areas to wealthy countries in search of a better life. This development trend has brought economic and social changes to European and American countries. Structural changes have come. In the United States, the white blue-collar workers engaged in traditional manufacturing have been hardest hit: the continuous relocation of multinational companies' business to foreign countries has caused them to lose a lot of jobs. career opportunities, and the low requirements for salary and benefits and the occupation of public resources by "new immigrants" have brought huge competitive pressure. Under the pressure of "political correctness" such as "cosmopolitanism" and "multiculturalism", these The "frustrated people" who deeply feel that their lives are no longer what they used to be are difficult to openly express their dissatisfaction. The anger that has been suppressed for a long time continues to accumulate, eventually leading to the rise of anti-globalization and antiimmigration right-wing populism. Former US President Donald Trump once threatened "Build a wall on the border between the United States and Mexico", "completely ban Muslims from entering" and "support Japan and South Korea in developing nuclear weapons". These shocking and extreme remarks have won a large number of followers. In Europe and other regions, right-wing populism has also evolved into an influential force. As a powerful political trend, populists even participated in the general elections in Hungary, Poland, Brazil and other countries. Victory. European populists shouted slogans of "Down with everything!" and "Everyone get out!" when running for public office. Germany's populism broke out against the background of good overall economic conditions. In 2016, Germany chose to target populist tendencies. A survey of party supporters shows that among these people, middle-class men with higher education account for the majority, and 4/5 people use "good" or "very good" to describe their personal economic statusÿ . They are concerned about identity, social Security issues, opposition to social integration, and demand to reverse the trend of social diversification. In the contemporary world, economic downturn, political disorder, non-traditional security issues, identity dilemmas, etc. may intensify social conflicts, thereby triggering populism. (2) Populism The rise of populism is a reflection of the intensification of social contradictions to

the point where it is difficult to reconcile. However, not all social contradictions

will inevitably lead to populism when they are intensified. Populism is a modern political phenomenon, and the prerequisite for its emergence is the common people. Participation in politics has a high degree of legitimacy in popular concepts and public opinion. With the outbreak of the European Enlightenment in the 18th century, the idea of "popular sovereignty" and the principle of "political equality" spread widely in Western society, and the political establishment was also given an unprecedented legitimacy basis. When the people are unable to achieve political participation through institutional channels, they will criticize or deny the existing political establishment. It is necessary

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Seeking to achieve true political democracy. If this dissatisfaction continues to spread throughout society, discussions on related issues become increasingly emotional, a large number of people transform into radical opponents of the establishment, and the authority of the existing establishment is seriously shaken, populism will May appear as a link connecting social resistance consciousness.

Although there is still a lack of consensus on what "populism" is, many scholars agree that it is a hollow concept that lacks core values and does not contain ideology. It comes from the complaints of some people that the existing political establishment does not speak for themselves. The crux of this problem is hidden in the institutional arrangements of representative democracy.

Representative democracy adopts indirect democracy as the main political form, using institutional arrangements to check and balance power and impose restrictions on political participation to prevent the "majority" from "tyranny" in order to overcome human weaknesses and increase political rationality to the greatest extent. Joseph Schumpeter pointed out that representative democracy is a selection mechanism for political elites. In fact, it uses "open, numerous, and competitive "Elite" replaces "a small group of monopolistic elite oligarchs as the sharers of political power"ÿ. This elitist tendency is obviously different from the political ideal of "popular sovereignty": the latter values the principle of "equality" in democratic values and emphasizes politics Equality and broadness of participation. The former focuses on safeguarding freedom and recognizes "the inequality in the distribution of power and resources in human society," 

ÿ Therefore, the difference between "democracy" in political ideals and institutional arrangements leads to representative democracy It may face a crisis due to insufficient representation in the political establishment. A 2015 U.S. opinion poll showed that 71% of the public believed that the U.S. economic system was obviously unfairly biased towards the rich. At least 70% of Americans were dissatisfied with the direction of the country's development. With this, At the same time, the public has also lost trust in the political elite. In 2016, the public's satisfaction with Congress was only 14%. Populism attempts to correct

the elitist tendency of representative democracy, advocates the political form of direct democracy, and "seeks to establish unrestricted A system for expressing public opinion, or enhancing the direct connection between leaders and the real people without the need for institutions to mediate it."ÿ "Making the current system more democratic" is an important source of legitimacy for populist politics. Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia and other populist governments

The government once formulated a new constitution through a constitutional conference, and then submitted it to a referendum to verify the validity of the constitution. Jan-Werner Miller summarized the political exploration of populism as "an anti-liberal democratic approach, a response to anti-democratic liberalism" "  $\ddot{y}\ddot{y}$ 

ÿ [Austria] Joseph Schumpeter, translated by Wu Liangjian: «Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy», Beijing: The Commercial Press, 2009, page 189, Jing

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ÿ [Germany] Written by Jan-Werner Müller, translated by Qian Jingyuan: «What is Populism», Nanjing: Yilin Publishing House, 2020 ÿ, page 81, page 10

(3) Populism views political issues from a moral perspective.

Western society has long regarded "multiculturalism" as "political correctness". This tradition is particularly deep in the United Kingdom, the United States, France and other countries. The "monist" political proposition of populism can In the above-mentioned countries, it quickly won social support and posed a threat to mainstream ideas. This was largely due to the fact that it found a rather confusing logical support: a moral declaration of the power to represent the people. Populism combined political differences, poverty and Wealth differences and ethnic conflicts are all examined under the category of morality, and these issues are characterized by simplistic labels of "justice" or "evil" in an attempt to guide a "group of morally pure, completely unified but purely fictitious people in the political field." "The people need a moral power." He called his supporters "the people." Patriots", calling political opponents "corrupt" and their followers "traitors". At a general strike rally in 2002, Chavez said this: "This is not for or against Chavez. The problem is the confrontation between patriots and enemies of the motherland." ÿ If populists lose an election, they often condemn their opponents or question the electoral system from a moral standpoint. When Trump loses an election, he often accuses his opponents of fraud and declares the election. Manipulated. After Obrador lost the Mexican presidential election in 2006, he declared that "the victory of the right (political opponents) is against morality." ÿ Populism looks at political events from a moral perspective and gives an understanding of the nature of the problem. Subjective judgment, while ignoring the verification of the authenticity of details, is essentially a "moral imagination of politics." Often this general subjective moral perspective only has symbolic meaning and is not based on factual experience, so it is difficult to be falsified ÿ ÿ

Since criticism from civil society will weaken populism's monopoly on morality, populist leaders mostly adopt a harsh attitude towards objections and regard them as a betrayal of "the people". Hungarian populist Orban Viktor Kedou promulgated the Hungarian Constitution "Basic Law" in 2012. He explained this: "The people provided good suggestions and instructions to the Hungarian Parliament, so the Parliament approved the "Basic Law". If someone criticizes the Hungarian Constitution, this is not against the government, but It is aimed at the Hungarian people."ÿ In Orban's view, those political opponents who do not belong to the "people" did not participate in the drafting and adoption of the constitution, and this constitution will not provide them with any guarantees. Coincidentally, Poland and Bolivia

<sup>[</sup>Germany] Written by Jan-Werner Müller, translated by Qian Jingyuan: «What is Populism», Nanjing: Yilin Publishing House, 2020. ÿ

Page 25ÿ ÿ José Pedro Zúÿueteÿ "ÿ he Missionary Policies of Hugo Chavez " ÿ in Latin American Politics and Society Vol 5 0ÿ 2008ÿ p 105

ÿ ÿ [Germany] Written by Jan-Werner Müller, translated by Qian Jingyuan: "What is Populism", Nanjing: Yilin Publishing House, 2020 year, page 41, page 51

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Populist governments in other countries have added exclusive and negative clauses to the promulgated constitutions to limit the power of non-populists, claiming that only the will and interests of the "people" will be reflected in national decision-making. In fact, modern The development of democratic politics is attributed to those struggles for greater inclusiveness. "The people" has always been a controversial and open concept, and the "people" in the populists' mouth are limited to their own supporters. The populist constitution has become a A tool of political factions, it cannot be regarded as the country's democratic political framework. Miller calls this governance method of populist governments "discriminatory legalism".ÿ

(4) The logic of populism is to use "monist" politics to realize the political ideal of "people's sovereignty". In the democratic era, politics should be the expression of the general will of the people. Almost all political leaders are proud to represent "the people". Populism The same is true for leaders. However, driven by the "monist" political logic, populism itself has developed into an undemocratic political phenomenon in the democratic era.

First, populism constructs an overall concept of "people" and monopolizes the "right of representation of the people."

Populism simplifies and homogenizes the connotation of "people" and gives "people" a single personality. Then, populist leadership People thus monopolize the representation of "the people". Liu Yu believes that opposition to pluralism is the basic feature of populism. Unitary democracy will inevitably move towards "populism", and "once populism occupies the mainstream of society, the trend of pluralism will be affected." Containment and shock."ÿ Former Argentine President Juan Peron said, "The political leader is the one who implements the people's wishes."ÿ Nigel Farage declared that the result of the British referendum to leave the European Union was "a real victory for the people." In fact, 48% of voters in this election chose to remain in the EU. According to Farage, these people who voted to remain in the EU do not belong to the British "people". ÿ Because "the entire people cannot be identified or represented " " Therefore, the "people" spoken by populists is closer to a "super-political illusion." Tan Daoming vividly described the "people" constructed by populism as "a rabble dancing to the same rhythm under the command of the leader." 'ÿ Presented to the outside world as a 'collective will' that plays the same tune and speaks with the same voice "ÿÿ

Second, populism uses "zero-sum" thinking to view the diverse interests in politics and society. Left-wing populists oppose the innocent, hard-working working class to a group of corrupt and selfish upper-class elites who get something for nothing, while right-wing populists It also pits the middle- and upper-class groups who are noble and decent and have made great contributions to the country and society against the people at the bottom who occupy public resources and hinder social security like parasites.

<sup>[</sup>Germany] Jan-Werner Müller, translated by Qian Jingyuan: «What is Populism», Nanjing: Yilin Publishing House, 2020, ÿ Page 58, Liu Yu:

<sup>«</sup>Populism and Democracy—On American Politics Populism in China», published in "Exploration and Debate", Issue 10, 2016, Page 69, ÿ ÿ [ Germany] Written by Jan-Werner Miller, translated by Qian Jingyuan: «What is Populism», Nanjing: Translated Lin Publishing House, 2020 ÿ, page 40, page 82

ÿ Tan Daoming: "Three Dimensions of Populism: Taking Trump's Populism as an Example", published in "Latin American Studies", Issue 2017 Issue 4, Page 45

Come, Trump targets people of color and new immigrants. There are numerous examples of nonsense, such as "81% of white victims died at the hands of black people", "Mexican immigrants are rapists", etc. Marina from France Populist leaders such as Marine Le Pen, Geert Wilders of the Netherlands, Beate Szydwo of Poland, and Viktor Orban of Hungary all blame their countries' social conflicts on people of color, immigrants, or people of color. Heretic. Richard Hofstadter summarized the logic of populism as: first imagining "a huge and sinister conspiracy, a huge but subtle system, which is trying to weaken and destroy the existing social way of life". In a crisis In the process, populist propositions appear to be very necessary. In order to get out of trouble, the people must "abandon the usual means of political compromise and concession, and adopt all possible means of crusade to defeat the enemy."ÿ Therefore, in practice, populism has a negative impact on aggravating social problems. The role of division is inevitable.

## 2. Regional Characteristics of Latin American Populism

Populism appears repeatedly in Latin America and is a unique phenomenon in Latin American politics.

Compared with populist trends that have emerged in other countries or regions, there is no essential difference in the causes and internal logic of populism in Latin America. Populism is particularly special in this region. Prosperity has distinct regional characteristics, which is closely related to the historical process, political system, economic model, social structure, cultural tradition and other factors of Latin American

countries. (1) The four populist waves in Latin America have cyclical characteristics Latin America It has experienced four populist waves so far. The first populist wave emerged from the 1930s to the 1960s. It opposed the export-oriented economic model and the oligarchic elite rule based on it, and advocated the implementation of strategies to promote the development of national industry. Representative figures include Mexico's Lazaro Cardenas, Brazil's Getulio Vargas, Argentina's Juan Peron, etc. The second wave of populism emerged in the 1980s, opposing the import substitution industrialization model and using it as a It is based on oligarchic elite rule and supports neoliberal development plans. Representatives include Argentina's Carlos Menem, Peru's Alberto Fujimori, Brazil's Collor de Melo, etc. The third wave of populism appeared at the turn of the century. They oppose neoliberal development programs and the associated oligarchic elite rule, and promote left-wing value orientations. Representatives include Hugo Chavez of Venezuela, Rafael Correa of Ecuador, and Evo Morales of Bolivia. After left-wing reforms were in trouble, right-wing populism that opposed social integration flourished in some Latin American countries around 2010, forming the fourth wave of populism. Representatives include Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro and Guatemala's Jimmie. Morales, Keiko Fujimori of Peru, etc.

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Although the reasons and specific propositions for the emergence of each populist wave in Latin America are different, they follow a similar development cycle: the original development model is unsustainable, disadvantaged groups in society are squeezed out of the establishment, and populist leaders take the opportunity to recruit a large number of Believers, move towards the political front.

After a brief period of prosperity, populist political practice hastily come to an end due to triggering new crises. In the repeated political cycles, populism has accompanied the development process of Latin America and has become a key factor in Latin American politics. Tradition (2) The serious lack of institutional

representation is a chronic disease of Latin American politics. Wiarda

believes that in the history of Latin America, tradition and semi-feudalism are deeply rooted, the influence of right-wing conservatism has always been strong, and low political inclusiveness has caused the left Movements and guerrilla politics often appear as right-wing challengers. ÿ During the colonial period, the European metropolitan countries plundered wealth in Latin America. The colonists only cared about their own economic interests and brutally exploited local people for agricultural and mineral labor. The colonial government was corrupt and inefficient, and implemented A highly centralized political system. In 1595, some positions in the colonial government of Mexico City were auctioned off to the highest bidder. As time went by, this practice became more and more common. In La Plata, Puebla, Buenos Aires, Official positions were sold in jurisdictions such as Enos Aires. By the end of the 18th century, the colonial government had been discredited throughout South America. ÿ In this process, the ruling model of the oligarchic elite was established in Latin America: 10% of the population A very low-level elite monopolizes national economic resources and has strong political influence, but lacks a sense of responsibility for national development. The vast majority of the people are marginalized in the national political and economic system. They have neither the right to participate in politics nor the opportunity to share. Economic results and social security. After Latin American countries gained independence, the new political elites in power chose to continue the political and social order of the colonial period to maintain the privileges of this class. "Although most constitutions have included the protection of citizen freedom and equality." However, in political practice, "the ruling class strives to safeguard the interests of transnational capital and industry oligarchs. Not only Indians, blacks, farmers, and miners are excluded, but also workers, intellectuals, and urban middle-income groups find it difficult to achieve political participation."ÿÿ 1928 In 2006, Colombian farmers in the Caribbean protested against the exploitation of the United Fruit Company and held a general strike. The Colombian government even used its own army to help the United Fruit Company suppress the strike. It is estimated that two to three thousand people were killed. Called the "Banana Massacre"

ÿ [US] Written by Howard J. Wialda, translated by Guo Cunhai, Deng Yuping, and Ye Jianhui: «The Spirit of Latin America: Culture and Politics Tradition » Hangzhou: Zhejiang University Press, 2019, Page 13

ÿ [Intelligence] Written by Sebastian Edwards, translated by Guo Jinxing: «Latin America Left Behind: The Fatal Temptation of Populism». Beijing: CITIC Publishing

Later, Latin American countries went through many changes, exploring different development models to change the centralized power structure. Generally speaking, although the representativeness of the political establishment has increased, the progress has been slow and full of twists and turns. "Political elites" still widely exist. The inertia of the system has Powerful is exactly what Edwards said: "Although political forces continue to evolve over time, they still strive to maintain the original balance of political power and wealth distribution, and the sustainability of the political system is the product of this political force." ÿ Moreover, Civil society is becoming increasingly mature, and the requirements for political participation are also increasing. This has made it more difficult for political institutions to gain recognition in Latin American society.

Some Western scholars believe: "Latin America has never gotten rid of the shadow of 'superficial democracy', and the defects of political systems have increased. There is a risk of political failure. Due to the widespread existence of "low democracy" and the lack of complete democracy, there is disappointment in the functioning of democracy in almost all Latin American countries. "ÿ In 2015, the populist Jimmy Morale, who was elected president of Guatemala, Sri Lanka has little interaction with traditional political parties and traditional elites. His status as a political "outsider" has become an important political advantage for him. He does not need to make any claims and can attract a large number of supporters as long as he keeps smiling. The public's disgust with the existing political establishment is evident . ÿ Marco Palacios noticed that the relationship between populism and revolution in Latin America is like two sides of a coin. The absence of populist movements in some Central American countries will lead to more revolutions. ÿ

In addition, economic instability in Latin America has increased the risk of a crisis in the political establishment. The development model of Latin American countries is highly dependent on foreign countries. Economic development is susceptible to the influence of the international environment. Fiscal discipline is loose and monetary policies are inappropriate. The superposition of internal and external factors has caused severe economic fluctuations. Since 1981, By 1991, the average annual depreciation rate of the Argentine peso reached an astonishing 1,346%.

In 1985 alone, the inflation rate was as high as 672%. ÿ In Venezuela, more than 90% of national fiscal revenue relies on oil foreign exchange.

The collapse of international crude oil prices in the 1980s caused this The country's economy was in rapid recession. Amid social calls for change, the Venezuelan government launched democratization reforms in 1989. However, democratization did not save Venezuela from the crisis. Instead, it made the situation more volatile, ÿ in the face of the failure of the democratic system and the crisis of public belief. In the context of Chave

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ÿ [Intelligence] Written by Sebastian Edwards, translated by Guo Jinxing: «Latin America Left Behind: The Fatal Temptation of Populism», Beijing: CITIC Publishing Group, 2019, page 34.

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The Movement Party of the Fifth Republic led by Sri Lanka took this as an opportunity to enter the core of state power. The relationship between economic crisis, institutional authority and populism is as the American sociologist Kang Hauser said, "The core problem of the rise of populism is the institutional crisis, and the economic crisis is An important factor that weakens the value and authority of the existing establishment."ÿ

(3) The high degree of differentiation in Latin American society increases the difficulty of expanding

the political system. Most societies in Latin American countries have been highly differentiated for a long time. The gap between rich and poor, imbalanced development, racial discrimination, etc. have always been problems that need to be solved. It can be said that the modern economic history of Latin America is one The country has a history of slow growth, crisis, inequality and poverty. During the colonial period, land resources in Latin America were concentrated in the hands of a few people. In the mid-19th century, 60% of North American farmers owned their own land, compared with only 5% in Latin America. ÿ Since then, industrialization and development in Latin America have In the process of modernization, a large number of marginalized groups lack necessary labor skills and can only work in the informal sector. Their economic situation is very difficult and their political influence is very limited. The anthropologist Oscar Lewis recorded it in detail in the book "Children of Sanchez" The poverty and despair experienced by the Sanchez family in Mexico, the social violence suffered by the poor, and the government's inability to provide minimum public services. During the economic upturn, people's living conditions generally improve, and problems caused by uneven development are easier to deal with. During the economic downturn, public resources are increasingly strained, employment opportunities are reduced, and groups that were originally disadvantaged have suffered a greater impact. After the devaluation of the Argentine peso from 2001 to 2002, the poverty rate among Argentine households soared to 40%. The crisis of 1994-1995 , It's hard to find food on the streets of Buenos Aires increased the number of poor people in Mexico by 11%. At this time, antagonism between different social groups was on the rise. Oligarchies and serious social inequality became the target of public criticism, and the possibility of populist outbreaks also increased accordingly.

In highly differentiated Latin American societies, how to narrow differences and integrate interests has become an insurmountable obstacle

to the expansion of political institutions. The rise of right-wing populism in Latin America in the past 20 years is a result of the once dominant middleincome class's struggle in identity, social security, and public affairs. Resources and other fields were fully threatened and opposed social integration,
demanding a reversal of the trend of diversification. At the beginning of the 21st century, the left-wing Brazilian Labor Party government vigorously
promoted the development program of social integration and improved the economic conditions of low-income groups through increased public
expenditure and other means. As a result, Brazil's poverty rate has dropped significantly. However, the left-wing development plan has ignored the
interests of the middle- and high-income classes. During the 2001-2015 period when the Labor Party was in power, Brazil's per capita income increased by 56%.

ÿ J B Alcockÿ " 'Populism': A Brief Biography" Sociologyÿ Vol 5ÿ No 3ÿ 1971ÿ p 375 [Intelligence] Written by Sebastian Edwards,

ÿ translated by Guo Jinxing: «Latin America Left Behind: The Fatal Temptation of Populism» ÿ Beijing: CITIC Publishing Group, 2019, page 38, [US] Sebastian Edwards:

ÿ "Research on New and Old Populism in Latin America", published in "Foreign Theoretical Trends", Issue 6, 2012, page 96, Brazil The "upper-middle-

ÿ income class" refers to the total population of Brazil excluding the 50% with the lowest annual income and the highest annual income.

The rest of the 1% of the population.

The cumulative growth of the lowest 5-adult population reached 72%, Whilesheutative latious growf the other flike difference growth synthesis with 42%. ÿ

This group is an important contributor to national fiscal revenue, but has not received development dividends commensurate with its contribution. After 2016, the Brazilian economy will develop As the country hit a trough, the living conditions of the middle- and high-income classes deteriorated across the board, and long-standing dissatisfaction broke out. On the eve of the 2018 general election, Brazil's middle- and high-income classes became the main force opposing the left-wing Labor Party government. They not only advocated a break with the previous left-wing development line, but also advocated a break with the previous left-wing development line. In the first round of the election, moderate right-wing party candidates were abandoned, choosing to support Bolsonaro's extreme right-wing values. Some media commented that Bolsonaro's election as Brazilian president was not a victory of the right over the left, but an "opposition" The victory of the "status quo party" ÿÿ

Another serious consequence of social differentiation is the differentiation of people's self-awareness. People do not psychologically accept the existence of their country's society as a whole. Instead, they construct identities based on classes or groups. This is the reason why populist discourse plays a role in "either friends or enemies." It provides a psychological basis for constructing "us" and "others" under the logic of "Chapter 1". Chavez is good at using a tone similar to military mobilization in speeches, such as "They (the establishment) are not defending democracy, but defending their privileges." ", calling on the people to "start a conflict, start a war, enemies, prepare to fight. There are two camps on the war front. One side is us who want to completely change the bad status quo, and the other side is them who want the disaster to continue. Let them raise their hands and surrender, let them "Admit defeat."

These words were warmly welcomed by supporters because they expressed the anger of groups that have been suppressed for a long time in highly divided Latin American societies. The mood of Latin American populists to break with the establishment was therefore more extreme.

(4) The contradictory understanding of democracy in political culture is the driving force behind the slide of Latin American democracy into populism. Latin America is a region among third world countries that was earlier exposed to Enlightenment ideas. From 1810 to 1812, Spain's political elites established themselves in the country's southern port cities, Cadiz, the starting point of the new sea route to the American continent, held a constitutional convention and promulgated the "Constitution of 1812", promising to fully protect the legal rights and equal status of its citizens. This event produced a strong response among the local elites in Latin America, and they accordingly re-established the Constitution. Thinking about the international political order, they claimed that Latin American countries have the right to achieve independence and trade with other countries on an equal footing. At the same time, they also printed a large number of publications to promote democratic values, condemned the excessive expropriation of the metropolitan country, and sought allies among the middle and lower classes to launch an independent war. Enlightenment Ideas continue to spread in Latin American countries and have gained a certain base of social support. The legitimacy of Latin American political institutions has been given democratic connotations as never before. Leandro Garcia pointed out, "Only not long ago, these (democratic) demands were expressed in a Like Latin America

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Such a hierarchical racial society is still unimaginable."ÿ

However, "foreign" democratic ideas cannot replace the local political traditions of Latin America overnight. Samuel Huntington believes that Latin Americans are more loyal to more primitive social and economic groups (family, family, village, tribe, religion, social class), disloyal to the public system and distrustful of the country. Due to the lack of a sense of political commonality, Latin American countries lack the ability to establish more efficient, adaptable, complex and reasonable political systems in accordance with the requirements of modernization. ÿ Before the arrival of the colonists , The Indian tribes built a hierarchical political system based on religious relations. The leader was regarded as the incarnation of the gods or could understand the will of the gods and enjoyed unlimited power. Peasants, slaves, and prisoners of war were at the bottom of the social hierarchy pyramid and lacked basic personal freedoms. and the protection of rights, forming a relationship of personal dependence with landowners, and worshiping religious and political authority. During the colonial period, middle- and lower-class workers were completely reduced to enslaved objects. They urgently needed to seek political protectors to act as partners. The colonial government became the medium of communication, so it relied more on individuals with prestige and appeal in the region for security. The dependency relationship based on the large estate system evolved into a political patronage relationship. The society lacked a tradition of autonomy, and the people lacked the ability to self-govern., became a huge obstacle in the democratic practice of Latin American countries after independence. Henry W. Bates attributed the political turmoil after Mexico's independence to the forced implementation of the Mexican Constitution, which was tailored from the U.S. Constitution. He believed that Mexicans "have always been trained to follow rules. To endure the irresponsible and tyrannical rule of the sovereign state, but to be suddenly called upon to be free citizens and to abide by the principle of selfgovernment without having to understand human nature, such an attempt will surely lead to disastrous consequences. " This is particularly typical among social groups far away from metropolitan areas. Most people adhere to the inherent way of thinking, "Placing all their hopes for social justice on these savior-like figures, firmly believing that only they can bring peace and prosperity, and solve problems." Conflicts in these countries."ÿAlthough Latin America's

political and cultural traditions have many shortcomings, they are, after all, the "water and soil" of this region - the people's conditions and public opinions. Although the democratic systems of Western developed countries look bright, they are difficult to compete with local ones. Spiritual traditions are in harmony with each other. Democratic governance capabilities have been weak for a long time and democratic practice

<sup>[</sup>US] Samuel Huntington, translated by Zhang Daiyun: "The Political Order of Changing Society", Shanghai: Shanghai Translation Publishing House, 1989,

ÿ 2 years, pages 31-35, Henry W Bates Central America rica London : Edward Standfordÿ 1878ÿ pp 82 - 83 Yuan Dongzhen: «Understanding the

ÿ changes in the political systems of major Latin American countries», published in «World Economy and Politics»ÿ 2 Issue 10, 2017, No. Pages 41-42ÿ

The experience of failure has made Latin American people generally have a tangled mentality towards "democracy". They are eager to obtain equality and respect in politics, but they do not believe that they can get rid of their own difficulties by relying on independence and autonomy. This social psychology is reflected in political practice, a very contradictory scenario will appear: whenever there is an economic crisis or political turmoil, the original political establishment will quickly decline due to the lack of a solid social foundation, and the Latin American tradition of advocating political authority will be revived, and the people will habitually seek charismatic leaders in the establishment. In order to reshape authority externally, they strongly demand to fulfill the political ideal of "people's sovereignty" in the atmosphere of fanatical personality worship. The repeated emergence of populism is actually a process of the continuous emergence of political strongmen. Individual citizens' pursuit of democracy is unknowingly was interpreted as the pursuit of populism by the general public.

(5) The fragility of the democratic system has led to the frequent emergence of populist "one-dollar" political solutions.

Ren Jiantao pointed out, "If you want to determine the harm of populist politics, you only need to judge whether it has reached the point of challenging the constitutional democratic government. As long as the constitution is If the foundation of the democratic government has not been shaken, populism is just playing the role of correcting elitist politics. If populism exceeds the goal of political mobilization and plays the role of subverting the constitutional democratic government, then it must be resolutely stopped."ÿ In Latin American countries, populism not only poses a threat to representative democracy, but also changes or subverts modern political systems based on rationality through amending the constitution and other means. Since the 1990s, the Chavez government in Venezuela has initiated a series of political reforms. In 1999, Venezuela established an Emergency Judicial Council and an Emergency Legislative Council. In December of the same year, it promulgated the "Bolivarian Constitution" and changed the bicameral system to a unicameral system. The legislative and judicial powers were seriously weakened. In 2001, the Chavez government urged the National People's Congress of Venezuela to adopt the "Delegated legislative power" recognizes that the president has the power to issue a 12-month emergency bill on a specific issue without parliamentary approval. In 2009, the Chavez government held a referendum to allow the president and other public officials to vote nationwide. Can be continuously elected for voting without restrictions. ÿ These reform measures have made fundamental changes to the top-level design of Venezuela's political system, breaking the separation of powers and checks and balances, and maximizing the expansion of executive power. What happened in Venezuela is not an isolated case in Latin America. Gass, Peron, Menem, Fujimori and others all sought to establish unchecked administrative power through self-coup, amending the constitution and other means, and then relied on the development of clientelist networks to consolidate their support base.

The classic situation of Latin American populism is that leaders pass "Numerical strength" wins the election, and then the separation of powers and institutions will be empty

ÿ Ren Jiantao: «The rising sun of populism, the dusk of elites?»ÿ Caijing.com, December 20, 2016, http://m caijing.com.cn/

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Transform the balanced "pluralistic democracy" into the winner-takes-all "monistic democracy" ÿÿ

Populist "unitary" political practices have not been effectively restrained in Latin America. An important reason is the fragility of the region's democratic system. The Fraser Institute compiled an index that measures "the degree to which the judicial system is independent of political pressure." The index is based on The value is 1 to 10 points. In 2006, the average score of Latin American countries was 3.2, which is far lower than the overall level of Asia and southern European countries. In addition to the independence of the judicial system, the stability of the system also includes the quality of the rule of law, government integrity, civil liberties, etc. Generally speaking, the democratic systems of Latin American countries are not solid enough and their governance capabilities lag behind, and there is a risk of malfunctioning. ÿ This is actually the case. In the 1990s alone, there were about 20 institutional crises in Latin America. In contrast to Latin America, In recent years, right-wing populism has emerged in the United States. The relatively stable democratic system has become the last line of defense for American politics when it is attacked by populism. The right-wing populist Trump won the election and came to power. Although "a series of populist interests or value demands It is reflected in Trump's policies, but he does it within the framework of a democratic government"ÿÿ In September 2017, the U.S. Federal Court of Appeal rejected the Trump administration's ban on six Islamic countries (Iran, Syria, Libya, Somalia), Sudan and Yemen). Since administrative power is effectively checked and balanced, and there is also a large number of professional and stable technocratic teams responsible for operation, citizens

The impact of purism on American politics is firmly limited within the national political framework and legal system.

In addition to its own problems, the democratic system still lacks a solid foundation of social support in Latin America. A report released in 2021 by the polling organization Latinobarómetro shows that the changes in Latin American people's support for democracy in the past 20 years have been related to changes in the region's per capita income. Showing a high degree of consistency, from 2010, when the economy was relatively prosperous, to 2018, when the economy fell into recession, the proportion of respondents who agreed that "democracy is better than other systems" dropped from 63% to 48%, Dultwijl itabeaume signify, Total proportion of respondents who said "dictatorship is better than other systems" has always remained at around 15% y, which shows that many Latin American people lack a clear and rational understanding of democracy. What is even more worrying is that among the people surveyed, they said they were "disliked" The proportion of "indifferent" about "what kind of political system the country adopts" increased from 16% in 2010 to 27% in 2020. y This attitude of alienation from politics has nothing to do with the "left" or "right" ideology, but reflects the attitude towards the country.

Tan Daoming: «Three Dimensions of Populism: Taking Trump Populism as an Example», published in «Latin American Studies», Issue ÿ 4 , 2017, Pages 43-44 [Intelligence]

Sebastian Edward This is the author, translated by Guo Jinxing: «Latin America Left Behind: The Fatal Temptation of Populism», Beijing: ÿ CITIC Publishing Group, 2019, page 83. Yuan

ÿ Dongzhen: «Understanding the Changes in the Political Systems of Major Latin American Countries», in "World Economy and Politics»ÿ Issue

 $<sup>\</sup>ddot{y}$  10, 2017, page 35 Gong Qun: «The post-truth era and the issue of populism—and singing peace with Mr. Wu Xiaoming», published in «Exploration and Controversy», Issue 9, 2017, page 57  $\ddot{y}$ 

Extremely tired of domestic politics and mainstream political parties, this group is a potential supporter of populism.

## Three conclusions

The extraordinary prosperity of populism in Latin America is the result of the long-term overlay and interweaving of multiple

factors such as the long-term lack of inclusiveness of the political establishment, the high degree of social structure differentiation, and the lack of democratic traditions. Since these factors cannot disappear in the short term, populism is likely to develop for some time in the future. It still exists in Latin American politics. However, populist politics continues to evolve with the development of the times. After the 1990s, most of the populist leaders in power came to power through democratic elections. As the political systems of Latin American countries tend to improve, Stable, it becomes increasingly difficult for populist leaders to break the balance of power and expand personal power after taking power. Bolsonaro expressed nostalgia for the Brazilian dictatorship during the 2016 election, but was immediately criticized by the then Supreme Court President Diastopol. In addition, a stable macroeconomic situation is conducive to easing social conflicts and helping to reduce the risk of populist outbreaks in Latin America. After 2010, the world economy declined, and commodities Prices have fallen, and various economic indicators in Latin America are not as good as expected. However, many Latin American countries have adopted active countercyclical fiscal policies. Except for a few cases such as Venezuela, most countries have not experienced a major collapse-type economic crisis such as Mexico in 1995 or Argentina at the end of the 20th century. ÿ

The wave of populism that has set off throughout Western society in recent decades shows that populism is not a unique phenomenon in one region of Latin America, but a common problem endogenous to Western democratic systems. The pursuit of democracy is a simple and beautiful wish, but how to base it on "Building a political system based on the understanding of "democracy" is a complex technical issue. In the era of global democracy, as long as representative democracy cannot solve the problem of limited political participation, populism will always exist as a "shadow of democracy." Practice has proved Populism is not a feasible solution to expand political participation and correct the problems of representative democracy. However, representative democracy constructed under liberal principles also needs to face its own problems. With the progress of the times, politics is no longer the exclusive domain of elites. And gradually becoming popular and civilian, this is an inevitable trend in the development of democratic politics. If liberalism only brings benefits to the victors, and the interest demands of vulnerable groups cannot be effectively represented, then the legitimacy of liberal democracy is worthy of question. Of course, This kind of questioning itself is also a normal thing: "From ancient times to the present, democracy is the only political concept that condemns its own denial of equality and inclusiveness."

(Editor Liu Weiguang)