PART I

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1

Introduction: A Theory for the Popular Sectors' Quest for Inclusion in Latin America

> "We want to return to factories. We said to the [national Labor] Ministry that we are socialists; that we question the private ownership of the means of production; that we struggle for a workers' state – but that we won't wait for the revolution to return to the job market. We want to be exploited by a capitalist again."
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> – Néstor Pitrola, national *piquetero* leader of the Trotskyist Workers' Pole social movement organization (*La Nación*, April 6, 2004)

What did it take to bring a key national Trotskyist leader to demand that the government allow workers to be exploited by capitalists *again*? Although it may seem contradictory at first glance, this social movement leader's request was the logical result of the effects of neoliberal reforms on Latin American politics and society. Neoliberalism has been defined as crucial to the reformulation of state–society relations in many parts of the world.[1] In Latin America, neoliberal reforms have also caused the socio-political exclusion or *disincorporation* of the popular sectors[2] (cf. Tokman and O'Donnell 1998; Portes and Hoffmann 2003; Reygadas and Filgueira 2010). However, exclusion was intensely resisted by social movements mobilizing the popular sectors, such as the landless peasants in Brazil, the indigenous in Bolivia and Ecuador, and the unemployed in

[1] For a discussion of the multiple dimensions that compose the definition of "neoliberalism," cf. Lee Mudge (2008), and about the crucial differences between neoliberalism in the Global South and the North-West, cf. Connell and Dados (2014).

[2] This book uses the terms "popular sectors," "workers," "laborers," and "urban/rural poor" interchangeably to refer to the poor and/or marginalized strata in society, which in Spanish is commonly rendered as *sectores populares*.

Argentina (Almeida 2007; Ondetti 2008; Silva 2009; Becker 2011), contributing to a resurgence of the left.

A growing body of literature has examined the turn toward leftist governments in the region in the past ten years (Panizza 2009; Cameron and Hershberg 2010; Weyland et al. 2010; Levitsky and Roberts 2011). Some scholars associate what might be considered as the end of neoliberalism with the accession to power of left-wing or populist parties in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Uruguay, and Venezuela in the 1990s and 2000s (Grugel and Riggirozzi 2009, 2012). While the accession to power of left-wing or populist parties seems to lead to the implementation of inclusionary policies (Huber and Stephens 2012), as yet there has been no systematic study of how this has played out. In order to accomplish such a study, we need to add extra layers of empirical detail and theoretical density to the "left turn" thesis to explain the complexity of the macro-process of transformation in Latin America's socio-political arena and how it relates to the capacity of poor people's movements to influence the political agenda to include their interests.[3]

In the quest to empirically trace the historical path that gives sense to demands such as the one quoted at the beginning of this chapter, this book addresses the following questions: How did the struggle from below contribute to the halt of neoliberalism in part of Latin America? And how has the socio-political arena been expanded to include the interests of the poor and excluded strata of society? The starting point for the answer this book offers is to put poor people's movements into the long-term perspective of the societal transformations produced by neoliberalism. We still need to learn more about the relationship between macro-processes of transformation and social movements (McAdam et al. 2001).

This book proposes an explanation for the major process of transformation behind the Latin American left turn: *the second wave of incorporation of the popular sectors*. For "second wave of incorporation" I mean the second major redefinition of the socio-political arena, caused by the broad and selective inclusion of the popular sectors in the polity after being excluded or disincorporated by military authoritarian regimes and democratic neoliberal reforms. The second wave of incorporation is the result of the accumulation of transformations that were carried out to deal with the contentious struggle for reincorporation by the popular sectors,

[3] The concept of "poor people's movement" is used following the original definition of Piven and Cloward (1979) and interchangeably with "popular movement," its equivalent for the Latin American tradition in social movement studies.

organized in territorialized social movements. The emergence of left-wing or populist parties in government is one of the by-products of two decades of struggle against disincorporation.[4]

This book presents a relational study of twenty years of a poor people's movement's pressure for inclusion and the state mechanisms for institutional change that this pressure has produced. I conceptualize the dynamics of the popular sectors' struggle for their reincorporation into the socio-political arena and analyze the role played by the main political actor related to this historical process in Argentina, the *piquetero* (picketer) movement. Given that the *piqueteros* emerged as a by-product of the transformations caused by neoliberalism, this movement of unemployed people represents a paradigmatic case of a specific type of movement I will conceptualize in this chapter: the *reincorporation movement*. This definition considers the *piquetero* movement as part of a long-term quest on the part of the poor people of Argentina for socio-political participation in the polity.

The *piquetero* movement is a key case for social movement scholars as well as students of Latin American politics because it represents the largest movement of unemployed people in the contemporary world.[5] The *piqueteros* was the main national social movement in the struggle to shape a post-neoliberal arena in Argentina.[6] Since 1996, the *piquetero* movement

[4] When dealing with "(re)incorporation" as a concept, I am following Collier and Collier (1991) rather than social movement scholars' conceptualization of this term (Giugni 1998a). This is because rather than considering incorporation as an immediate outcome of social movement struggles, I understand it – like Luna and Filgueira (2009) and Reygadas and Filgueira (2010) – as a Latin American macro-historical process.

[5] Reiss and Perry (2011) offer several historical examples of other unemployed workers' movements.

[6] I follow the definition of post-neoliberalism proposed by Grugel and Riggirozzi (2012: 3–4): "we understand it to embody a different conceptualization of the state from that which reigned in the high period of neoliberalism, based on a view that states have a moral responsibility to respect and deliver the inalienable (that is, not market-dependent) rights of their citizens (see Almeida and Johnston 2006: 7) alongside growth. Politically, post-neoliberalism is a reaction against what came to be seen as excessive marketization at the end of the twentieth century and the elitist and technocratic democracies that accompanied market reforms. … It is, as such, part of an unfinished debate over what constitutes the transition to democracy (Peruzzotti 200[5]: 209). But changes to the portfolio of state responsibilities and a vision of a more equal distribution of national income sit alongside strong continuities from the recent past, in particular the retention of the export axis and commitment to a degree of fiscal restraint that are seen as essential for economic stability. … Crucially, in much of Latin America it is emerging in the context of an unprecedented export bonanza that permits the adoption of more expansive public spending than has been the case since the 1980s."

has mobilized the poor and unemployed people of Argentina, providing organizational structure to their quest to end neoliberalism and see themselves incorporated into a more inclusive and equal society. Moreover, this movement influenced national politics to such an extent that it became part of the governing coalition. This is the first time that a movement made up of unemployed people has come to occupy such a central position in Latin American politics.

This book offers an analysis and conceptualization of the dynamics of the second incorporation in Argentina: from the emergence of the *piquetero* movement as a means of resisting the social, economic, and political exclusion of the poor in the 1990s to the development – partially as a result of this movement – of a series of policies enabling the partial inclusion of the poor into the socio-political arena in the 2000s. To do so, this analysis applies a qualitative process-tracing method based on the triangulation of interviews with key actors, newspaper data, and archival material to study the process (the second wave of incorporation) and actor (the reincorporation movement) that have partially reshaped the socio-political arena in Argentina, and perhaps elsewhere in the region.

This book links historical institutionalism and social movement studies to improve our relational analyses of social movements as part of macro-processes of socio-political change. On the one hand, I introduce the importance of considering timing and sequence as a manifestation of the thoroughness required by historical institutionalism (Aminzade 1992; Pierson 2000, 2004; Sewell 2005, 2008) that supplies the need – as claimed by some scholars – for dynamic studies of social movements (Tilly 1995, 2004; McAdam et al. 2001; Tilly and Tarrow 2006). On the other hand, the second incorporation process included the re-routinization of rules and procedures. Based on institutions and practices of the previous context, on the movement side the second incorporation process was built through the use of a predominant repertoire of strategies, which transcended contentious politics and implied mid- and long-term goals (conceptualized in Chapter 2). In Argentina, this happened within a mostly trade unionist strategy in combination with other strategies coming from left-wing traditions. To analyze and conceptualize the historical process of strategy making and performing of social movements we need to recover the school of historical analysis of Charles Tilly while at the same time escaping from the structuralist trap of most macro studies. In other words, the concepts I will propose in Chapter 2 provide us with the elements for studying in detail how social movements' strategies differ from or coincide with the ones of the elites and also enrich the social

movement literature by contributing elements for studying what happens when contentious politics is not taking place.

This book builds on and expands previous studies of the neoliberal period in Latin America (Cavarozzi and Garretón 1989; Oxhorn 1998; Roberts 2002, 2008; Almeida 2014) by outlining what happened after the period of resistance to recommodification ended. It also complements the analyses of post-neoliberalism that have focused on trade unions (Etchemendy and Collier 2007), political parties (Levitsky and Roberts 2011; Flores-Macías 2012; Roberts 2013), and community organizations and NGOs (Collier and Handlin 2009a), along with the role played by social movements (Auyero 2003; Lucero 2008; Burdick et al. 2009; Silva 2009).

The main argument of this book is that, between 1996 and 2009, the Argentine socio-political arena was reshaped according to non-corporatist logic. Neoliberal reforms, carried out under authoritarian and democratic regimes as of the 1970s, had led to the gradual disincorporation of the popular sectors from the political and socioeconomic arenas. This consequence of the neoliberal program led to the emergence in the 1990s of the *piqueteros*, a movement of unemployed people seeking a halt to neoliberal reforms and reincorporation into the socio-political arena. However, transformations were not immediate. The state responded to the challenge posed by the *piquetero* movement with some innovations in policing at protest events but also with incremental changes and additions to social policies addressing some of the *piqueteros'* demands. In other words, the state identified a new "social question" as a result of the protests of the *piqueteros*, devising institutional responses in a bid to calm social unrest. The dynamics of interaction between claims for reincorporation and the accumulation of gradual changes on the part of the state to deal with the new "social question" were the elements that two decades later led to the rise of post-neoliberalism in Argentina.

However, this second wave of incorporation was not done through the trade union system as it had been in the 1940s but through the legitimation of a new political actor, the *piqueteros* – a territorially organized movement. As a result, once the *piqueteros* succeeded in stopping neoliberal policies, a portion of the movement began to participate in the governing coalitions.

Why does this book propose a dynamic analysis of a social movement rather than a structuralist analysis to study a macro-process like the second wave of incorporation? Because, for both periods of incorporation, the interactions of the actors involved unfolded in a pattern that led

to long-term consequences and effects that – in many cases – had not been foreseen *a priori*. However, this book does not propose a path-dependent argument: on the contrary, agency, in particular from below, is the crucial explanatory element for the second wave of incorporation in Argentina, and – as analyzed in Chapter 8 – also elsewhere. In Argentina, governmental decisions were important, but much less than what could be expected from a study that primarily focuses on the elites.

Each historical period has been associated with different types of popular movements leading the efforts for social change. During the liberal period (1870s–1930s) that preceded the first incorporation in Latin America (1930s–50s), the labor and/or peasant movements were the main organizers of the popular sectors in their claim for well-being through reform or revolution. For the second incorporation (2000s–10s), a different type of movement emerged in Latin America during the neoliberal period (1970s–90s) as the central popular actor in the drive to reverse the exclusionary consequences of authoritarianism and neoliberalism and claim the reincorporation of the popular sectors as citizens and wage-earners. The emergence of what I define as the "reincorporation movement" – a type of movement that has built upon, but also decentered, labor-based actors – is the result of important transformations that took place in the socio-political arena between the two waves of incorporation of the popular sectors.

THE TWO WAVES OF INCORPORATION OF THE POPULAR SECTORS

In Argentina, the first incorporation was a corporatist process that unfolded between 1943 and 1955.[7] It involved a combination of the mobilization of popular claims by the labor movement at the factory level and the application of populist Peronist party policies for channeling these claims into corporatist institutions.[8] The first incorporation in

[7] "Corporatism can be defined as a system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organized into a limited number of singular, compulsory, non-competitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognized or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and supports" (Schmitter 1974: 93–94).

[8] Briefly, Peronism is the national-populist movement that first incorporated workers into the nation's politics. The establishment of the dominant labor tradition in Argentina is intimately related to the Peronist movement. Peronism has an emblem, a hymn, and a stable of intellectuals and is the hegemonic popular political culture of the Argentine poor

Argentina (and Latin America) has been defined as "[t]he first sustained and at least partially successful attempt by the state to legitimate and shape an institutionalized labor movement" (Collier and Collier 1991: 783).[9] This was done through the gradual creation of social policies for addressing the claims of the increasingly unionized popular sectors. The origins of first incorporation may be traced to the collapse of economic and political liberalism, the ruin of the western European and US economies in the 1930s, and decades of accumulated protests for inclusion by popular movements across most of Latin America since the late nineteenth century (Piven and Cloward 1979; Collier and Collier 1991; French 1992; Hobsbawm 1994; Botana and Gallo 1997; Gotkowitz 2007; Kurtz 2013).

The second incorporation was a territorially based process that happened between 2002 and 2009 after an extended period of disincorporation of the popular sectors. This new wave originated from the inherited institutions and actors of the first incorporation. In addition, the two waves of incorporation were *partial* and *selective*, redefining the relationship between the popular sectors and the state. Like the first, the second incorporation was a predominantly urban and industrial process; rural peasants, of marginal relevance in Argentine national politics, were not included. However, in this second wave, the main actor mobilizing the claims of the poor and excluded was the *piquetero* movement, organizing the disincorporated popular sectors at the territorial level. A Peronist party was again in charge of developing the policies for channeling these new claims, but in this case, they were not the old corporatist institutions but new or reformulated institutions conceived in response to the territorialized nature of the claims that emerged with the *piqueteros* and as a result of the weakening of corporatism caused by neoliberalism.

Incorporation waves represent major and prolonged historical processes of struggle among socioeconomic and political groups for the expansion or reduction of the socio-political arena. In analytical terms, I define the second incorporation process as sharing the same basic requisites identified by Collier and Collier (1991: 783) for the first

since the 1940s (Germani 1973; Brennan 1988; James 1988; Torre 1990; Auyero 2000; Plotkin 2003; Karush and Chamosa 2010; Rossi 2013a).

[9] This process was not exclusive to Argentina. In Brazil, the first incorporation was done for demobilization purposes, while in Bolivia, Venezuela, and – mainly – Argentina, incorporation implied the mobilization of the labor movement. In Bolivia and Venezuela, the first incorporation also included peasants, and in Ecuador, incorporation was done by a military reformist regime with a weak labor movement (Collier and Collier 1991; French 1992; Klein 2003; Yashar 2005; Gotkowitz 2007).

TABLE 1.1 *Historical Sequence of Stages in the Popular Sectors' Struggle for Incorporation in Argentina, 1915–2009*

Years	Stage
1915–43	Reform
1943–55	Party corporatist incorporation
1955–62	Aftermath – Heritage – Coup
1962–76	Equilibrium/ Zero-sum game
1976–96	Coup – Disincorporation
1996–2002	Recognition – Legitimation
2002–9	Party territorial reincorporation

Sources: The stages for the period 1915–62 were taken from Collier and Collier (1991). Reproduced from Rossi (2015b).

incorporation process: it "occurs in relatively well defined policy periods, which we frequently refer to as the 'incorporation period'. These periods emerge as part of a larger program of political and economic reform . . . " If we apply this long-term perspective to the analysis of poor people's movements, the historical sequence of stages in the popular sectors' struggle for incorporation in Argentina can be synthesized as shown in **Table 1.1**. While according to Collier and Collier (1991: 22, figure 0.1) the initial incorporation process in Argentina followed a logic of Reform – Incorporation – Aftermath – Heritage – Coup, I suggest the following as the logic of the second incorporation process: Disincorporation – Recognition – Legitimation – Reincorporation.

Rather than a linear understanding of the progress of society, the Machiavellian recursive logic of history is the one that better grasps the dynamic of the eternal reshaping of the polity. The historical process of the first incorporation in Argentina is not the focus of this book, as this has already been successfully analyzed by Collier and Collier (1991). This book focuses on the historical continuation of what these authors studied, that is, the stages that compose the second wave of incorporation: from neoliberal disincorporation to the recognition of the claim for reincorporation (Chapter 3), the struggle for legitimation of the reincorporation movement as a new political actor (Chapter 4), and the second incorporation phase (Chapters 5 and 6). However, the advances (1943–55), stalemates (1962–76), and setbacks (1976–96) of the popular sectors' quest for inclusion in Argentine politics that link the first and second incorporations should be viewed as stages of the same historical process.

The "Social Question" Then and Now

As part of the recurring dynamics of incorporation, both waves had some elements in common in terms of the steps leading to incorporation. Both incorporation periods were preceded by a (neo)liberal phase that created a new "social question." This "social question" in both cases evolved into a *political* question with a contentious actor that was gradually recognized and legitimated. In the 1990s and 2000s, the emergence of recommodification and marginalization (unemployment, impoverishment, exclusion, etc.) as a new "social question," the modification of policing techniques, and the creation of massive social programs can be seen as a process equivalent to that of the pre-incorporation dynamics. Between the 1870s and the 1930s, anarchists, syndicalists, and socialists posing the "social question" pushed the elites to create anti-immigration and security laws (Isuani 1985; Suriano 1988) to recognize the claim to social rights and later the actor behind this new claim, the labor movement (Suriano 2000). Concerning social policies, the first-wave process, begun in 1935, eventually led to the creation of the Secretariat of Employment and Social Security in 1943 (Gaudio and Pilone 1983, 1984) and, later, the enactment of comprehensive social rights policies and constitutional reform before ending in 1955.[10] During the second wave, the process led to the creation of the Ministry of Social Development in 1999 and the establishment of wide-ranging cash-transfer policies and universal citizenship income rights policies, mainly since 2002.[11]

These transformations do not imply that the relationship between popular movements and the elites have been harmonious. The first incorporation divided movements, some supporting governments, while others becoming critical or even suffering persecution and repression. In the first wave, the labor movement maintained a conflictive relationship with Juan

[10] Furthermore, Collier and Collier (1991: 155) argue that the connection between the period of 1935–43 and the later labor populism incorporation of 1943–55 under the first two Perón governments is "that the 'institutionalization' of this state role did not occur until Perón period – though Perón's policies should definitively be viewed as the product of a progressive 'sedimentation' of these earlier informal practices [of the process]."

[11] The Ministry of Social Development existed during the aftermath and coup stages of the first incorporation as the Ministry of Social Welfare or Social Action, from 1966 (the start of Juan Carlos Onganía's authoritarian regime) to the end of 1982. Before this, from 1955 it had been a subsidiary division of the Ministry of Health. With the neoliberal disincorporation phase and redemocratization, the Ministry of Social Welfare was again downgraded to a secretariat, until 1999 when the Ministry of Social Development was restored in response to the *piqueteros*' struggles for reincorporation (Chapters 4, 5, and 6).