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Corresponding Author	Family Name	Manucci
	Particle	
	Given Name	Luca
	Prefix	
	Suffix	
	Role	
	Division	Institute of Social Sciences
	Organization	University of Lisbon
	Address	Lisbon, Portugal
	Email	luca.manucci@ics.ulisboa.pt
Abstract	<p>Populism is a widespread political phenomenon present in countries across the globe. To explain the success of populist actors and discourses, I claim it is essential to consider the long-term impact of authoritarian legacies on national political culture, individual attitudes, and electoral behavior. In the first section, I discuss the importance of collective memories in molding identities and structures of power. I then present the relevant literature on democratization and authoritarian legacies, explaining how to integrate these strands of literature with the study of populism. In the following section, I examine cases from Europe and Latin America that are suitable to study the populist present through the lenses of collective memories of authoritarian regimes. In the conclusions, I discuss possible directions for future research and suggest that other types of memories, including collective memories about colonialism and civil wars, can have a relevant impact on populism.</p>	
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Populism and Collective Memory

Luca Manucci

INTRODUCTION

History and memory are crucially different, and the way in which a society decides to remember its past has concrete, long-lasting consequences. Political actors and institutions compete to organize collective memories and memorialize the past because it allows them to select which aspects to pass on, forget, or silence.¹ The outcome of this—often conflictual—process reflects how a country decides to remember and commemorate its own past thus forming a representation of its present. Collective memories have three main effects for the study of populism in a given society, country, or political system: first, collective memories determine which ideas of power are acceptable; second, they shape the national collective identity; third, they define the realm of what can be said in the public debate.

This means that different collective memories create favorable conditions for some political ideologies and unfavorable conditions for others. In particular, in this chapter I analyze the links between collective memories of an authoritarian past and the social acceptability of the populist ideology. The argument is that in countries with collective memories that strongly stigmatize the authoritarian past, populism is less likely to be socially acceptable, while in countries that silence, deny, or refuse to acknowledge the authoritarian past, populism is more likely to thrive (Manucci, 2020).

L. Manucci (✉)

Institute of Social Sciences, University of Lisbon, Lisbon, Portugal

e-mail: luca.manucci@ics.ulisboa.pt

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The way in which a society remembers and memorializes its past has profound implications. Individual behaviors, values and voting preferences can be linked to past events and how those events have been framed, narrated and included into a collective myth that often relies on invented traditions (Hobsbawm, 1983). Therefore it is not surprising to observe that politicians use mythologized understandings of the past to mobilize memory as an instrument of politics and identity in the present, manipulating collective memories for ideological purposes (Ricoeur, 2004; Verovšek, 2016). The struggle over an official, national memory of the past is so important because it determines the social acceptability and electoral success of different ideas of power, including populism.

Despite the fact that populism has been studied from a multitude of perspectives, disciplines and approaches, this chapter insists on the importance of an aspect too often overlooked: collective memories. Why are collective memories relevant for the study of populism? They are relevant because ‘what and how societies remember and forget largely determines their future options. Myths and memories define the scope and nature of action, reorder reality and legitimate power holders’ (Barahona de Brito & Sznajder, 2010, p. 500). The legitimacy of populist actors, in other words, is determined, among other things, by collective memories.

In order to understand contemporary populism, its success or failure, its acceptability or rejection, it is essential to study collective memories of the authoritarian past because the process of memory-building shapes collective identities, determining who we are, and who we are not (Berger, 2002). In particular, collective memories of traumatic pasts usually frame elected elites, immigrants, or various out-groups as morally corrupt enemies of the nation (Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2018; Zubrzycki & Woźny, 2020). The way in which we decide to remember our past forms a collective identity that resonates with a populist construction of ‘the people’ and its enemies.

This is relevant because populism divides society along the lines of those who belong to a community, a more or less broad understanding of ‘the people’ based on cultural, moral or economic elements, and those who are excluded from it and therefore are its enemies, a specific elite or some alien group according to the type of populist discourse articulated. This implies that defining a ‘people’ requires first to construct ‘powerful myths that draw on a collective memory of an imagined past in order to define who belongs to “the people”’ (Bull, 2016, p. 217).

The relationship between collective memories and political power is far from being just a debate for political theorists, since it can manifest itself in disruptive confrontations. For example, heated debates cyclically arise about the name of streets and squares or the presence of statues that remind us of a history that we no longer want to celebrate. The death of George Floyd, a black man killed by the police in Minneapolis, Minnesota, prompted a new wave of Confederate memorial removals across the United States. In a rapid escalation, the statue of seventeenth-century slave trader Edward Colton was

hauled to the ground and into Bristol harbor, and Belgium started a critical reflection about the statues commemorating King Leopold II, responsible for the death of 10 million people in Congo.

Statues represent a narrow and rather superficial aspect of the memorialization of the past, but they are powerful symbols because they are the plastic manifestation of collective memories once they crystallize and become tangible.² Removing a statue of Cecil Rhodes, who paved the way for apartheid in South Africa, does not automatically mean that justice is restored and the process of coming to terms with the colonial past is concluded. In fact, collective memories are neither permanent nor immutable: they are the result of continuous negotiations and conflicts.³ The past, or rather the collective memory we elaborate about that past, provides the guidelines for the rejection or acceptance of certain beliefs (e.g. racism), ideas (e.g. nationalism), but also political actors and discourses, including populist ones. For this reason 'any conception of politics that ignores the power that myths or memories play in moulding identities and structures of power is destined to fail' (Bell, 2008, p. 162).

To explore the impact of collective memories on the acceptability of populism, the chapter is structured as follows. In the next section, I define collective memories and the ways in which they can illuminate the success or failure of contemporary populism. I explain that the study of populism should be connected to the literature on democratization and authoritarian legacies, arguing that this connection introduces often-neglected cultural and historical factors. The following section presents empirical cases for the study of populism through the lenses of collective memories, with examples from Europe and Latin America, showing how the formation of different collective memories of the authoritarian past can concretely affect the levels of social acceptability for populist discourses. I conclude by discussing directions for future research and proposing to consider also memories concerning not only authoritarianism but also colonialism and civil wars and their impact on contemporary populism.

AUTHORITARIAN PAST AND POPULISM

Collective memories can shape political scenarios for centuries, and in many different ways. In Germany, for example, the same places that witnessed violent attacks on Jews during the Black Death plague in 1349 showed more anti-Semitic attitudes five hundred years later: their inhabitants engaged in more anti-Semitic violence in the 1920s and were more likely to vote for the Nazi Party before 1930 (Voigtländer & Voth, 2012). Wodak and Forchtner (2014) focus on the memories of the victory of a Christian coalition over Ottoman forces besieging Vienna in 1683 and how this event still provides a reservoir for anti-Turkish sentiments. In particular, they show how the right-wing populist Freedom Party of Austria (*Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs*—FPÖ) used a comic book for its political propaganda by constructing

Fig. 28.1 Effects on Present

a populist worldview where the underdog FPÖ is with ‘the people’ while opposing Muslim migrants and the ‘Social-Democratic establishment’.

In this chapter, however, I focus on the links between populism and a specific type of collective memories: those built around an authoritarian past. This choice is due to two main reasons: first, authoritarian regimes and populist actors share a set of illiberal elements, and second, the literature on authoritarian legacies and democratization offers many points of contact for the study of populism. Concretely, to link the collective memories of an authoritarian past to the success or failure of populism, the analysis should follow these two steps. First, it is necessary to examine how new democratic regimes that faced an authoritarian experience decide to incorporate that past into national history (Aguilar & Humlebaek, 2002, p. 121), in other words which collective memories of the authoritarian past are formed. At this point, it is possible to evaluate to what extent these collective memories constitute an advantage or a disadvantage for populist actors and discourses. The next sections disentangle these two steps and provide a detailed account of the reasons behind this approach (Fig. 28.1).

Authoritarian Past

As already mentioned above, I focus on the memory of authoritarian regimes because they share a number of illiberal elements with contemporary populism. Whether one follows a discursive approach (Laclau, 2005; Mouffe, 2005), an ideational definition (Hawkins & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017; Mudde, 2004) or understands populism as a type of mobilization (Jansen, 2011), it is possible to connect the study of populism to the literature on collective memories

because of populism's inherently illiberal nature.⁴ While it is possible that populist actors embrace, at a discursive level, liberal values such as free speech, gender equality and minorities' protection, populism remains essentially illiberal for three reasons. First, populists consider political opponents as enemies rather than legitimate adversaries, accusing them to betray the interests of the common people (Jansen, 2011). Second, in a majoritarian understanding of democracy they consider the 'will of the people' as corresponding to any opinion expressed by a majority, with disregard for minority rights and checks and balances (Pinelli, 2011). Third, at the institutional level populist actors almost invariably attack the press and hinder the independence of the judiciary system, claiming of doing so to return the power to 'the people' against corrupt elites (Krämer, 2018; Prendergast, 2019).

Populism shares several illiberal elements of past authoritarian regimes independently from its ideological, religious or social features. For example, in Latin America neoliberal and conservative populists (Carlos Menem in Argentina, Alberto Fujimori in Peru, Fernando Collor de Mello in Brazil), as well as left-wing populists (such as Hugo Chavez of Venezuela, Evo Morales of Bolivia and Rafael Correa of Ecuador) have damaged liberal democracy and established competitive authoritarianism that controls the media and undermines the opposition.⁵ Moreover, comparing three populist leaders such as Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Hugo Chávez and Rafael Correa, it emerges that left, right or religious populism operates through similar mechanisms: an anti-establishment image, a plebiscitary understanding of democracy and a Manichean worldview (Selçuk, 2016). Finally, populist actors in power usually undermine liberal democracy and establish some form of illiberal, authoritarian rule: recent examples include Hungary, India, Turkey, Brazil and the Philippines.

For these reasons, populism is often considered to be a threat for liberal democracy (Rovira Kaltwasser, 2012) and is labeled as proto-totalitarian (Abts & Rummens, 2007; Urbinati, 1998): once it becomes part of the political landscape, it makes that system irreconcilable with liberal democracy. One can therefore expect that in countries stigmatizing and rejecting the authoritarian past, populism will be unsuccessful in elections and socially not acceptable as a discourse. On the other hand, populism will thrive in countries that did not come to terms with their past, and where therefore the authoritarian past enjoys a certain degree of legitimacy or, at least, the absence of a social and political stigma. Given the characteristic of authoritarian regimes, the literature investigating the effects of authoritarian legacies mostly focused on penalizing effects on electoral performances of radical and extreme political parties (Golder, 2003). These studies are mostly about Europe and its fascist past, and observe the presence of a series of constraints showing that the stigmatization of populist ideas is stronger when those ideas are proposed in combination with a radical or extreme ideology (Caramani & Manucci, 2019). As Jan-Werner Müller (2016) argues, after World War II, European political systems

were built on a distrust of popular sovereignty fueled by the experience of fascism.

Collective memories can help explain the presence, success and social acceptability of populism when used in combination with other supply- and demand-side variables. While political opportunity structures are a well-established field of research, and the mediatization of politics is emerging as an increasingly important one (Stanyer et al., 2017), cultural opportunity structures should be considered when analyzing the social acceptability of populist messages. Economic performance, levels of corruption, credibility of populist actors and other short-term factors interact with cultural, long-term opportunity structures and together affect the success and acceptability of populism across countries. The next section illustrates how, from an empirical point of view, different collective memories of an authoritarian past can create more or less favorable conditions for populism's social acceptability.

Authoritarian Legacies

When the authoritarian past is analyzed in relationship with contemporary politics, the focus is normally on the effects of authoritarian legacies on individuals rather than on the impact of collective memories on societies. The argument proposed here is that authoritarian legacies and the study of collective memories of the authoritarian past are not mutually exclusive: to the contrary, they are complementary approaches that can illuminate different aspects of contemporary populism, including its electoral performance and its social acceptability.

The literature on authoritarian legacies is burgeoning despite little consensus on how to conceptualize them (Wittenberg, 2015), and especially how to empirically measure them and establishing their effects (Simpser et al., 2018). Several studies focus on Eastern Europe, its communist or pre-communist legacies and their impact on patterns of electoral behavior, state-society relations, quality of democracy and attitudes toward democracy (Grzymala-Busse, 2002; Neundorff, 2010; Pop-Eleches & Tucker, 2019). Other studies focus on Latin American and South European countries, concluding that past authoritarian regimes and their legacies have influenced, and continue to influence, democratic practice. In particular, 'authoritarian legacies stand a better chance of being eliminated if democratic reforms and democrats themselves seek to contribute to a public sphere that engages in collective debates over memories' (Hite & Cesarini, 2004, p. 17). The impact of authoritarian legacies on the democratization process, party systems and quality of democracy should focus on the presence of populist actors and discourses, their electoral performance and social acceptability.

Linked to the study of authoritarian legacies, although often implicitly, is the literature on transitional justice. It focuses on truth commissions, trials, purges, compensations and amnesties as a way of dealing with authoritarian

legacies, as well as museums, street name changes and forensic work (Barahona de Brito & Sznajder, 2010). The connection between collective memory, transitional justice and democratization has become the focus of much scholar attention: first concerning countries from the third wave of democratization (de Brito et al., 2001), and since the fall of the Berlin Wall also on Central and East Europe (David, 2015; Nalepa, 2010).

Recent studies on democratization and authoritarian legacies, show that parties' ideological stances are judged by their policy implications but also assessed according to whether they are opposed to the ideology of the previous regime (Dinas, 2017). Moreover, the ideology of the previous regime can affect public opinion and party competition after the democratic transition (Dinas & Northmore-Ball, 2019). Scholars should stress more explicitly the links between populism and the literature on transitional justice and democratization, to determine the effects of lustration mechanisms, successor parties and democratization process on the performance of populist actors and social acceptability of populist discourses. The next section illustrates how to do so by providing concrete examples.

EMPIRICAL APPLICATIONS

This section presents an overview of empirical cases showing how fascist, communist and military regimes produce long-lasting legacies that can throw some light on the electoral performance of populist actors and the social acceptability of populist discourses. The focus is on Europe and Latin America both for reasons of space and because it is possible to observe the impact of authoritarian legacies only when a democratization process took place. For example, in post-soviet countries (the only exception being the Baltic States) the status of democracy, pluralism, and civil society is at best ambiguous (March, 2017). Other interesting cases would have deserved more attention. For example, Japan struggles to come to terms with Second World War history (Seaton, 2007) and it is often depicted as a country suffering from collective amnesia and depicting itself as a victim (Berger, 2012). Mongolia approved a law that grants compensation for the victims of Stalinist political repression, but never established a truth commission and chose not to pursue the perpetrators of violence, indicating a general repression of public memory (Kaplonski, 2008).⁶

A burgeoning literature examines populism in Europe, but its links to the legacies of both fascism and communism have rarely been the object of systematic and comparative analyses.⁷ Germany, in particular, has been considered for a long time immune to right-wing populism and radical right parties because it came to terms with its Nazi past (a process called *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*).⁸ While a culture of contrition prevented a resurgent far right in Germany, Austria nourished a culture of victimization that proved to be favorable for the rise of right-wing populism (Art, 2006). Assuming the guilt for the atrocities of the Nazi regimes reduced the opportunity structures for the far right as

well as right-wing populist actors, at least until the recent success of Alternative for Germany (Arzheimer, 2019). In Italy, a country that never came to terms with its fascist and colonial past (Focardi, 2013), the post-fascist party National Alliance became part of the first Berlusconi's government in the 1990s, and two members of the family Mussolini ran for a seat in the European Parliament elections of 2019.

Three Southern European countries belonging to the third wave of democratization—Greece, Portugal and Spain—have been compared in terms of party system and electoral behavior (Gunther, 2005), authoritarian legacies (Barahona de Brito & Sznajder, 2010) and democratization processes (Cavallaro & Kornetis, 2019).⁹ Moreover, the bias against a right-wing ideology due to the authoritarian past, may explain why the right-wing parties of Greece, Portugal and Spain have been constantly treated by their electorates as the most right-wing in Europe, despite these parties holding relatively moderate right-wing positions according to their manifestos (Dinas, 2017). Recently, the performance of populist far-right parties in Portugal and Spain has been examined by taking into consideration the levels of stigma attached to the authoritarian regimes of Francisco Franco and António de Oliveira Salazar (Mendes & Dennison, 2020).

This type of research constitutes an excellent example of how the impact of collective memories of the authoritarian past can influence the presence and success of populism in contemporary politics. Spain, similarly to what happened in Chile with the regime of Augusto Pinochet, went through a *ruptura pactada*, which allowed the regime of Francisco Franco to negotiate its departure.¹⁰ Consequently, 'letting bygones be bygones' became a foundation for democratic consolidation and a politics of forgetting created and solidified the country's democratic institutions (Aguilar, 2008; Encarnación, 2014). This seemed to form a strong stigma against populist radical right parties (Alonso & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2015), at least until 2019 when Vox became the third most voted for party in Spain. Similarly, in Portugal the carnation revolution that ended almost half a century of authoritarian rule enjoyed a large consensus, and this created mechanisms that closed the window of opportunity for the radical right (Pinto, 2006), although there is higher agreement regarding 'authoritarian legacies' compared to 'transitional legacies' (Raimundo & Generoso de Almeida, 2019).¹¹ Also in Greece all political forces recognized the dictatorship era (1967–1974) as a major setback but, contrary to Portugal, the country experienced populism since the early 1980s when PASOK established its long hegemony, a feature of the Greek political system that was reactivated after the economic crisis of 2008. The socio-economic crisis became a crisis of representation (Halikiopoulou & Vasilopoulou, 2018), and populist parties could be found both in power and in opposition, and across the ideological spectrum (Stavrakakis & Katsambekis, 2019).

Communist legacies in East Europe are well studied, in particular their effects on electoral behavior and values (Pop-Eleches & Tucker, 2011) and

their impact on party systems and competition (Grzymała-Busse, 2006). Shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall, George Schöpflin (1993) correctly predicted that post-communist legacies would haunt the region even after the democratic systems and rule of law were instituted. Indeed, those legacies have an impact on the success of radical right parties in Eastern Europe (Bustikova & Kitschelt, 2009) and countries in Central and Eastern Europe continue to experience informal legacies and to be divided between the ‘winners’ of the transition and reform processes and the losers (Seleny, 2007). In Poland, the right-wing populist party Law and Justice (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość—PiS) originated from the anti-communist Solidarity trade union, and it continues to fight the influence of the Communist era security apparatus in Polish society (Pankowski, 2010). As early as 2006–2007 a three-party populist coalition attempted to break with the liberal-democratic model of post-communist transition, arguing that radical action was necessary in order to remove from power a network of politicians, business people and media figures associated with the communist regime (Stanley, 2016).¹² In a similar way, Hungary successfully transitioned from communism to liberal democracy, only to experience an autocratic evolution a few years later (Pappas, 2014). The populist radical right party of Viktor Orbán, Fidesz, carried out a systematic devaluation of 1989 as a revolution, insisting on the interwar period—when Hungary was ruled by right-wing autocrat (and ally of Hitler) Miklós Horthy—as a foundational myth for the country (Palonen, 2018).¹³

Other former communist countries reckoned with their past more or less successfully. In Romania, Bulgaria and Slovakia communism is the most relevant legacy in explaining what makes the citizens of these countries endorse democracy, regret communism or turn to populism. The poor performance of governments and their lack of accountability led to populism because the ‘populist syndrome’ is caused by residual authoritarianism. In particular, ‘considering minorities a threat, agreeing with the government bypassing parliament and approving communism retrospectively turn out to be predictors’ for a populist vote (Mungiu-Pippidi & Mindruta, 2002, p. 209).

Former Yugoslavia, where communist legacies are intertwined with military conflicts and ethnic nationalism, received less attention but its transition to democracy and the formation of populist movements has not been completely neglected. In the late 1980s populism began to bloom as a reaction to the crisis and then disintegration of the Yugoslav federation, originating the so-called anti-bureaucratic revolution of 1988–1989 (Mikucka-Wójtowicz, 2019). In Serbia and Croatia, the current ‘wave of populism’ stems from the unfulfilled expectations of democracy. In Serbia, a country that hardly came to terms with its past, a politician who used to praise war criminal Ratko Mladić and his greater Serbian ideology such as Aleksandar Vučić has been elected Prime Minister in 2014 and then President in 2017. In Slovenia the process of state formation brought about both ethno-nationalist and ethno-religious populism, with the construction of new enemies and groups of ‘others’ (Pajnik et al., 2016).

Latin America is another region that would particularly benefit a comparative analysis of authoritarian legacies, since most countries in the last decades experienced military dictatorships and populist governments. In Brazil, because of the dark legacy of the 1964–1985 military regime, politicians have been reluctant to define themselves as right wing (Power & Zucco, 2009), a phenomenon nicknamed *direita envergonhada* (ashamed right) referring to political conservatives who do not wish to identify themselves as such. Things changed in the last decade, when the pervasive ‘culture of amnesia’ gave place to a more active ‘politics of memory’ (Schneider, 2011). However, this ‘turn to memory’ did not enhance the country’s democratic credentials but rather allowed president Bolsonaro to foster a vision of the dictatorship as a ‘democratic revolution’ (Ryan, 2016), to the point of ordering the country’s armed forces to commemorate the 55th anniversary of the 1964 military coup.

In Argentina, the legacy of the military dictatorship also known as National Reorganization Process (1976–1983) has always been very relevant, and the fact that it was preceded by decades of Peronism adds a further layer of memories to deal with, to the point that one could argue that Argentine fascism shaped the country’s political culture (Finchelstein, 2014). Despite a very active discussion about the country’s authoritarian past, with human rights organizations and left-wing parties pressing for justice, the lack of a real closure represents a political-cultural impediment to more profound democratization (Muller et al., 2016).

The military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet (1973–1990) left profound marks on the political culture and democratization process of a Chile. As a result, the country remains haunted by divided memories (Wilde, 1999) and the party system is deeply influenced by the cleavage between those who supported authoritarian rule and those who opposed it (Torcal & Mainwaring, 2003). After one year of intense protests often repressed by the police, a national plebiscite to change the constitution adopted under the military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet was held in 2020, starting a process of institutional distancing from the legacies of Pinochet’s dictatorship.¹⁴

CONCLUSIONS

Authoritarian legacies and collective memories are relevant for the comprehension of populism because they form a blueprint for the legitimacy or stigmatization of populist actors and discourses. With the passage from an authoritarian regime to democracy, engaging in a collective process of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* creates varying degrees of legitimacy for political discourses promoting illiberal ideas of power, as well as a certain ideological bias in reaction to the ideology of the past authoritarian regime. In other cases, the authoritarian past can be used as mythological material for the creation of a society that rejects pluralism, rule of law and minority rights.

Populism can instrumentally manipulate the past to justify new lines of conflict between those that belong to an imagined community and those who are excluded from it. As we have seen, this can happen in two ways. First, when a country does not come to terms with its past and the collective memory of the authoritarian regime fails to produce a stigma of that idea of power. Second, when a past authoritarian regime is strongly condemned and this produces an ideological shift that rejects the past and legitimizes populist actors opposing the past regime. In both cases, countries that experienced an authoritarian past and then transitioned to liberal democracy are more likely to legitimize populist ideas of power that reject liberal principles. This, in turn, can produce a further vulnerability of democracy and lead toward a return of authoritarian tendencies, whether or not procedural democratic principles are respected.

The constant re-negotiation of the meanings to attribute to the past, as the chapter has shown, is an always-changing conflictual process. For example, in 2014 Dilma Rousseff's government launched a truth commission that published an exhaustive report of dictatorship abuses, and in 2019, Jair Bolsonaro became president of Brazil promoting, among other things, a positive image of the military government while downplaying the human rights abuses it perpetrated. Every generational or political cohort can influence the way in which collective memories evolve: textbooks, official celebrations, museums, symbolic gestures, reparations, truth commissions, books, movies, to name just a few, are tools that contribute to this process.

While this chapter focused on authoritarian regimes, it is important to mention that other types of collective memories. For example, colonialism, slavery and wars interact with other aspects of a country's past and contribute to shape its collective identity and political culture. Colonialism played an important role in producing mostly inclusive populism in Latin America and exclusionary populism in Europe. In particular, its "hierarchic and exclusionary traits will continue to influence the conceptualization of the people, and the effect of this influence on populist movements depends on the position of such movements vis-à-vis the colonial relationship" (Filc, 2015, p. 269).

The wounds left by systemic racism are still visible in the United States, where monuments and memorials dedicated to the Confederate States of America, a government that fought for the perpetuation and expansion of slavery, are the object of much controversy. It is interesting to note that even the confederate general Robert Lee opposed building public memorials to the rebellion, arguing they would keep open the war's many wounds. Political attitudes, electoral behavior and public opinion, including racial antagonism and ideological conservatism (Valentino & Sears, 2005) and self-identification with the Republican party (Acharya et al., 2016) are still largely affected by the legacies of the civil war. The election of Donald Trump in 2016—preceded by the Charleston church shooting in 2015 and followed by the

Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville in 2017—, the protests against Confederate monuments and the requests of the Black Lives Matter movement, all resonate with long-lasting historic legacies and collective memories.

Future research should investigate also subnational and international levels of collective memories. For example, as the German case shows, the country developed two different memories of the Nazi past and the Holocaust since the West and the East fell under the influence of the Allies and the Soviet Union respectively, and this is reflected in the success of populist parties like AfD and Die Linke in the East compared to the West. In a similar way, Belgium shows how two regions with different historical legacies such as Flanders and Wallonia manifest different reactions of mainstream parties and the media that, in turn, produce very different levels of success for populist radical right parties (de Jonge, 2020). Collective memories also have an international dimension, as Aleida Assmann suggests when talking about the role of the Holocaust universal reference and global icon forming a transnational memory (Assmann, 2010).

Furthermore, future research should investigate the links between lustration mechanisms and authoritarian legacies to determine what kind of reparations, commissions and symbolic gestures allow countries to come to terms with their past and stigmatize authoritarian tendencies. In particular, how the process of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* translates in terms of opportunity structures for populist actors at the institutional level and in terms of patterns of democratic consolidation. Moreover, it is essential to study how collective memories affect cultural attitudes and electoral behavior at the individual level through surveys that explore, in a direct way, the links between individual memory, evaluation of the past authoritarian regime, ideological self-placement and the presence of populist attitudes.

Finally, it is important to understand how communities form and negotiate collective memories, for how long these memories have an impact on political culture and individual values, when and under which circumstances they start fading. While a correct process of socialization can prevent the fading of collective memories, a natural generational change combined with the advent of new critical junctures might change the approach toward official narratives of the past. Over time, societies perceive the ‘remote’ past as less and less relevant for the present, and this mechanism is crucial to understand contemporary democracies as well as populist tendencies.

NOTES

1. Maurice Halbwachs, who died in the Nazi concentration camp of Buchenwald and was one of the first scholars to explore the collective dimension of memory, argued that collective memory is always mediated through complex mechanisms of conscious manipulation by elites and unconscious absorption by members of society (1925). However, it would be misleading to ignore also a bottom-up dimension of memory-building, in which social movements can bring certain

issues into the limelight, putting pressure on the elites and contributing to shape the country's collective memory.

2. A community collectively remembers and ritualizes its past through commemorations and holidays, names of public streets and squares, statues, textbooks and symbolic actions, but also elements of popular culture such as movies and TV shows. Several studies, for example, show that the media influence and shape collective perceptions of the past, see e.g. (Kligler-Vilenchik et al., 2014; Neiger et al., 2011).
3. Several factors can trigger an evolution or a metamorphosis in collective memories: e.g. the emergence of social movements, debates among historians, international controversies and trials.
4. Moffitt (2020) argues that populism can be considered as inherently illiberal only following an ideational approach. However, in the following paragraphs I show how populism is an illiberal phenomenon regardless of its definition.
5. This inevitably eroded horizontal accountability in Latin American countries governed by populist politicians (Ruth, 2018).
6. Moreover, one could observe how in Turkey, collective memory of the Armenian genocide and past wrongs against several minorities (including Kurdish and Alevi), are still far from the mainstream (Kaya, 2017).
7. A growing literature observes how Europe built its politics of memory (Fogu & Kansteiner, 2006; Judt, 1992; Müller, 2002), and came to terms with its authoritarian past (Borejsza & Ziemer, 2006). Rousso (1990) focused on the memory of the Nazi occupation in France, speaking of a "Vichy Syndrome" because of the reluctance to come to terms with the past. However, in memory studies the connection to populism is often missing. Single country studies make a connection between the fascist past and populism (Betz, 1988; Kitschelt & McGann, 1995) but in a non-systematic way.
8. This does not mean that the German process of coming to terms with the past was easy or completely spontaneous. In fact, Germany started it only in the 1950s and under pressure from the Allies. Moreover, Eastern Germany followed a very different script since it fell under the Soviet influence and therefore developed a radically different collective memory of the Holocaust and the Nazi past. In particular, the East defined itself in heroic terms for having defeated Nazism (Herf, 1997).
9. Interestingly, during the protests against austerity measures imposed by the European institutions during the Great recession, in all three countries the social protests established a parallel between the lack of democracy during the authoritarian past and the impositions of the Troika (Fishman, 2019; Kornetis, 2019; Lobo et al., 2016, p. 164).
10. Interestingly, Aleida Assmann (2014) argues that what has developed over the years between Spain and Argentina is a case of transnational memory-alliance relating to the respective traumatic legacies. Moreover, she claims that the introduction of Argentinian terminology and symbols (e.g. *desaparecido*) served as an external trigger for Spanish memories to re-emerge in the social debates.
11. In 2019, the far right party Chega obtained a seat in the parliament, thus ending Portuguese 'exceptionalism'.
12. PiS won the elections again in 2015 fueling anti-establishment and anti-communist sentiments and representing a backlash against the liberal turn of the post-Soviet world and the revolt against the elites that after 1989 reached a 'liberal consensus' considered as illegitimate.

13. Poland and Hungary have populist parties not only in power, but also in opposition: the Kukiz'15 movement in Poland, led by punk rock musician turned politician Paweł Kukiz, and the radical and nationalist Jobbik in Hungary.
14. The authoritarian past re-emerged also in May 2020 when Pinochet's great-niece, Macarena Santelices, became Chile women's minister, and she had to resign because before her nomination she had praised the 'good side' of a dictatorship in which over 300 women were raped under torture.

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Chapter 28

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