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The Discourse on Civil Society in Poverty Reduction Policy in the Argentina of the 1990s

The neoliberal and populist political project's struggles for hegemony

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Declaration

Abstract

This thesis looks at how the long-standing battle between liberalism and populism in Argentina manifested in the 1990s in the struggles between neoliberalism and populism to hegemonise the discourse on civil society in national poverty reduction policy. It traces how, through their struggles to remain or become hegemonic, neoliberalism and the concrete form that populism took in the country – henceforth Argentinean populism – each incorporated some of the other's views, made the other change, and transformed.

Neoliberalism and Argentinean populism are considered antagonistic political projects that struggle to become hegemonic. Each project has normative viewpoints at its core, but also includes contingent characteristics acquired in specific historical contexts. For example, the package of market-liberalisation measures and the model of inward economic development are contingent characteristics of neoliberalism and Argentinean populism respectively.

Civil society is seen as both a discourse emerging from struggles to hegemonise its meaning and the arena where struggles for political hegemony take place and, thus, where hegemony and counter-hegemony are manufactured (Gramsci, 1998 [1971]: 12, 13, 15, 204). Defining a discourse on civil society is, therefore, a fundamental hegemonic operation, which entails setting limits to the possibilities of hegemonic struggles that can take place in that arena.

The thesis argues that the discourse on civil society in the poverty reduction policy area in the Argentina of the 1990s was neopopulist, understood here as the articulation of neoliberal and Argentinean populist discourses on civil society. The neopopulist discourse, however, was not fixed throughout the decade. It emerged (1990-1994), turned into what this thesis characterises as technopopulism (1995-1999) and was then challenged by populist views (2000-2001). While neoliberalism predominated during the decade, the mutations of the neopopulist discourse reflected the gradual colonisation of the predominantly neoliberal discourse by populism and the attempts of neoliberalism to retain its predominance.

The conclusion stresses that the centrality of technical and institutional aspects in the neoliberal logic of hegemonic construction created a crucial interstice through which the intrinsically political populist discourse could permeate the neoliberal hegemony. As dislocations in the hegemonic discourse emerged, domestic factors and actors enabled the Argentinean populist discourse on civil society to grow within the neopopulist discourse, partially colonise it, and eventually challenge it. Policy-makers and implementers, whose profiles combined technical skills with deeply embedded populist views, were crucial in this process. Additionally, changes in the neoliberal discourse of the Multilateral Development Banks during the 1990s, as well as differences between these banks and between their official positions and their staff views, were contributory factors in this colonisation.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

<u>General</u>

(Political parties in **bold***)*

Unless stated, translations throughout the thesis are by the author.

Alianza – Alianza por el Empleo, la Justicia y la Educación (Alliance for Jobs, Justice and Education)

AC – Acción Católica (Catholic Action)

CEADEL – Centro de Apoyo al Desarrollo Local (Local Development Support Centre)

CGT – Confederación General del Trabajo (General Labour Confederation)

COs – Círculos de Obreros (Workers' Circles)

DI – Discursive Institutionalism

DNGOs – Development NGOs

ECLAC – Economic Council for Latin America and the Caribbean (United Nations)

EPH – Encuesta Permanente de Hogares (Household Survey [biannual])

FEP – Fundación Eva Perón (Eva Perón Foundation)

FREPASO – Frente País Solidario (Solidarity Country Front)

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

HI – Historical Institutionalism

IFIs – International Financial Institutions

ISI – Import Substitution Industrialisation

MAOs – Mutual Aid Organisations

NAs – Neighbourhood Associations

NBI – *Necesidades Básicas Insatisfechas* (Unsatisfied Basic Needs)

NGOs – Non-Governmental Organisations

N/OI – normative or organisational institutionalism

PJ - Partido Justicialista (Justicialist or "Peronist" Party)

SBC – *Sociedad de Beneficencia de la Capital* (Beneficence Society of the Capital)

SSNs – Social Safety Nets

SIFs – Social Investment Funds

UCR – *Unión Cívica Radical* (Radical Civic Union)

UNICEF – United Nations Children's Fund

WDR – World Development Report

Programme-related acronyms

CENOC – Centro Nacional de Organizaciones Comunitarias (National Centre for Community Organisations)

FONCAP – Fondo de Capital Social (Social Capital Fund)

FOPAR – Fondo Participativo de Inversión Social (Participatory Social Investment Fund)

NuBs – Núcleos de Beneficiarios (Beneficiaries' Groups)

PAD – Project Appraisal Document

PAGV – Programa de Atención a Grupos Vulnerables (Programme to Support Vulnerable Groups)

PFSC – Programa de Fortaleciemiento de la Sociedad Civil (Civil Society Strengthening Programme)

PROAME – Programa de Atención a Menores en Situaciones de Riesgo (Children at Risk Programme)

PROMEBA – Programa de Mejoramiento de Barrios (Neighbouhood Improvement Programme)

PROMIN – Programa Materno-Infantíl de Nutrición (Mother and Child Nutrition Programme)

PRONATASS – Programa Nacional de Asistencia Técnica para la Administración de los Servicios Sociales (National Technical Assistance Programme for the Administration of Social Services

PROSOCO – Programa de Políticas Sociales Comunitarias (Community-level Social Policies Programme)

PROSOL – Programa Federal Solidario (Federal Solidarity Programme)

PROSONU – Programa Social Nutricional (Social Nutritional Programme)

PSA – Programa Social Agropecuario (Social Farming Programme)

SP – Social Protection

SI – Plan de Seguro Infantil (Childhood Insurance Programme)

SIEMPRO – Sistema de Evaluación y Monitoreo de Programas (Programme Evaluation and Monitoring System)

UCEPMIN – Unidad Coordinadora Ejecutora de Programas Materno Infantiles (Coordination Unit for Mother and Child Programmes)

National and International Institutions

IDB – Inter-American Development Bank

INDEC – Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censo (National Statistics and Census Institute)

MDBs – Multilateral Development Banks

MDSyM – Ministerio de Desarrollo Social y Medioambiente (Ministry for Social Development and the Environment)

SDS – Secretaría de Desarrollo Social (National Secretariat for Social Development)

STEyAS – Secretaría de la Tercera Edad y Acción Social (National Secretariat for the Third Age and Social Action)

UFI – Unidad de Financiamiento Internacional (International Funding Unit)

WB – World Bank

Chapter 1

Introduction

Hegemonic struggles between liberalism and populism have marked the history of Latin American countries since their independence. In Argentina these struggles appeared in historical events such as the battles between the Federals and Unitarians between 1810 and 1852. They were portrayed as the struggle between civilisation and barbarism, which dominated political ideology in the late 19th century, and underpinned the antagonism between the masses and the oligarchy that emerged during Perón's first governments (Svampa, 1994).

In the early 1990s, Argentina's newly elected president Carlos Menem (1989-1995 and 1995-1999) adopted neoliberal economic reforms focused on reducing the state, achieving fiscal balance and liberalising markets (Keeler, 1993; Grindle, 1996: 4; Gerchunoff and Torre, 1996: 737-8; Acuña 1994: 47). Throughout the 1990s the country was committed to the neoliberal reform agenda, with the international financial community widely applauding these economic policies (Mussa, 2002: 1). However, Argentina had experienced one of the most studied cases of populism to date – Peronism – and, until the 1980s, populism had remained hegemonic in the country. How did neoliberalism, the 1990s version of liberalism, challenge that existing populist hegemony?

The thesis looks at how the longstanding battle between liberalism and populism in Argentina manifested in the 1990s in the struggles between neoliberalism and populism to hegemonise the discourse on civil society in national poverty reduction policy. It traces how, through their struggles to remain or become hegemonic, neoliberalism and the concrete form that populism took in the country – henceforth Argentinean populism – each incorporated some of the other's views, made the other change, and transformed.

The thesis' main argument is that the discourse on civil society in the poverty reduction policy area in the Argentina of the 1990s was neopopulist, understood here as the articulation of neoliberal and Argentinean populist discourses on civil society. The neopopulist discourse, however, was not fixed throughout the decade. It emerged (1990-1994), turned into what this thesis characterises as technopopulism (1995-1999) and was challenged by an attempt to articulate a different discourse (2000-2001). While neoliberalism predominated in the neopopulist discourse during the decade, the mutations of the neopopulist discourse reflected the gradual colonisation of this discourse by Argentinean populism and the attempts of neoliberalism to retain its predominance.

The first section of this introduction looks at the definitions of neoliberalism and Argentinean populism. The second section justifies the focus on poverty reduction and civil society, and the third section explains the importance of the Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) and Argentinean populism in the analysis of the neopopulist discourse of the 1990s. The fourth section details the contribution made by the thesis vis-à-vis the literature on topics related to it. The fifth section explains the theoretical perspective and analytical framework adopted here, and the final section outlines the thesis structure and addresses methodology issues.

1.1. Neoliberalism and populism

Neoliberalism and Argentinean populism are considered here antagonistic political projects that struggle to become hegemonic. Each project has normative viewpoints at its core, a logical component, and contingent characteristics acquired in specific historical contexts. They are antagonistic not only because their historical struggles for hegemony constituted them as such, but also because their normative and contingent components, as well as their predominant logic of discursive formation, are opposed.

Neoliberalism is usually referred to as a package of economic reforms famously labelled by Williamson as the "Washington Consensus". These reforms called for

fiscal discipline, tax reform and privatisation, interest rate and trade liberalisation, a competitive exchange rate, and an economy open to foreign investment (Williamson, 1990: 1993). In this thesis, neoliberalism is a political project not in terms of being a class-project (Veltmeyer et al., 1997), nor simply because it pursues a specific political system such as pluralist liberal democracy (Philip, 1999; Santiso, 2001; Leftwich, 1993), but because neoliberalism involves a particular normative view of how society works and aims to make it hegemonic. Neoliberal economic reforms are part of the contingent component of this political project.

Economic reforms are the most visible, and are a crucial, contingent element of the neoliberal political project, but the core of this project is its normative component, which draws on the two central tenets of liberalism: the primacy of the individual over the community and the division between the private and public spheres. The contingent component of neoliberalism includes economic and institutional reform measures and the democratic pluralist system of government that the latter seeks to establish. Yet, while liberalism is concerned with both political and economic factors that may guarantee individual freedom, neoliberalism focuses on liberalism's economic premises. Therefore, economic reform packages emerge as the most visible element of neoliberalism. These reforms also play a crucial role in this project's struggle for hegemony.

The logical component of neoliberalism refers to the manner in which political projects process population's demands and seek to become or remain hegemonic. Neoliberalism's distinctive logic of discursive construction is the logic of difference, since population's demands are expected to be addressed through institutionalised responses to each individual claim and thus reflect the neoliberal normative preference for individuals over the community. The use of techniques and methods is key in emphasising that demands are addressed according to each individual's need and in a systematised manner that is not based on political aims but on an objective reading of the social reality. In turn, due to neoliberalism's focus on economic liberalism — liberalism's tenet of the social and economic spheres as equal and the conception of the economic sphere as a realm that can be objectively scrutinised and known — economic knowledge emerges as the main source legitimating the techniques and methods used to address social demands.

There is less agreement among scholars about what populism is. Until the 1980s, populism was associated with socio-historical aspects and a specific model of economic development –import substitution industrialisation (ISI) (Germani, 1962; Murmis and Portantiero, 1971; Cardoso and Faletto (1990 [1969]). In the 1990s, scholars were puzzled by the coexistence of populism with economic neoliberalism (Panizza, 2000: 179) and "purely political" definitions of populism emerged (Roberts, 1995; Weyland, 1996; 1999). In these writings, populism was usually defined using lists of characteristics and regarded frequently as a "style of leadership" (Conniff, 1999: 7; Drake, 1999: 223-4; Knight, 1998; Panizza, 2001: 441).

Here, populism is a political project the normative component of which comprises the sovereignty of the people over individuals and the dissolution of the barriers that separate the people from the institutions that govern them. The focus on the political constitution of the people, rather than on a particular social base or economic programme, is what differentiates populism from other political projects with similar normative components, such as republicanism or grass-roots politics (Panizza, 2005a, Panizza, 2008: 79). This focus reflects the centrality of the logic of equivalence in populism because it is through highlighting the commonalities of people's different social demands that populism constitutes the people as political actors. This focus also reinforces the project's anti-institutionalism because populism constitutes political identities by direct appeals to the people that ignore established institutions, and by identifying the people with unsatisfied demands as neglected or oppressed by the established institutions. This focus and populism's anti-institutionalism, makes populist political projects vary significantly according to the historical circumstances in which they exist. In Argentina, the success of the Peronist populist appeal in the mid-20th century defined largely the content of the populist political project. Thus, most of what analysts include in lists of populism's characteristics, such as its association with an inward model of development or the primacy of corporatist state-society relations, are contingent elements of Argentinean populism.

Neoliberalism and Argentinean populism are inherently antagonistic. Yet, antagonism does not presuppose incompatibility. A fundamental possibility for their combination lies in their logical components. While the prevalent logic of discursive construction

is different in each project – difference in neoliberalism and equivalence in populism –, as political projects both need to apply the logic of equivalence to struggle for hegemony. In order to universalise its normative views, neoliberalism needs to apply the logic of equivalence by highlighting how different demands from population are equal to each other and how the political project can meet them. However, neoliberal claims that its views are apolitical and draw on the objective observation of the natural sphere of the economy leave the political side of the project unarticulated and available for other political projects to articulate it. Populism, especially successful populist appeals, needs to acquire a certain level of institutionalisation, thus it also needs to implement the logic of difference. Additionally, because of its highly contingent character, populism can adopt a variety of institutional forms.

1.2. The focus on poverty reduction policy and civil society

An analysis of Argentinean poverty reduction policy exposes how neoliberalism and populism struggled for hegemony in the 1990s. First, poverty reduction was a key element of the neoliberal reform agenda of that decade. In a first stage, started in the 1980s, neoliberal reforms focused on the macroeconomic sphere and consisted mainly of economic adjustment measures. Poverty and inequality in the region[1] worsened during those years. In a second stage – usually referred to as "second generation reforms" (Naim, 1995; Pastor and Wise, 1999; Nelson, J. 2001) – the reforms expanded their area of concern beyond the macroeconomic realm to include state and social sectors reform (Vellinga, 1998: ix). In the early 1990s, poverty became the central concern of two key institutions promoting neoliberal reform in the country — the World Bank (WB) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) – which significantly increased their loans for the social sectors (World Bank, 1990; IDB, 1994; Annex I, figs. 1, 2). Second, poverty is also a key issue in populist projects. Populism's focus on the political constitution of the people as the oppressed or neglected usually leads to the populist appeal being associated with the poorest

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[1] Many analysts indicated that in the 1980s poverty and inequality in the region worsened as a consequence of the market reform measures and adjustment implemented in that decade, which came to be known as the "lost decade" for development in Latin America. Morley shows that income per capita fell by 11% and income poverty, in terms of living on less than US$2 a day, went up from 26.5% in 1980 to 31% in 1989 (Morley, 1995a). For more on poverty and inequality in the region in the 1980s see Altimir 1994, 1996; Londoño and Szekely 1997; Lustig 1995; Morley 1994; 1995a and b; Rosenthal, 1996; Veltmeyer et al., 1997.

sectors of the population. In Argentina, as populism acquired its most crystallised features alongside the emergence and development of Peronism, the appeal was chiefly associated with workers.

Concentrating attention on civil society discourse is especially relevant for the analysis of the struggles between neoliberalism and populism in the 1990s. First, during the second stage of neoliberal reform, including civil society actors in the design or implementation of policies became a central objective in MDBs' strategies (World Bank, 1992; 1997; 2000a; Bresser Pereira and Cunill Grau, 1998: 52-4). As the MDBs focused on poverty issues, the number of projects with some form of civil society involvement grew, key publications on participation were published and changes in the Banks' internal structure reflected an increasing concern with civil society (chapter 4). Second, civil society organisation was central in the Argentinean populist project as a form of opposing the liberal institutions of individuals' representation — political parties. After this, their centrality in the poverty reduction area was consolidated via the role that organisations played vis-à-vis the ISI model of development that prevailed until the 1970s, in which organisations would provide social services until the model bore fruit. Despite the weakening hegemony of populism in the 1970s and 1980s, civil society organisations continued to play key roles in poverty reduction. During the military dictatorship (1976-1983), civil society organisations emerged as the main resistance to the dictatorship and tried to compensate for the state withdrawal from social assistance while still expecting the state to eventually resume intervention in that field. During the government of Raúl Alfonsín (1983-1989), these organisations played a role in the delivery of poverty reduction policies and later emerged as crucial actors in coping with the effects of hyperinflation on the poor (Moreno, 2002: 291-303, 318-320; Iñigo Carerra and Cotarelo, 2003: 204).

Crucially, to focus on civil society is to focus on the heart of where hegemonic struggles take place. Most of the studies of civil society in Argentina that emerged in the 1990s focused on measuring or categorising civil society (eg Campetella, et al., 1998; Roitter, et al., 1999; Luna, 1997, 2000; GADIS-PNUD-BID, 2000; Filmus et al., 1997) and thus adopted a priori definitions of what constitutes civil society. In contrast, this thesis is interested in exploring how the understanding of civil society

was shaped in a particular context. Civil society is hence seen as a discourse shaped by the struggles for the definition of its meaning. Additionally, following Gramsci, civil society is seen as the arena where struggles for political hegemony take place, and thus where hegemony and counter-hegemony are manufactured (Gramsci, 1998 [1971]: 12, 13, 15, 204). Therefore, defining a discourse on civil society — or what civil society *is* in a given context — is a fundamental hegemonic operation, which entails setting limits to the possibilities of hegemonic struggles that can take place in that arena.

1.3. The MDBs, Argentinean populism and the analysis of the neopopulist discourse

In Argentina, the implementation of poverty reduction policies with civil society involvement went hand in hand with the increasing presence of the MDBs in this policy field. Initially, Menem's government neglected poverty-related problems, but in 1993 it started to address them, creating a national agency for that purpose — the *Secretaría de Desarrollo Social* (*SDS* – National Secretariat for Social Development). Yet, the government's focus on reducing state expenditure resulted in low levels of expenditure for assistance to the poor compared to expenditure in other countries[2] and other areas of the budget.[3] Facilitated by the government's explicit commitment to neoliberalism, *SDS* functionaries' personal connections with international financial organisations and those organisations' increasing interest in poverty-related issues, MDBs' funds became crucial for this new agency. The importance of the MDBs in Argentina increased in the 1990s, not only with respect to the volume of loans but also with respect to their capacity to direct and support the policies adopted by the national government (Acuña and Tuozzo, 2000b: 433). MDB loans for Argentina in the 1990s soared from an approximate average of US$2,000 million in the 1980s to US$13,000 million (Figures 0 and 00, Annex I).[4] In particular, the most notable study on the influence of the MDBs' views on social policy in Argentina asserts that the

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[2] According to Lo Vuolo et al. (1999: 174-5) expenditure on poverty reduction actions in Argentina was around 17% of the national budget in the 1990s, compared to an average of 32% in developed countries.
[3] Consolidated expenditure on targeted programmes was on average $2,268.41 million between 1990 and 2001, which represents approximately 10% of all social expenditure (Vinocur and Halperin, 2004: 20).
[4] Regarding the WB, whose first loan dates from June 1961, 65% of loans for Argentina were approved in the 1990s (including one in December 2001). See: http://tinyurl.com/2vj4g6.

only social area in which the MDBs' recommendations were heard was poverty reduction (Acuña and Tuozzo, 2000a: 124; 2000b: 453; also in Tussie and Tuozzo, 2001: 111). By the mid-1990s, the SDS's most influential policies or programmes[5] were MDB-funded and most of its policies included a role for civil society organisations. Only eight of the 24 national poverty reduction programmes with civil society involvement that emerged during the 1990s never had MDB funds.[6]

The MDBs encountered in Argentina a discourse on civil society in poverty reduction action that had developed within a framework of the populist hegemony, which started with Peronism in the 1940s and is labelled here as Argentinean populism. By the 1980s, the discourse had incorporated some features linked to liberalism but was still predominantly populist. The discourse reflected a view of inextricability between the private and public realms, the preference for community over individuals, and the political logic as more prevalent than the institutional one. This could be seen in the tendency of social organisations dealing with poverty to supplement the state but only temporarily, assuming that the state would eventually resume its role as provider of social services, and in their tendency to seek and accept state funds and guidance rather than to protect themselves against state interferences in the private realm. Also, these organisations preferred non-hierarchical structures and, in order to keep the bases in direct contact with the leaders, who nevertheless were usually strong and detached from the bases, participatory governing mechanisms rather than those of individual representation predominated. Catholicism and political identities rather than individual will and interests were key in guiding social organisations' preferences, and discretionary and weakly institutionalised modes of dealing with poverty were common. However, the advance of liberalism – the increasing support for liberal democracy, the growth of voluntary organisations, and the increasing technification and institutionalisation of actions for tackling poverty – emerged as an avenue for the neoliberalism that arrived in the 1990s to colonise this populist discourse.

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[5] Policies are taken here as synonymous with programmes. It is worth noting that what the MDBs call projects are called "programmes" by the states (or policies here). Sometimes, one MDB project can finance more than one programme and a programme can obtain funds from more than one project loan. For instance, the Social Protection Project loans (WB) corresponded to more than one programme, including *FOPAR, SIEMPRO* and *TRABAJAR* (Annex II).
[6] See Annex II.

The MDBs' discourse on civil society presented a fully articulated operationalisation of the neoliberal political project. This discourse comprised a view of civil society as social organisations, especially technically skilled organisations, which would eventually become a permanent supplement of the state. Civil society was located in the private sphere alongside the market, and separated from the political sphere. Organisations were envisaged as emerging from individual will and interests, which implied that the organisations' preferred form of internal government would be a system of individual representation. The scope of these organisations' involvement with poverty reduction policies was conceived of as having to be restricted to state-funded sub-projects[7] and, as technical organisations, they were expected to follow standardised technical methods to address poverty. These views operationalised the normative and logical components of neoliberalism because, ultimately, they aimed at redrawing the dividing line between the private and public spheres and stressed efficiency and the technical profile of social organisations, rather than the political purposes behind the inclusion of civil society in poverty reduction actions. However, the MDBs' focus on efficiency that neglected the political dimensions of social organisation was a fundamental avenue that opened up the possibility for non-neoliberal projects, such as the populist one, to colonise neoliberalism. Changes to the MDBs' discourse on civil society after the mid-1990s, and historical and institutional differences between the WB and the IDB, further facilitated the advancement of the Argentinean populist discourse on civil society in poverty reduction in Argentina in the 1990s.

The thesis argues that the mix of the Argentinean populist and the MDBs' neoliberal discourses on civil society resulted in a neopopulist discourse that was hegemonic in the country during the 1990s in the poverty reduction area. Therefore, neopopulism is seen here as the result of the struggles between the neoliberal and the populist political projects with regards, in particular, to the discourse on civil society in poverty reduction policy. This marks a difference between this thesis and the analyses that use the term neopopulism to refer to the broad characteristics of the first years of Menem's rule (Szusterman, 2000; Weyland, 1998, 1999, 2002: 168-209; 2003;

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[7]Sub-projects are the initiatives at the grass-roots level funded by policies or programmes.

Cammack, 2000).[8] This thesis differs also, and more strikingly, from those holding that neopopulism is the combination of populist politics and neoliberal economics (Weyland, 1996; Roberts, 1995; chapter 2) because here the economic and political aspects of neoliberalism and populism are seen as inseparable.

The thesis also argues that while the neopopulist discourse was predominantly neoliberal throughout the 1990s, the discourse was not fixed and the mutations reflected the Argentinean populist project gradual colonisation of the neopopulist discourse and neoliberalism's attempts to retain that predominance. In order to analyse how neopopulism emerged (1990-1994), evolved into technopopulism (1995-1999) and was challenged by attempts to articulate a different discourse on civil society (2000-2001) the thesis focuses on specifying the changes that occurred in the neopopulist discourse throughout the decade. It analyses the political struggles underpinning the formation and changes of the neopopulist discourse and expounds which of the political projects struggling for hegemony – neoliberalism and Argentinean populism – became predominant in each of the periods analysed.

The analysis shows that while contextual factors created opportunities for the emergence of and changes to the neopopulist discourse, the national government, the state actors involved in the poverty reduction area, and the WB and the IDB and their staff, were crucial in moulding the discourse. The MDBs were key promoters of the neoliberal discourse on civil society, but also facilitated the permeation of the discourse by Argentinean populism. State actors shaped the discourse in accordance with their technical profile, political allegiances and personal experiences, infusing the discourse with both neoliberal and populist features. Influential state actors in the poverty reduction area were policy makers – the head of the *SDS* its Secretaries and Under-Secretaries, and programme coordinators involved in programme design – as well as policy implementers – programme coordinators and programme area coordinators.

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[8] Analysts highlighted the combination of bypassing democratic institutions such as Congress and political parties and the centralisation of power in the executive branch (eg Novaro, 1994; Palermo and Novaro, 1996; O'Donnell, 1994 and 1996) with the new feature of disarticuling organised actors that had traditionally supported populism, such as unions (eg Torre, 1998; Murillo, 2001) in order to seek support among the disorganised and marginal sectors (eg Cheresky, 2001; Cavarozzi, 1992a; 1994).

1.4. The thesis contribution

This research enriches the academic debate at three levels. Empirically, it provides an unprecedented analysis of a particular aspect of a key policy area in the 1990s – the discourse on civil society of poverty reduction policies. Theoretically, the thesis applies recent developments in discoursive institutionalism and, thus, seeks to contribute towards that development. At the level of policy practice, the research emphasises the politically constructed character of such a fundamental term as civil society. It deals with the unmet expectation that strengthening civil society was going to help to not only make poverty reduction policies more efficient but also to foster a liberal, pluralist and representative democracy (Pearce, 2004: 203-4). Instead, by the end of 2001, after a decade of a predominantly neoliberal discourse on civil society, Argentina witnessed a massive mobilisation of people, which re-established distinctive features of the Argentinean populist discourse on civil society in the form of popular assemblies, street blockades and other non-institutionalised forms of advancing popular demands (Dinerstein, 2001; 2003; Iñigo Carerra and Cotarelo, 2003). This thesis shows that in the construction and re-construction of the discourse on civil society, populism was constantly present and gradually gained ground during the decade within the state discourse that was trying to modify civil society.

In order to emphasise the politically constructed character of civil society, this thesis rejects idealised conceptions of civil society and focuses on the role of state and international actors in shaping the understanding of civil society. By the mid-1990s, the inclusion of civil society actors in poverty reduction policies led to the spread of studies of the impact of this innovation on the transformation of state-society relations. Unlike this thesis, these studies not only concentrated on analysing the impact of policies, rather than the formation of the perspectives embedded in them, but also adopted a normative understanding of civil society and contrasted it with reality.

These studies suggest two main reasons why an "ideal" civil society does not appear in the reality of the country: the resilience of inherited habits and the persistence of inequality. Most studies highlight the positive effects of the implementation of

policies with civil society participation. Some argue that collaborating with the state could lead to the successful advancement of social movements' views (Jelin, 1997: 94-97) or foster healthy debate between organisations and the state (Thompson, 1995). They underscore the negative persistence of clientelism – or the use of policy resources to garner votes (Auyero, 2001) – in the implementation of these policies, as in the influential studies of Cavarozzi and Palermo (1995) and Martínez Nogueira (1995). Yet, they argue that that persistence drew on inherited practices associated with the state-centred matrix of development that prevailed between the 1930s and the 1980s (Cavarozzi, 1992a and 1994) and that it was not a problem inherent to civil society. Also, some students suggest that inequality prevents the expansion of the rule of law, allowing the continuation of the political manipulation of the poor (Vellinga, 1998: 12; see also O'Donnell (1998: 51, 61).

Like this thesis, many studies emphasise the importance of the state in shaping state-society relationships. Yet, still assuming an a priori, and idealised, definition of civil society, they consider that state reform can overcome the difficulties posed by inherited practices and inequality. In their views, state reform is crucial (Nogueira, 1999: 5; Bresser Pereyra and Cunnil Grau, 1998) to provide better services and to guarantee that interaction with civil society organisations does not lead to co-option and clientelism (Jelin, 1997; Garland, 2000: 5) allowing the channelling of social demands that seek to end inequality (Jelin, 1997; Roxborough, 1997). Even a study looking at the state discourse in poverty reduction policies and its effects on the formation of the poor's identity suggest managerial solutions to overcoming obstacles for the channelling of the poor's social demands (Cardarelli and Rosenfeld, 2000; 1998: 127-134) and, ultimately, assume that these reforms would allow that idealised civil society to become a reality. This thesis, instead, not only avoids a priori definitions of civil society but also holds that state promotion of civil society organisation is not necessarily conducive to the erosion of the discourse in which social organisations are embedded, especially because state policy makers and implementers are themselves influenced by that discourse.

The thesis' focus on state policy makers and implementers relates it to studies that focus on the role of "experts" in shaping policy or, as in this thesis, a discourse. It draws on the literature on technocracy to define state actors involved in discourse

moulding and to understand the role of technical language in the discourse on civil society of the 1990s. The definition of technocrats as individuals in governing positions who have highly professional and specialised training (Centeno, 1997: 230) is used here to refer to the technical profile of policy makers and implementers. Yet, technocrats are seen not merely as technicians, because being in decision-making positions entails dealing with politics (Centeno, 1997: 221). Moreover, they are not just "technopols" (Domínguez, 1997). This thesis looks at state actors' influence in shaping discourses by taking into account their identities, which are seen as made up of not only their technical expertise and decision-making role, as the "technopols". Their identities also include their engagement in other discursive practices within which they occupied "subject positions" (section 1.5) linked to their political allegiance, their participation in social organisations, or their personal lives. Also, as students of technocracy have argued, the thesis assumes that state actors can resort to technical language to look politically appropriate. Furthermore, it agrees that economics has not always been the most valued specialised knowledge in technocracies (Markoff and Montecinos, 1994: 9, 10) and technocrats and technocracies are not necessarily neoliberal (Centeno, 1997: 225; Markoff and Montecinos, 1994: 5). Nevertheless, the increasing centrality of economic questions contributed to the ascent of economists and their knowledge within governments in the 1990s (Markoff and Montecinos, 1994: 6-9).

Few studies look at the role of the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) dedicated to social issues — the MDBs – in shaping the poverty reduction policies. The essays authored and collected by Diana Tussie (Tussie, 2000; Casaburi and Tussie 2000b; Casaburi et al., 2000, Tussie and Tuozzo, 2001) are an exception but they still assume an idealised view of civil society. Analyses of the factors that led to the implementation of economic neoliberal reform widely acknowledge the role of the IFIs (Vacs, 1994: 67-73; Gerchunoff and Torre, 1998: 115, 116; Canitrot, 1994: 82; Acuña and Smith, 1994: 28-30). Yet, the role of the MDBs is only mentioned, if at all, as a facilitating factor in mainstreaming civil society involvement in social programmes (Cardarelli and Rosenfeld, 1998: 71, 90; 2000: 32). This neglect was particularly striking when the role of the MDBs grew so significantly in the poverty reduction area in the 1990s, as described in the previous section. In Tussie's collection, however, Acuña and Tuozzo (2000a and 2000b) analyse how the MDBs'

views of civil society participation affected reforms in three social areas in Argentina – labour, health and poverty reduction. Many of that work's insights are incorporated in the thesis. Yet, their point that a limited participation could preclude needed transformations in state-civil society relations (Acuña and Tuozzo, 2000a: 125) suggests they assume that civil society participation is ideal but MDBs' proposals to promote it could be negatively affecting it – an assumption that differs from this thesis' accent on the politically constructed character of civil society.

This thesis tangentially engages with an important stream within international relations that studies IFIs' influence on their borrower countries' agendas. Analyses of the relationship between IFIs and national states are taken into account here, such as the insightful work of Ngaire Woods (2006), particularly her views about the way in which these organisations operate and the factors that affect their leverage in their borrowing countries – such as isolated policy-making, shared views and the technical skills of the bureaucracy (Woods, 2006: 10, 73). This thesis' focus is not, however, the study of the mechanisms of influence of the MDBs but the extent to which and the way in which the MDBs' views shaped the state discourse and how domestic actors were able to reshape this influence. Furthermore, while most of these analyses adopt a political economy perspective, this thesis proposes a different theoretical perspective. In analysing the shaping and re-shaping of the discourse on civil society, this thesis does not neglect the traditional question of political economy, "in whose interest?" (Woods, 2000: 1) – it addresses it from a different angle. Material interests may have shaped this discourse, but the thesis' theoretical assumption is that interests, as well as ideas, can only influence the social and political world if they are politically constructed and articulated as a discourse that seeks to become hegemonic.

1.5. Analytical framework: Relational Discursive Institutionalism

a. A relational ontology

The theoretical approach chosen in this thesis falls within discursive institutionalism (DI) but it proposes a more radical ontology. The thesis agrees with most DI stances, yet it objects to its neglect of the political struggles underpinning processes of institutional formation and transformation. Therefore, it proposes a relational discursive institutionalist approach. The differences between a relational and a non-relational discursive institutional approach stem from a different understanding of discourse.

Discursive institutionalism (DI) draws on two versions of new institutionalism[9] – normative or organisational institutionalism (N/OI) (eg March and Olsen, 1984, 1989; Powell and Di Maggio, 1983, 1991) and historical institutionalism (HI) (eg Steinmo et al., 1992; Rueschmeyer and Skocpol, 1996; Hall, 1993). This section focuses on the versions of institutionalism that inform discursive institutionalism. It leaves aside rational choice versions (eg North, 1990; Ostrom, 1990) because their ontological and epistemological positions – positivism and methodological individualism respectively – are thoroughly different from the relational ontology and social constructivist epistemology that guides this thesis.

As with all new institutionalisms, DI's definition of institutions includes a wide variety of "social conventions", either formal or informal, which, following empirical observation, are noted as crucial. The only prerequisite is that institutions must have some stability over time and must affect individuals' behaviour (Peters, 1998: 146; Campbell and Pedersen, 2001: 13). In line with HI, DI prefers inductive approaches to the testing of theories and is interested in tracing the effects of the past in the formation of new institutions. Like N/OI, DI emphasises the importance of meanings[10] in the analysis of socio-political phenomena and how actors' strategic actions are "bounded" by systems of rules and values in particular organisational arrangements (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Fligstein 1990; Dobbin, 1994 in Strand and Bradburn, 2001: 131).

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[9] New institutionalism started to emerge in political science in the mid-1980s. Incorporating traditional institutionalism, it holds that institutions are the structures against which actors interpret reality and take decisions. However, unlike traditional institutionalism, institutions are not defined merely in a formal and legalistic manner and they include informal structures such as "norms and values", "rules and constraints" and "regularized patterns of interaction" (Peters, 1998: 1-8, 18-19, 146).

[10] According to normative institutionalism "political life is organized around the development of meaning through symbols, rituals, and ceremonies." (March and Olsen, 1984: 3, 7, 8).

DI also criticises HI and N/OI, however. Most notably, DI prefers the terms "meaning" to ideas, and "discourses" to paradigms. A number of institutional analyses have recently included a "discursive dimension" by considering that ideas influence the formation and transformation of institutions and policies (Hall, 1993; Hay, 2001; Sikkink, 1991; Risse et al., 1999).[11] The DI critique of these studies is that ideas are seen as fully finished concepts, exogenous to the phenomenon under analysis, and as independent or supplementary variables to structural or interest-based variables. Differently, discursive institutionalism asserts that ideas are meaningful only by reference to a certain system of interpretation or discourse (Kjaer and Pedersen, 2001: 220), and hence cannot be conceived as fully finished realities external to the discourses that embody them. Discourse, therefore, acquires a central role in this theory. The concept of paradigm appears to perform a similar role in ideational versions of HI (Hall, 1993; Hay, 2001). DI regards positively ideational HI's notion of paradigm, because it underscores the existence of ideas and values beyond institutionalised ones. DI notes, however, that paradigms do not account for the historical processes behind their own formation, and thus, ideational HI grants paradigms the same theoretical level – ultimate causes – as institutions. In contrast, DI stresses the different temporality of ideational and institutional change (Hay, 2001: 193) and that paradigms, redefined as discourses, should be theoretically situated as key shapers of institutions as they affect crisis narratives and their solutions (Hay, 2001: 203-4), the perception of change, and actors' behaviour (Kjaer and Pedersen, 2001: 225).

This thesis agrees with the epistemological and analytical insights of DI, but it differs in its ontological basis and proposes additional analytical tools to supplement those of DI. At the epistemological level, focusing on meaning and discourses asserts the need of inductive methods to map events that construct meanings rather than establishing causal links between variables. Analytically, DI looks at processes of "translation" of loosely defined discourses into particular contexts focusing on the selection, displacement and innovation processes involved in these "translations" (Kjaer and Pedersen, 2001: 219, 241). Despite agreeing with DI epistemological and analytical proposals, this thesis holds that the DI understanding of discourse needs to be "de-

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[11] For more positivist perspectives see Haas, 1992; Goldstein and Keohane, 1993).

positivised". Consequently, the thesis differs from DI in the conceptualisation of structure-agent relations, and in the notions of institutions, actors, interests and social change. Moreover, a "de-positivised" ontology requires other analytical tools in addition to those linked to the notion of "translation".

DI's definition of discourse retains traces of positivism. DI defines discourse as a "system of meaning that orders the production of conceptions and interpretations of the social world in a particular context" (Kjaer and Pedersen, 2001: 220). This definition assumes a moment of representation of the real, which sidelines the intrinsically relational character of the social and the necessary political operations behind the articulation of that relational reality. Therefore, DI analyses do not include accounts of the political struggles entailed in the operations of "translation", "displacement" and "triggered innovation".

The notion of discourse[12] adopted here entails a relational ontology in which political struggles are crucial – discourses here are relational systems of signification that are politically constructed. In this understanding of discourse, social objects have meanings in terms of differences and equivalences within discourses and the construction of discourses is intrinsically political, as it involves the construction of antagonisms[13] and the articulation of chains of equivalence and differences within the discourse. The construction of antagonisms defines the "outside" and "inside" of the discourse and the articulation of chains involves the partial fixation of meaning around nodal points (Howarth, 2000: 9). Therefore, the objects of the socio-political life do not have meaning independently from the discourses that constitute them as objects and discourses are the result of political struggles about the partial fixation of meaning. However, the centrality of politics in this ontology makes this approach different from other anti-foundational theories[14] because it does not deny the reality beyond thought. What this ontology denies is that reality can have any social significance beyond discourse (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 107). Furthermore, this

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[12] The account of discourse theory presented here draws on the work of Laclau and Mouffe. It includes insights from studies by Howarth and Torfing that operationalised their concepts (Howarth, 1995 and 2000; Torfing, 1999a) and other studies that employed them in empirical analyses (eg Torfing, 1999b; Howarth, 1997, Howarth et al. (eds.), 2000, Panizza, 2005 (ed.)).

[13] This understanding of social antagonist draws on Schmitter's conception of politics, whereby its essence is the construction of "enemies". However, from the perspective adopted here, since politics is intrinsic to the social, social antagonists should be tolerated, not eliminated (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 165; Mouffe, 1993: 4).

[14] Mainly postmodernists, see Rosenau, 1992, Rorty, 1989, Lyotard, 1984 [1979]

ontology does not deny the possibility of "foundational politics". In fact, it considers politics as the foundation of social existence.

b. Three levels of analysis and the understanding of institutions and actors

In view of this ontological position, this thesis analyses the discourse on civil society on three levels. First, it concentrates on tracing the fundamental discursive articulations behind partially fixed meanings. Second, it looks at the contextual factors involved in the political struggles that led to these articulations. Third, levels one and two framed in a hegemonic analysis.

A further explanation of the concepts introduced with the definition of discourse will be helpful to identify what is taken into account when tracing the creation and recreation of this discourse. If meaning is about differences and equivalences, a system of signification (discourse) must exist. For this system to exist there must be limits and for these limits to exist there must be something beyond the limits – there must be an exclusion (Laclau, 1996: 37). This exclusion is politically created by the discursive construction of an antagonist and the concomitant emergence of empty signifiers that triggers the construction of chains of equivalence and difference that seeks to fill those signifiers. The operation of generating an "inside" and "outside" of the discourse leads to the emergence of empty signifiers because previous relations of difference and equivalence that fixed the relation between signifier and the signified (social) object are broken when a different social antagonist is constituted (Laclau, 1996: 38-9). These empty signifiers are floating signifiers in that they broke the chains of equivalences and differences that made them part of the discourse in which they existed.

The re-articulation of empty or floating signifiers entails the transformation of some of them into nodal points capable of fixing the content of a range of floating signifiers by articulating them within a chain of equivalences (Torfing, 1999a: 98, 99; Zizek, 1989: 95-97; Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 113). Constructing chains of equivalence consists of the dissolution or redefinition of existing chains within a discourse by the recreation of that purely negative identity – the social antagonist. That is, A, B and C

are all equivalent with respect to antagonist D. But discourses are also articulated using the logic of difference, which aims to expand a certain discourse and its chains of equivalence by incorporating disarticulated elements into the discourse. The use of this logic tends to weaken antagonisms (Howarth, 2000: 106, 107).

Hence, one level of the analysis carried out here entails the "de-construction" of fixed meanings, in an attempt to identify empty and floating signifiers and unveil how social antagonists, chains of equivalences and differences and nodal points have been constructed. This de-constructive analysis can include the identification of operations of "overdetermination", which comprise "displacement", an operation that "involves the transferral of the meaning of one particular discursive moment to another discursive moment" (Torfing, 1999a: 301), and "condensation", which consists of "the fusion of a variety of identities and meanings into a single unity" (Torfing, 1999a: 299). Other discursive operations that can be observed are "conceptual bridges" and "iterations". The former occurs when, in a signifying chain, a position is determined partly through logical associations and partly through illogical associations (Laclau, 2000: 71). The latter refers to the Derridean statement that language presupposes the repeatability and alterability of signs: "…traces exhibit a minimal sameness in the different contexts in which they appear, yet are still modified in the new contexts in which they appear" (Howarth 2000: 41, also 42-3). This level of analysis is undertaken in this thesis through the examination of policy documents and interview transcriptions.

A second level of analysis consists of the mapping of the contexts in which discourses are stabilised or redefined. This is similar to most institutional analysis and thus insights from the new institutionalism that informs DI are used in this stage. Yet, the relational ontology and the primacy of politics entailed in this thesis' definition of discourse leads to fundamental divergences from these approaches' understanding of core concepts – institutions, actors and change.

Here, institutions are highly routinised and sedimented discourses that crystallise the result of political struggles. Partially fixed meanings can sediment and become institutionalised in more or less formal practices, policies, rules and concepts. In this respect, this thesis aligns with HI, N/OI and DI definition of institutions as "both

formal organizations and informal rules and procedures that structure conduct"
(Thelen and Steinmo, 1992: 2). Yet, here there is no qualitative difference between
discourses and institutions, only a difference of stability (Howarth, 2000: 12). As
such, state institutions in this thesis are not static. They are a conjunction of more or
less sedimented processes of discoursive struggles that form the space from which
these discourses can attain a status of universality by hegemonising society at large.

The analysis of institutions as sedimented discourses calls for a focus on the processes
of sedimentation "whereby contingent discoursive forms are institutionalized into
social institutions that exist in oblivion of their political 'origin'" (Torfing, 1999a:
307). Therefore, this institutional analysis constitutes a form of genealogical analysis
since the focus is not on the search for causes but on details and accidents that
accompanied the formation of discourses, including institutions. Mapping the factors
that affect the formation of a discourse shows precisely this interest in details and
accidents and is based on the assertion that "[w]hat is found at the historical beginning
of things is not the inviolable identity of their origins, it is the dissension of other
things" (Foucault, 1977: 142). The presentation of the Argentinean populist discourse
on civil society and the MDBs' neoliberal one are underpinned by this genealogical
approach. Also, the analysis of the disputes around the formation and transformations
of the national agency dealing with poverty reduction presented in this thesis echoes
this understanding of institutions, and informs the mapping of factors affecting the
formation and characteristics of the neopopulist discourse.

At the same time, institutions are not trans-historical and objective entities made up of
actors endowed with fixed capacities that enable them to advance their interests
(Howarth, 2000: 119). This thesis' consideration of actors assimilates notions of new
institutionalism but re-frames them in the relational ontology adopted here and the
corresponding understanding of institutions just described. In the institutionalist
versions informing DI, the structure (institutions) usually prevails over the agent
(individual or collective actors). In N/OI institutions shape actors' preferences as
institutional settings limit the range of possibilities for rational decision – what is
defined as "bounded rationality" (Peters, 1998, 26). N/OI states that individuals make
choices "appropriate" to the values prevailing in the institutions they belong to. The
lack of space for change in the "logic of appropriateness" is counterbalanced by the

notion of "interpretation" and the "garbage can" argument. The former states that individuals interpret rules and values, potentially leading them to question the status quo and induce some change (March and Olsen, 1989: 38). The latter holds that institutions count on sets of alternative solutions for situations in which routine procedures seem to be in need of adjustment, and that from these alternatives change can emerge. Yet, overall, N/OI emphasises the role of institutions in shaping individuals' behaviour and leaves little space for actors influencing institutions (Peters, 1998: 33). Similarly, HI's main claim is that policy choices made at the moment of institutional formation or the initiation of a policy – "path shaping" – have a continued and strong influence over future policy decisions. This is known as "path dependency" (Peters, 1998: 63; Thelen and Steinmo, 1992: 2). The centrality of this concept usually results in assigning a crucial role to actors at the moment of "path shaping" and leaves little space for agency after institutions are formed.

In ideational versions of HI, however, the concepts of "policy diffusion", "policy learning" (Hall, 1993; 278) and "punctuated evolution" (Hay, 2001: 213) suggest that actors and ideas can induce changes after institutional formation. HI, while it stresses that historical-based analysis explain which goals are maximised by actors, and why, they consider that actors can induce changes as they act not only in accordance with rules and values but also strategically and based on rational decisions[15] to achieve ends[16] (Thelen and Steinmo, 1992: 9). The DI focus on discourses also leads to a conception of agents freer from structures than agents in N/OI and HI are. While the "logic of appropriateness" is central in DI, the appropriate rules and values do not correspond only to the institutions but to broader systems of signification on which basis "interpretations" are made and "garbage can" resources can emerge. Additionally, the DI concept of "translation" is a development of the HI concepts of policy diffusion, policy learning and punctuated evolution. The difference is that DI stresses the need to analyse how actors learn and contribute to the evolution of unfinished discourses by reshaping them according to particular circumstances rather than according to ideas crystallised in institutions or policies.

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[15] However, HI criticises rational choice versions of institutionalism because they view institutions as a contextual constraint upon individuals and their choices, and not as influencing choice and preference.
[16] For instance, Steinmo's empirical work on tax policy in the UK, Sweden and the US does not deny that political actors' interests may guide their choices, yet their rationality may be limited by lack of information or time due to institutional arrangements (Kato, 1996: 570).

The approach taken here holds that actors act strategically, interpret, resort to alternative sets of values and norms, shape paths and are shaped by the past, all in agreement with N/O, HI and DI (Kjaer and Pedersen, 2001: 244). This is possible because actors are conceived of as both subjects and agents that are part of "open" social structures.[17] Social structures exist as discourses that emerge from a discursive field (Torfing, 1999: 102; Derrida, 1988 [1977]), which provides the differential trace structure that every fixation of meaning presupposes but is "undecidable" because it can never be fully incorporated into a particular discourse. This undecidability makes discourses "open" (to change) (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 113) and, therefore, the political moment and the agent necessary to partially close – or "suture" – it. Thus, the construction of antagonists and chains of equivalences and difference closes only partially a discourse because a meaning is inevitably never fully exhausted by discourse (Howarth, 2000: 103) since the discursive field "flows and subverts the attempts to fix a stable set of differential positions within a particular discourse" (Torfing, 1999a: 92 from Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 111). At the same time, agents exist in accordance with the discourses that provide them with identity, so they are subject to the structure. But the undecidability of discourses results in the incompleteness not only of structures but also of the subjects that exist in those structures occupying subject positions. Therefore, subjects construct illusionary full identities through processes of identification that consist of recreating discursive elements that traverse them. Subjects' strategic actions, either to preserve the closure of a discourse or subvert it, reflect these processes of identification, but also turn subjects into agents since these actions transform the discourses in which they occupy subject positions. Actors' ability to re-articulate meanings may depend on interests, as political economists argue, but the articulation of these interests is permeated by discourses.[18] Therefore, the structure persists through the contamination of the agent's decision but the decision persists through the subversion or modification of the structure, which is possible because of the inevitable openness of discourses. The thesis' analysis of the role of policy makers and implementers, in shaping the

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[17] This post-structuralist stance does not claim that subjects are free from structures, but notes the latter's precariousness. The emphasis is not, as with the postmodernists, on the fluidity of meaning but on the partiality of the fixation of meanings (Howarth, 1995: 131).

[18] Barros and Castagnola made this point clear in their analysis of the political stagnation of Argentina after 1955. They show that most studies of this period reduced the political significance of Peronism "to some kind of economic logic or institutional rationality". They explain the political stagnation of Argentina after Peronism, tracing back "the particular way in which the formation of political identities shaped the political frontiers in the wake of the irruption of Peronist populism." (Barros and Castagnola, 2000: 29)

discourse on civil society, reflects this double character of actors as agents and subjects.

The undecidability of discourses thus affects the thesis' view of change. Ideational innovation and crisis are the most important sources of change in new institutionalism. In this thesis, ideational innovation cannot be treated as external to the context and the innovators' subject positions, and crises occupy a central role as moments in which discourses can be redefined. Within HI perspectives, the notion of "critical juncture" (Collier and Collier, 1991: 772-4) refers to crises, and Hay highlights the importance of the "narration" of crises and the availability of alternative discourses to determine the depth of the change that crises can produce. Likewise, dislocations are the moments in which the openness of the social appears evident, providing the opportunity for discourses to change. The notion of dislocation, however, permits an analysis that takes into account fundamental change beyond the moments of crisis, similarly to the notion of "punctuated evolution" but without its teleological connotation. Since discourses are "always vulnerable to those political forces excluded in their production, as well as the dislocatory effects of events beyond their control" (Laclau 1990: 31-6), political subjects can "narrate" dislocations in a manner that the established discourse cannot domesticate and thus break down that discourse and generate the need and opportunity for new operations of discursive articulation.

Hegemonic analysis constitutes the third level of analysis undertaken in this thesis. Hegemony is achieved when a particular political project or discourse becomes the universal framework of meaning for a certain social formation (Laclau, 2000: 54; Howarth, 1995: 124). Counter-hegemonic discourses challenge these universal frameworks, entering into a political struggle for definitions. Hegemony, however, is not stable. Although a level of stability can be achieved, counter-hegemonic discourses can emerge both from outside the hegemonic discourse and from the rearticulation of the hegemony. Hegemonic articulations are the political struggles in which discourses engage in their search for hegemony or its maintenance. These articulations are path-dependent, as political construction always occurs in a relatively structured terrain and is about a selection of sedimented discourses.

Hegemony is a term usually attached to class- and interests-based theories, but here hegemony is not seen as necessarily linked to a determinant material base. Following Gramsci, who noted the need for political leadership for the working classes to become a hegemonic force (Gramsci, 1998 [1971]: 12), Laclau and Mouffe continued the move towards highlighting the political moment and eliminated the last remnant of economic necessity from Gramsci's understanding. These authors defined hegemony as the articulation of a dominant discourse around a nodal point (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 75-88). Hegemony in these terms is

"a moral, intellectual and political leadership [achieved] through the expansion of a discourse that partially fixes meaning around nodal points. Hegemony involves more than a passive consensus (…). It involves the expansion of a particular discourse of norms, values, views and perceptions through persuasive redescriptions of the world" (Torfing, 1999a: 302).

Hegemonic analysis complements the de-constructive and institutional analyses. Hegemonic analysis entails the unveiling of the power struggles behind hegemony formation, at the same time as it reveals the persistence of counter-hegemonic discourses, showing the constant reproduction and production of power and how "[p]ower is not stable or static, but is remade at various junctures within everyday life…." (Butler, in Butler et al., 2000: 14). As de-construction "discovers the role of the decision out of the undecidability of the structure" (from identity to difference) and hegemonic analysis is about observing how a particularity became a universal that veils undecidability (from difference to identity), the theory of hegemony implies a de-constructive analysis (Laclau, 1993: 283). By the same token, hegemonic analysis points out how in highly sedimented discourses (institutions) hegemonic articulation is about the reproduction of partially fixed meanings, but in this reproduction there is a reactivation of hegemonic practices and a reconstruction of the outside and inside of the discourse where the political construction behind everyday decisions (actors) transpires.

At this level of analysis, the thesis seeks to identify whether hegemonic articulations have tended toward "transformism" or "expansionism". According to Gramsci, transformism is the strategy of the bourgeoisie in times of crisis, and expansionism is the hegemonic strategy of the proletariat (Torfing, 1999a: 111). Here, these strategies are emptied of class references but retain their dominant-subversive meaning. Transformism is a strategy that aims to neutralise antagonist forces through cooption of, or minor concessions to, excluded discourses. It can consist of appropriating a concept from a past or opposite discourse and transforming it into one's own (Torfing, 1999a: 111). Expansionism is an offensive strategy, which aims to unite discursive elements that share something (metonymy) by constructing a "metaphor" or operating a "displacement" that entails losing part of a previous identity but highlights their common features, providing the discourse with hegemonic potential (Torfing, 2003; Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 141). Hence, transformism incorporates discursive elements that a given discourse leaves off-limits and expansionism consists of internal re-articulations. These strategies can complement each other and can be implemented by both dominant and counter-hegemonic discourses as they engage in struggles for hegemony.

In summary, while the insights of discursive institutionalism and its sources are useful for this thesis' analytical purpose, the concern with the political struggles defining the discourse on civil society suggests the need of a definition of discourse that entails a relational ontology. The analytical framework presented here led to the development of the threefold analytical model that guides this thesis. This model consists of a relational analysis, a mapping of the contextual factors and political struggles that attempted to fixate the discourse, and a hegemonic analysis aimed at defining which particular political project managed to hegemonise the definition of civil society, and through which strategies.

1.6. Thesis structure and sources

The thesis traces the construction of the discourse on civil society in the poverty reduction policy area in Argentina through the analysis of policy documents and

interviews. It is divided into two parts. The first part sets out the conditions of the discursive struggle. Chapter 2 depicts the political projects that disputed the definition of civil society in the 1990s – neoliberalism and Argentinean populism – and specifies the thesis' understanding of civil society. Chapters 3 and 4 provide further details about Argentinean populism and MDBs' neoliberalism, respectively, and examine, in particular, their discourses on civil society. The second part of the thesis shows how the MDBs' neoliberal and the Argentinean populist discourses mixed in the formation of the neopopulist discourse on civil society. Chapter 5 looks at the formation of neopopulism (1990-1994), chapter 6 deals with the re-articulation processes triggered when the neopopulist discourse was put to work (1995-1999), and chapter 7 focuses on the period of "contested hegemony" (2000-2001).

The first part of the thesis makes use of genealogical analysis. Although the accounts of the MDBs' neoliberal and the Argentinean populist discourses, in chapters 3 and 4 respectively, focus on specifying the main features of the discourses, they also refer to the contextual details that shaped and re-shaped them. Chapter 3 uses secondary sources, mainly historical studies. In chapter 4, the main sources are policy documents from both MDBs. Interviews helped to contextualise and interpret the documents' contents. Secondary sources were also used, mainly analyses of the MDBs' approach to working with civil society and those explaining the functioning of the institutions mentioned above.

The second part presents the empirical case. It consists of three chapters that detail the construction and the main characteristics of the discourse on civil society in the poverty reduction policy area of the Argentinean national state in the 1990s. To achieve this objective, the chapters draw on newspaper articles, personal interviews and key documents from programmes with civil society participation. These chapters look at ten programmes that were selected if MDB or national state documents showed that the projects gave significant importance to civil society involvement; if they were linked to the *SDS*; and if they had a broad geographical coverage and a sizeable budget. While chapter 5 concentrates on the emergence of the *SDS*, chapters 6 and 7 focus on programmes. Chapter 6 looks at the programmes implemented during Menem's second presidency: *PROMIN* (*Programa Materno-Infantil de Nutrición* – Mother and Child Nutrition Programme) and *FOPAR* (*Fondo*

Participativo de Inversión Social – Participatory Social Investment Fund), funded by the World Bank; *PROMEBA* (*Programa de Mejoramiento de Barrios* – Programme for Neighbourhood Improvement), *PAGV* (*Programa de Atención a Grupos Vulnerables* – Programme for Support of Vulnerable Groups) and *PROAME* (*Programa de Atención a Menores en Situaciones de Riesgo* – Programme to Assist Minors at Risk) funded by the IDB; and *PFSC* (*Programa de Fortalecimiento de la Sociedad Civil* - Programme for the Strengthening of Civil Society) and *CENOC* (*Centro Nacional de Organizaciones Comunitarias* – National Centre of Community Organisations), funded by the national budget. Chapter 7 looks at these programmes and at the *Plan Solidaridad* (Solidarity Plan), comprising *Unidos* (United) Programme, at *Jefas de Hogar* (Female Heads of Households) and at *SI*, (*Seguro Infantil* – Childhood Insurance), all programmes aimed at absorbing MDB-funded programmes.[19]

Chapter 5 looks at the formation of the neopopulist discourse (1989-1994), showing that when the neoliberal discourse came onto the scene there was an initial moment of disjointed co-existence of the neoliberal and populist discourses on civil society, followed by a non-conflictive articulation of these discourses when neopopulism emerged and in which neoliberalism predominated. Chapter 6 analyses the changes introduced to the neopopulist discourse, put into practice in a number of poverty reduction policies (1995-1999). It shows that at the same time as the discourse was being colonised by the more political discourse of populism, it acquired an increasingly technical character and remained predominantly neoliberal. Chapter 7 focuses on the *Alianza* government's attempts to challenge the neopopulist discourse. That challenge paved the way for the domestic populist discourse to contest the neoliberal hegemony over the discourse on civil society (2000-2001).

The second part applies the threefold analytical model derived from the theoretical framework presented here – relational discursive institutionalism. Relational analysis, empirical mapping and hegemonic analyses cut across these chapters. The first sections of the chapters map the events and actors that contributed to the stabilisation or re-articulation of the discourse on civil society in poverty reduction action. The second and third sections focus on the discourses on poverty and civil society

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[19] For more details on the selection of programmes see Annex II.

respectively, considering that the government's approaches to poverty prepared the ground in which the discourse on civil society took root. These sections attempt to deconstruct the partially fixed meanings of poverty and civil society by identifying discursive articulations, for example nodal points and chains of equivalences, and by mapping institutions and actors involved in poverty reduction policy-making and implementation, since these were embedded in the political struggles underlying the discursive articulations. The conclusions of these chapters aim to define which political project hegemonised – and with which strategies – the discourse on civil society in poverty reduction action in each period.

The thesis shows that the centrality of technical and institutional aspects in the neoliberal logic of hegemonic construction created a crucial interstice through which the intrinsically political populist discourse could permeate the neoliberal hegemony. As dislocations in the hegemonic discourse emerged, domestic factors and actors allowed the Argentinean populist discourse on civil society to grow within the neopopulist discourse, partially colonise it and eventually challenge it. Policy makers and implementers, whose profiles combined technical skills with deeply embedded populist views, were crucial in this process. Additionally, the changes in the MDBs' discourse on civil society during the 1990s, and the differences between the Banks and between their official positions and their staff's views contributed to allowing this colonisation to happen.

Chapter 2

Neoliberalism, populism and civil society

This chapter details the understanding of neoliberalism, populism and civil society adopted in this thesis. The first section defines neoliberalism and Argentinean populism as two antagonistic political projects and describes their normative, contingent and logical components. These projects are antagonistic to each other because of their opposing normative views, contingent components and prevalent logics of discursive formation and, as political projects, they aim to universalise their particular views. The last part of the first section compares these projects, summarising their main features and pointing out their opposing characters and the possibilities of combining them. The second section explains the understanding of civil society used in the thesis. Civil society is seen as the arena in which the struggles for hegemony take place and as a discourse that defines what that arena is. The discourse on civil society thus delimits the possibilities of the political struggles for hegemony, and a focus on civil society is therefore particularly interesting for the analysis of the struggles between the neoliberal and populist political projects.

2.1. Neoliberalism and populism: two antagonistic political projects

a. Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism is usually defined by reference to economic measures and is taken as synonymous with "market-oriented reform" or the list of measures that Williamson presented as the "Washington Consensus". These included a focus on fiscal discipline, tax reform and privatisation, interest rate and trade liberalisation, a competitive exchange rate and the fostering of an economy more open to foreign investment (Williamson, 1990; 1993).

Numerous studies of neoliberalism that took a political perspective adopted this economic definition. Some of them concentrated on analysing the political counter-face of neoliberal economic reform and others highlighted the political character of such reform.

The studies concerned with the political counter-face of neoliberalism look at the socio-political conditions and consequences of the reforms. Regarding the conditions, until the 1980s academic wisdom was that regimes with cohesive technocratic elites and powerful executives that could control popular protest were a necessary condition for the implementation of neoliberal reform (Kaufman and Stallings, 1989). By the early 1990s, however, neoliberal reforms were no longer tied to authoritarian policy-making (Philip, 1993: 556) and scholars had to consider again what conditions favoured the implementation and success of these reforms. The studies started to highlight the importance of domestic support for the success of reforms (Remmer, 1991; Dominguez, 1997; Silva, 1997; Edwards, 1995; Philip, 1993) and international politics in the form of policy diffusion (Kahler, 1990) or imposition (Stallings, 1992; for Argentina Vacs, 1994).[20] When the neoliberal agenda incorporated institutional reform objectives in the mid-1990s, scholars' attention turned to bureaucratic issues, such as state capacity, and political factors, including the ability to negotiate consensus and the determination of political leaders (Grindle, 2000: 19). Many noted the importance of state bureaucracies' isolation from socio-political influences and the defective functioning of representative institutions. Some of them asserted that countries with technocracies (Silva, 1997; 1998; Silva and Centeno, 1997; Centeno, 1993; Teichman, 1997), or highly technically trained bureaucracies, with strong connections with the relevant social sectors (Evans, 1992), were the most capable of advancing reform. Others noted that centralised decision-making (Philip, 1993: 556) and elitist types of democracies accompanied neoliberalisation processes (Cammack, 2000: 157). Some pointed out Presidents' departures from their voters' mandates (Stokes, 2001) and their taming of the ruling party (Corrales, 2003).

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[20] This account excludes the studies that focus on the economic causes of neoliberal reforms, which usually highlight the role of the 1982 debt crisis (eg Bulmer Thomas, 1996: 11; Naim, 1993: 133-50).

The studies that focused on the political consequences of neoliberal reform were concerned with the transformations of socio-political actors that the reform triggered. In an influential work, Cavarozzi argued that the return to democratic rule and economic neoliberal reform was leading to the demobilisation and atomisation of society (Cavarozzi, 1994). Yet, by the mid-1990s new studies were pointing to the emergence of new actors in a context modified by neoliberal reforms (Oxhorn and Duncatezeiler, 1998; Smith and Korzeniewicz, 1997). Other analyses looked at how existing actors redefined themselves. In the case of Argentina, the studies by Levitsky (2001; 2003) on the Peronist party and Murillo (2001) on trade unions are noteworthy.

However, these studies looking at the political counter-face of neoliberal reform fail to challenge the "end of history" thesis behind neoliberalism. They show that neoliberal reform redefines decision-making processes and the institutionalised distribution of power. Yet, they disregard a crucial belief that lies behind neoliberal reforms – that what guides them are logical analyses of the functioning of the social and not political preferences. The political outcomes of neoliberal reform are then the consequence of the rationality that governs free markets and not the triumph of a particular normative position. For instance, withdrawing the state from markets and the sphere of individuals would create the economic progress and free environment favourable to a democratic political system.[21] The spread of neoliberal reforms in the 1990s signified, it was claimed, the "end of history" because they were evidence of the triumph of liberal ideas (Fukuyama, 1989: 107), which appeared indisputable because the reforms drew on supposedly objective analyses of the social. Studies of the political counter-face of neoliberalism usually define the latter as an economic strategy and place political variables in relation to but outside of the economic realm, leaving unchallenged this neoliberal claim of apoliticism.

In contrast, highlighting the political character of neoliberalism implies a challenge to the "end of history" thesis. Several studies noted that neoliberal reforms are not only economic but political. Looking at the WB good governance strategies, which reflect

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[21] This view reflects a revival of modernisation theory which, outlined in the mid-20th century, held that economic growth would generate socio-economic conditions, such as education and a high level of urbanisation, in which democracy thrives (Lipset, 1960; Rostow, 1960).

the neoliberal institutional reform agenda,[22] scholars showed that in the search for the construction of a favourable environment for the development of market-based economies, these reforms favoured the establishment of a particular political system – liberal and pluralist democracy. The reforms' accent on individual pluralist representation and a system of checks and balances between state and society were evidence of that (Philip, 1999: 240-1; Santiso, 2001: 4; Leftwich, 1993). While the "end of history" thesis argues that democracy would derive from the rationality of the markets, these students observe that democracy is an actively pursued model of political organisation guiding the neoliberal institutional reform plans. Class-based analyses depict neoliberalism as a political project pursued by the state for the benefit of the domestic and international capitalist class (Veltmeyer et al, 1997: 3, 122). In these students' view, neoliberalism "is a product of US economic policy-makers, bankers and TNCs allied with Latin American transnational capitalists."[23] (Veltmeyer et al, 1997: 122). Neoliberalism is an ideology in the Marxist sense since "selling and marketing" neoliberalism as economic and institutional reforms of benefit to all veils the capitalists' interests (Veltmeyer et al, 1997: 4).

This thesis considers that the economic definition of neoliberalism, and its political counter-face and character, should be understood as part of the neoliberal political project, which consists of three components – normative, contingent and logical. Rather than economic reforms, the core of the neoliberal political project is its normative content. This content affects both the prevalent logic with which neoliberalism struggles for hegemony and, together with the given historical circumstances, the contingent elements of neoliberalism. Neoliberal economic measures are one of these contingent elements which, simultaneously, play a crucial role as a nodal point around which the neoliberal political project organises its logic of hegemonic articulation.

Neoliberalism's normative component draws on the two core tenets of classic liberalism – the primacy of individuals over the community and the division between the private and public spheres, where the latter's interference with the former should be minimal (see Taylor, 1992: 29-30; Hodgson, 1989: 251). However, neoliberalism

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[22] Chapter 4 considers these strategies further.
[23] TNCs – Transnational Corporations.

is not the same as liberalism. First, plural organisations gained a central role in 20th century liberalism (eg Dahl, 1971) but in the initial versions of neoliberalism society equalled the sum of its atomised individuals and so governments adopting neoliberalism sought to build support from multi-class coalitions of non-organised actors (Weyland, 1999: 382). Second, prioritising individuals over community ensures that state intervention is minimal and so individuals' freedom is preserved. In the late 20th century, analyses of less-developed countries that linked their economic problems to excessive state interventionism reinforced this view. Yet, neoliberal reforms were pursued using the state as the agent for effecting change (Weyland, 1996: 17). Third, liberalism was concerned with not just economic but political aspects. The social contractualism[24] that lies at the origins of liberalism was especially concerned with defining the most appropriate form of government for free individuals. Nowadays, debates about democracy express that concern. Neoliberalism, in contrast, accentuates the economic side of liberalism and seems to revive only the principles of economic liberalism: free trade and minimal state intervention in the economy (Helleiner, 2003: 686; O'Toole, 2003: 270). However, neoliberalism attempts to re-create the features of the bourgeois society (Jessop, 2002: 452) in which those economic principles emerged. State retraction is an attempt to reinstall the divide between private and public spheres that was emerging when liberal thought was developing (Habermas, 1989; Gellner, 1994). Therefore, while liberalism reflected an emerging social mutation, neoliberalism takes the liberal reading of that mutation – the emergence of the individual and the separation of the private from the public sphere – as a normative horizon.

The normative components of political projects constitute a threshold for their contingent variations, and the contingent elements consist of the projects' policies and institutional preferences. In neoliberalism the contingent elements include the Washington consensus set of measures, and other policy recommendations such as those aimed at good governance, including the aim of constructing liberal and pluralist democracy. The consequences of neoliberalism identified by students of the political counter-face of neoliberal reform are not contingent elements of the neoliberal project but part of the continuously changing context in which the

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[24] In particular, Locke, (1986) {1690}.

neoliberal project struggles for hegemony. The contingent elements are the most visible part of neoliberalism. As they are highly variable in accordance with the spatio-temporal circumstances in which neoliberalism is advanced, many claim that neoliberalism is just a loosely tied set of policy recommendations that take different forms in different contexts (Jessop, 2002: Campbell and Pedersen, 2001: 1). Yet, the preference for minimal state intervention in economic and social affairs underpins these contingent elements, which indicates that the normative component links and frames these elements.

Economic reforms are the most prominent element of the neoliberal contingent component. This prominence reflects the neoliberal adaptation of liberalism in the last decades of the 20th century, emphasising its economic aspects more than its political ones. This adaptation echoed the predominant readings of the context of that time. After the oil crisis of the early 1970s prompted the liberalisation of international markets, the perception spread that the origin of the succession of economic crises that developing countries suffered from then on was their state-led economies. The debt crisis of 1982 and the hyperinflation of the late 1980s in Latin America provided new grounds for this perception. Additionally, neoliberalism took its first steps in the region in the context of authoritarian governments (Kaufman and Stallings, 1989) and therefore it needed to appear detached from political positions. Later, increasingly under democratic governments, international organisations became key promoters of these reforms. These organisations, as external actors and to avoid interference with democratic mechanisms, had to appear politically neutral.[25]

The logics of discursive articulation reflect the manner in which political projects address social demands. In this way, political projects seek to become or remain hegemonic. The prevalent logic of discursive articulation in neoliberalism is differential in accordance with its normative component, particularly the stress on individuals. That is, neoliberalism addresses social demands in a differentiated manner through routinised techniques and institutions. This highlights the particularity of the demands and de-emphasises what each individual demand has in common with other demands (Laclau, 2005a: 98, 103-104). Yet, at the same time,

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[25] This also related to the rules of these institutions (chapter 4).

neoliberalism, as a political project, tries to present its particular normative views as universal in order to become or remain hegemonic.

The universalisation of a particularity entails the implementation of the logic of equivalence, which highlights how different demands are equal to others and how the given political project can meet them. The universalising of a particular project resembles the "selling and marketing" of neoliberalism suggested in class-based analyses (Veltmeyer et al, 1997: 4). Yet, this universalisation is not merely the imposition of an ideology that veils an objective reality, as those analyses assume. Since discourses are open, their articulation as ideologies represents the success of a particular view in temporarily closing a discourse – or suturing it. Neoliberalism presents its solutions to social demands as the outcome of objective analyses and technical language and experts' voices are central in supporting these objectivity claims. Drawing on its normative components and on these analyses, neoliberalism connects different social demands through chains of equivalence that converge in what emerges as the project's nodal point: economic reform based on state reduction. This discursive articulation of equivalences is key to helping neoliberalism to both close the discourse and hegemonise its views. The logical component of neoliberalism, thus, is mainly differential, but it includes the logic of equivalence since, as a political discourse, neoliberalism aims to become hegemonic.

Therefore, economic reforms are a crucial element of the neoliberal project in two respects. First, they are the most visible contingent element of neoliberalism and, second, they play a critical role as a nodal point around which the project constructs its hegemony. Due to the liberal conception of the economy as the realm of natural law and the neoliberal accent on economic liberalism, economic knowledge rose above other expert knowledge. As the "end of history" thesis holds, the rationality of the markets dictates neoliberal economic measures and thus, these experts can present their recommendations as neutral and beyond political disagreement. Economic knowledge and language applied the logic of difference, by justifying institutionalised responses to the population's demands, and were crucial in creating the chains of equivalences necessary to universalise the normative views of neoliberalism by showing that all demands converged in the inadequacy of state interventionism. Yet, as the conception of the economy as natural and rational is part of the liberal

worldview, the alleged rationality and neutrality of the measures that follow market dictates are at the core of the fundamentally political operation of making the neoliberal particular views universal, that is, constructing hegemonic power. In other words, the "end of history" thesis is at the core of neoliberal hegemonic operations.

To summarise, neoliberalism is a political project because it involves a particular reading of how the social works and should be governed – the normative component – and it aims to universalise this particular view. While the normative component prioritises the logic of difference in addressing social demands, in its attempts to become hegemonic neoliberalism applies the logic of equivalence. Economic prescriptions, at the same time as constituting a contingent element of the project, play, together with institutional recommendations for reform, a crucial role in achieving the project's universalising aims. Consequently, neoliberal institutional reform revolves around the priority of market-oriented reforms. In turn, both economic and institutional reforms are based on the normative liberal tenets of private and public division and the prioritisation of the individual over the community. Neoliberalism is a political project not in terms of being the project of a particular class, nor just in terms of the political practices and social dynamics it entails and triggers, but because it aims to become the hegemonic view of how the social should be conceived. Chapter 4 provides more details of the neoliberal political project in the 1990s and its specific discourse on poverty and civil society.

b. Populism

While neoliberalism is usually defined with reference to its economic measures, there is less agreement in the literature about what populism means.[26] Moreover, the word populism usually has pejorative connotations (Canovan, 1999: 2; Mackinnon and Petrone, 1998: 12). This thesis regards populism as a political project and, to avoid such connotations, it builds its understanding of populism on a formal definition. Yet, in understanding it as a political project, the thesis cannot be limited to a formal

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[26] The wide variety of definitions of populism meant that some questioned the conceptual usefulness of the term (de la Torre, 1992, 386-7; Viguera, 1993: 49; Flynn, 2000: 239).

definition and requires the inclusion of the particular form in which populism existed in the country under study.

As Latin American populism attracted the bulk of scholarly attention on the theme and as that is the region that this thesis is concerned with, the following review of the main approaches to populism is restricted to analyses focused on Latin America.[27] These approaches can be divided into four – socio-historical, economic, dimensional and discursive.

Up until the 1980s, populism was associated with socio-historical aspects and a specific stage of economic development. Studies at that time explained rather than defined populism, but it is possible to identify some definitions in them.

The socio-historical approach is two-tiered – cultural and sociological. Cultural approaches emphasise the importance of the patrimonial political culture inherited from the colonial past in explaining populism in Latin America. Populism is a type of leadership, which in the 20th century replaced the 19th century's *caudillismo* (Stein, 1980). Sociological approaches focused on issues of manipulation by leaders as opposed to autonomous popular mobilisation. A key debate here regarded the study of Peronism. Germani, influenced by structural functionalism[28] and modernisation theory,[29] argued that populism was a form of political manipulation made possible because the rapid industrialisation of the country paved the way for workers' political participation. Yet, still attached to traditional worldviews and not used to the new modernity, workers became "available masses" for manipulation (Germani, 1978 chapters 4-5; Germani, 1962; see also Mackinnon and Petrone, 1998: 24).[30] Murmis and Portantiero (1971) saw populism also as a form of political participation but, from a Gramscian perspective, contested Germani's thesis. They held that workers

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[27] Before becoming a social studies concept, populism was a self-denomination adopted by two disparate movements outside of Latin America: American agrarian populism and the early utopian socialism of tzarist Russia (for both cases see Canovan, 1981: chapters 1 and 2; Mackinnon and Petrone, 1998: 16-19 and Vilas, 1988: 325-8; on Russia Blakely, 1999 and on America, Szasz, 1999 and Goodwin 1978). Noteworthy among social analyses of populism outside of Latin America are those focused on right-wing populisms in Europe (see Betz, 1994 and, from a different perspective, selected articles in Panizza, 2005) and theoretical works such as Gellner and Ionescu, 1969; Laclau, 1977a, 2005a, 2005b; and Westlind, 1996.

[28] Structural functionalism is a post-Second World War theory and, as such, is concerned with the restoration of order. Developed by Parsons (1955), its core tenet is that, to understand how societies work, social systems and the roles of actors within them are more important than individuals' rationality.

[29] See note 2 in this chapter.

[30] Numerous studies followed Germani. Noteworthy is the work of Di Tella, which pointed out the multi-class character of populist coalitions (Di Tella, 1965). Other works in this vein were Dix (1985), who studied the differences between authoritarian and democratic populisms, taking into account not only the coalitions' characteristics but also the characteristics of the mass bases – ideologies, and organisation and leadership style – and Mouzelis (1985).

were politically engaged and populism emerged because of the inability of the national bourgeoisie to reconstruct their hegemony after the process of industrialisation had weakened it (Murmis and Portantiero, 1971).[31]

Linking populism with economic development, Cardoso and Faletto argued that populism was an ideology that enabled the legitimisation of the import substitution industrialisation (ISI) model of development. Drawing on economic structuralism,[32] they maintained that Latin American countries needed to adopt this model because the incipient industrialisation of the early 20th century had led to increasing internal demand and the countries were unable to import goods. The model required the collaboration of two sectors with opposing interests – workers and industrialists. Populism was shaped by the need to establish harmony between these sectors and maintain their support for the model of development, which the state did by responding to pressure from the popular sectors with redistributive measures and supporting national industry with the creation of internal markets (Cardoso and Faletto, 1990 [1969]: 104-106). More recent Marxist accounts argue that populism emerged as a response to a crisis of the model of capitalist accumulation (Cammack, 2000), and they define populism as economic policies aimed at the "expansion of consumption" to overcome this crisis (Vilas, 1988: 324). By the 1990s, these versions argued that populism was born at a specific stage of capitalist development but survived its conditions of emergence and became an ideology and a project for society (Vilas, 1995; Tarcus, 1992).

In the 1990s, when most of the region's governments adopted neoliberalism, populism was defined in macroeconomic terms as "an approach to economics that emphasizes growth and income distribution and deemphasizes the risks of inflation and deficit finance..." (Dornsbusch and Edwards, 1991: 9, see also Sachs, 1989).[33] The macroeconomics of populism is, in this view, what constitutes the core of

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[31] The socio-historical approach took a third turn in the late 1980s. Succinctly put, the "conjuncturalists" focused on the opportunities available to and the restrictions faced by different classes in the historical setting in which populisms emerged, holding that the labour sectors that supported populist movements were not weak and were involved in political activity (Adelman, 1992: 243, 248, 252; see also Matsushita, 1987; Torre, 1990; James, 1989).

[32] Economic structuralism is based on the work of Prebisch (1950) and argues that the causes of Latin American underdevelopment are to be found in longstanding social and economic structures. Its advocates proposed a recipe for development that stressed the role of the state in changing this unfavourable structure (Sunkel and Zuleta, 1990). For concise explanations of economic structuralism and the dependency theory version, see Palma, 1988; Sunkel 1990; Pinto (1965; 1970) and Hirschman (1963).

[33] A predecessor of this view of populism can be found in Canitrot (1975), written when neoliberalism was first making inroads in the region.

populism – while its politics may vary, the economic policy remains constant. This notion of populism is principally but not purely economic. Populist economic policies are seen as designed to serve political goals (Kauffman and Stallings, 1991: 16) rather than as following an economic rationality. The policies are usually conceived of as inseparable from the model of inward development that had prevailed in the region since the 1930s and the institutions that had developed around that state-centred model (Cavarozzi, 1992a; 1994). Thus, institutions can be labelled as populist, for example the populist state (Burki and Edwards, 1996), statist-populist parties (Corrales, 2003) and populist trade unions (Murillo, 2001).

Dimensional definitions also gained supporters in the 1990s, as the academic focus was shifting from explanation to definition. A number of multidimensional definitions reflected an attempt to systematise and provide further evidence of the most salient observations made about populism from both the socio-historical and economic perspectives. Bringing together the various dimensions of populism that this literature produced, populism consists of: (1) a personalistic and paternalistic style of leadership – not necessarily charismatic – possibly influenced by the colonial past; (2) a political practice in which the leader appeals to "the people", usually bypassing institutions; (3) a multi-class political coalition whose social bases are the subaltern sectors of society and tend to be urban; (4) a rhetoric that exalts popular culture and is anti-establishment; (5) a programme of proposals that is eclectic, ambiguous and reformist rather than revolutionary; (6) an economic programme that is functional to political objectives, is redistributive, and is associated with processes of accelerated industrialisation and inwards strategy for economic development; (7) the use of clientelistic methods to create material foundation for popular support; (8) an expression of a nationalist defence of popular sovereignty against foreign exploitation; (9) a preference for state intervention in both economic and social affairs; and (10) whatever its definition, it seems to emerge in situations of crisis (see Knight, 1998: 225; Roberts, 1995: 88; Drake, 1982: 190; 1999: 224-233; Conniff, 1982). However, these dimensions describe the characteristics of populism but do not say what populism ultimately is. Is populism a movement, an ideology, or a regime with all these characteristics? A second type of dimensional definitions throws some light on this.

Politico-dimensional definitions emerged as a response to scholars' surprise at seeing populism co-existing with neoliberalism in the 1990s. The neoliberal understanding of populism in economic terms assumed that the neoliberal fiscal discipline of neoliberalism would erode populism by curtailing its central feature of fiscal indiscipline (Sachs, 1989: 7-11). Thus, the economic neoliberal definition of populism seemed to be inadequate to explain this co-existence (Panizza, 2000a: 179) and some authors suggested focusing on the political dimensions of populism (Roberts, 1995; Weyland, 1996; 1999). A "purely political"[34] definition of populism maintains that there is populism when (1) a personalistic leader appeals to a heterogeneous mass of followers; (2) the leader approaches the followers, bypassing established institutions; and (3) the leader builds new organisations or revives earlier populist organisations which remain at a low level of institutionalisation (Weyland, 1999: 381). These studies argue that while these dimensions are constant in all populisms, mass constituencies and economic policies vary and should be the object of empirical research (Weyland, 1996: 5).[35] If these dimensions indicate what populism is, then populism is a "style of leadership" (Conniff, 1999: 7; Drake, 1999: 223, 224; Knight, 1998; Panizza, 2001: 441). Therefore, this approach highlights the centrality of the political rather than the economic character of populism and, unlike the economic and multidimensional approaches, it sees style rather than content as defining what populism is (Knight, 1998). But what is it that unites the empirically observed characteristics of this style? The discursive approach provides insights that help to answer this.

The discursive approach holds that populism is a mode of discursive articulation in which the logic of equivalence prevails. This discursive articulation consists of a direct and anti-status quo appeal to the people. In this appeal, populism constitutes the people politically by identifying them as the oppressed or neglected and dividing them from what and who oppresses or neglects them (Panizza, 2005b: 3; 2000: 179; Laclau, 2005b: 38). This moment of political constitution reveals the anti-status quo character of populism because people are constituted as different from those whose

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[34] The main problem with Weyland's "purely political" definition is that he understands the fusion of neoliberalism with populism as circumstancial to the special situation of hyperinflation that led to the need for populism to adopt neoliberalism. When he argues that with the end of this extraordinary situation a "backlash of populism" is not unlikely (Weyland, 1999: 396, 398) it is evident that he still sees populism in both political and economic terms.

[35] Accordingly, what makes classical populism different from neo-populism is that it no longer appeals to the working classes and does not apply redistributive economic measures.

power is crystallised in the institutionalised system, and because the appeal addresses people directly and not through those established institutions (Laclau, 1977a: 173). In constituting the people politically, populism applies the logic of equivalence. When established institutions fail to satisfy a number of demands, the dislocation of a social system becomes apparent and the opportunity emerges to form equivalential chains that connect these demands beyond their differences (Laclau, 2005b: 35-37) and to attempt a new form of closure of the social. In Barros' words,

> *"a dislocation of the existing structures of meaning forces the emergence of different demands that will seek to resignify the political context by advancing a specific solution to the critical situation provoked by the dislocated structure" (2005: 252-253).*

The populist appeal points out that different demands are equivalent in terms of being equally non-satisfied by the established institutions. While the logic of equivalence is inherent in all political operations of hegemonisation, its expansion is what makes an appeal populist (Laclau, 2005b: 45). The above explanation shows that this expansion is linked to crises of the established institutional system[36] (Panizza, 2005b: 14). According to this view, therefore, populism is the purest form of politics because, by rupturing with "politics as usual", it reveals the politically constructed character of the social, and because it does so by dividing the political terrain into friends and enemies, it is the political gesture *par excellence* (Zizek, 2000: 182).

The understanding of populism as a political project in this thesis builds on the formal definition of populism suggested by the discursive approach. However, as a political project, populism here includes a normative component and the content with which this logic is filled in the specific context in which it exists – the contingent component. Moreover, this thesis considers that the logical component of populism is so distinctive of this political project that it acquires a meta-normative status.

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[36] The emergence of populism is associated in most analyses with some form of crisis – crisis of the capitalist model of accumulation, crisis of the hegemonic bloc, the overlapping of traditional and modern systems, crisis of the political party systems, or crises of democracy (Cammack, 2000; Vilas, 1988; Murmis and Portantiero, 1971; Germani, 1969; Weyland, 1999: 383-85, 393-4 and Szuzterman, 2000: 194, respectively).

The normative horizon of populism consists of the sovereignty of people over individuals and the dissolution of the separation between the people and the institutions that represent them. However, what differentiates populism from other political projects with similar normative components, such as republicanism or grass-roots politics (Panizza, 2005a, Panizza, 2008: 79), is not a particular social base or economic programme. Rather, its distinctiveness lies in its focus on the political constitution of the people via the creation of antagonists – the established institutional system and those sectors whose views are crystallised in this system – and equivalences – created by highlighting the commonalities of the people's different demands. This logical component is so central to populism that it overlaps with the normative level of the project and operates as a meta-normative threshold – a value position that sustains its normative component.

These logical and normative components set a framework for the possibilities of existing populisms. Yet, due to the anti-institutionalist logic of populism, the normative component of populism is rarely operationalised in institutional recommendations that are a fixed part of the project. Rather, these recommendations are highly dependent on the circumstances in which the populist project struggles to become hegemonic. Hence, the contingent component carries significant weight in defining what existing populisms are.

The contingent component of populism consists of the manner in which a populist appeal institutionalises its direct link with the people, the themes it articulates in its appeal, and the content that fills the concepts of "the people" and "the others" – that is, its institutions, its policies and its social bases. Therefore, the contingent component of populism reveals the limitations of its anti-status quo character. The populist "moment" of the direct appeal is brief (Cammack, 2000: 157) and, if it succeeds, it needs to crystallise its success through some form of institutionalisation. The logic of populism conditions the contingent component of institutions. Yet, the anti-institutionalism inherent in that logic allows the context to define the content of the contingent component – the characteristics of the populist institutions.

In Argentina, the success of the Peronist populist appeal fundamentally defined the elements that crystallised as the content of the populist political project. Although

these elements were contingent, the success of the Peronist appeal and its subsequent proscription meant that they obtained a higher level of fixation. Hence, most of what analysts include in lists of populism's characteristics, such as its association with an inward model of development, the preference for corporatist state-society relations and the appeal to workers – particularly in the case of Peronism – are considered here as elements of the populist political project that engaged in struggles for hegemony with neoliberalism in the 1990s. Peronism filled the notion of "the people" with the workers and corporatism reflected the Peronist attempt to institutionalise its direct appeal to the people. These elements shared the common feature of state interventionism, which made them compatible with the populist logic because it enabled direct contact between the political sphere and the people. At the same time, the preference for these institutions was strongly influenced by the context in which the Peronist populist appeal succeeded – the international prevalence of ISI models of development since the 1930s, anti-liberal political systems in the inter-war years, and the situation at that time of the longstanding domestic disputes between liberalism and populism. Chapter 3 presents further details of the content of Argentinean populism.

While Argentinean populism resembles many empirical descriptions of populism, the thesis understands the core of populism to be its logical and normative components. This understanding can better account for the ubiquity of populism, highlight its emancipatory potential beyond its contingent content, and avoid the usual pejorative connotations. If the contingent character of the manifestations of populism is acknowledged, it is not inconceivable that populism and neoliberalism can co-exist, influence each other and transform themselves. Also, acknowledging the politically constructed character of the content of populism reinforces the fact that the character that populism acquired in a given historical context is not fixed, opening up the possibilities of populism engendering a mode of politics highly responsive to people's demands (Panizza, 2008: 80).[37] This thesis includes the contingent elements in the definition of populism, especially because they were perceived as crucial parts of the project and hence affected the conditions in which populism struggled for hegemony

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[37] This position is different to that of De Ipola and Portantiero, who sustain that the emancipatory potential of populism, or its equivalence with socialism, is jeopardised by the fact that populism has historically reified people in organicist and statist political forms that negate pluralism, dissent and difference (De Ipola and Portantiero, 1995: 533).

in the 1990s. But the definition used in this thesis emphasises the contingent rather than the constitutive character of those elements.

In summary, populism is understood here as a political project, the distinctive feature of which is the prevalence of a logic of discursive formation characterised by its direct appeal to the people against established institutions, and by the construction of chains of equivalences within the political identity that that appeal constitutes. Because of its centrality, this logic operates as a normative horizon for the project that sustains its core normative component – the sovereignty of the people and the resistance to barriers that hinder direct contact between the people and their leaders. These logical and normative components condition the contingent manifestations of populism. In Argentina, the fundamental contingent elements of the populist project, crystallised during Peronism, include principally the economic model of inward development, the central role of the workers as part of "the people" and the prevalence of an interventionist state.

The logical, normative and contingent components described above is the basis of the Argentinean populist project that antagonised with the neoliberal political project in struggles to become hegemonic. The next paragraphs look at the possibility that these two antagonistic projects had to combine their most fundamental constitutive components in order to start exploring how they co-existed, influenced each other or transformed themselves through hegemonic struggles in the context of defining the discourse on civil society in poverty reduction policies in the 1990s in Argentina.

c. Comparing neoliberalism and populism

As political projects, both neoliberalism and populism contain three components: contingent, normative and logical. Neoliberalism and populism are opposing political projects because of their divergent normative views and preferred logics of discursive formation, which result in the adoption of contrasting contingent elements. Figure 1 compares the two political projects.

TABLE 1: Comparison of the Neoliberal and Populist Political Projects

Components/Projects	NEOLIBERALISM	POPULISM
LOGICAL	Difference: Institutions	Equivalence:
NORMATIVE	Primacy of individuals Private/public divide	Political constitution of the people
		Sovereignty of the people Unmediated contact people-politics
CONTINGENT	State withdrawal from private sphere Washington consensus: Institutional reform Pluralist Democracy	State interventionism ISI model of development: Bypassing institutions Corporatism

Keys:
☐ Core component of each project
▦ Overlapping components
- - ▶ Connection between neoliberal and populist project: appeal for support
····▶ Connection between populism and neoliberalism: need for institutionalisation

The contingent elements of neoliberalism include the Washington consensus economic measures and recommendations for institutional reforms aimed at the construction of a democratic system of individuals' pluralist representation. In the populist project, the contingent component refers specifically to the fundamental characteristics that this project acquired in its historical existence in Argentina: the ISI model of development; the content given to "the people", in which the working class played a central role; and the attempt to institutionalise the populist appeal to the people through corporatism. The crosscutting issues of state interventionism and withdrawal in the populist and neoliberal projects respectively appear as distinctive contingent elements of these projects, but also reflect their different normative perspectives.

Normatively, these projects entail different conceptions of the social and how it should be governed. The neoliberal normative horizon is the separation of the private and public spheres and the defence of the individual rather than the community. The core of populism is its appeal to the people and the attempt to break down all the

barriers that separate them from their governments or leaders, which involves a fusion of the liberal notion of the private and public spheres and an accent on the identity of "the people" rather than on individuals. In both populism and neoliberalism the normative component defines the prevalent logic of discursive construction, but in the case of populism the normative and the logical component are mutually linked.

The logical level presents a key avenue for the combination of these two projects. While the prevalent logic of discursive constructions is diverse in each project – difference in neoliberalism and equivalence in populism – as political projects they both need to apply the logic of equivalence to universalise their particular project and become hegemonic. Neoliberalism resorts to the alleged neutrality of economic rationality to build political support, thus making the "end of history" thesis the core of the political character of the neoliberal project. This paves the way for a possible co-existence of liberalism with populism, particularly because neoliberalism focuses only on the economic aspects of the liberal doctrine and leaves the political aspect available for other political projects to re-articulate. At the same time, populism, especially successful populist appeals, needs to acquire a certain level of institutionalisation, thus also implementing the logic of difference. Moreover, because of its highly contingent character, it can adopt a variety of institutional forms. However, because a key part of the distinctive character of populism is its anti-institutionalist logic, if populism acquires a certain level of institutionalisation it can be absorbed by other political projects with different normative views and in which the logic of difference – or institutionalised mode of dealing with demands – prevails.

2.2. Civil society as discourse and arena

Following an account of the re-emergence of the study of civil society and the main theoretical debates that informed the 1990s' perspectives, this section specifies the understanding of civil society used in this thesis.

a. Perspectives on civil society

After having disappeared from the social studies field between the 1920s and the 1980s,[38] the study of civil society re-emerged in the last decade of the 20th century (Gellner, 1994; Keane, 1998; Taylor, 1995; Fine, 1997; Cohen and Arato, 1994) among social theorists, social analysts and policy practitioners, bringing about a multiplication of definitions and perspectives. Crucial events leading to this return started in the 1960s, with feminist movements, anti-war protests and student mobilisations, and continued with civil society groups that formed in Eastern Europe to confront the Soviet order in the 1980s.[39] The international economic crisis of the 1970s was associated with the exhaustion of the welfare states created after the war (Keane, 1998: 6) and produced a marked shift of focus in social studies from the state to society. In Latin America, a growth of social organisations accompanied the region's implementation of the Alliance for Progress plans to attack poverty in the 1960s (Cardarelli and Rosenfeld, 1998: 29). In the 1970s, these organisations continued to develop because they became a space in which political participation could continue despite military or limited democratic regimes (Jelin 1994; Jelin and Hershberg 1996; Pearce 1997; Roberts 1998). From the mid-1980s onwards, the gradual adoption of neoliberalism continued to foster the growth of social organisations, which supplemented the reduction of state intervention. By the early 1990s, neoliberal poverty reduction plans started to include actions for civil society strengthening, and policy makers became interested in civil society debates (Chandoke, 1995; Pearce 1997; 2000: 4; Bresser Pereira and Cunill Grau, 1998).

Although this revival led to a multiplication of definitions and perspectives on civil society (Keane, 1998, 36), many scholars noted that the 1990s' views on civil society could be categorised according to the long-standing theoretical debates they built on (eg Foley and Edwards, 1996; Howell and Pearce, 2001: 25-38; Taylor, 1995; Fine, 1997). Reflecting these scholars' suggestion, the debates on civil society in the 1990s are grouped here into three perspectives – neo-conservative, neo-Gramscian and neo-pluralist, which incorporate, respectively, the writings of Tocqueville, those of

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[38] This assertion draws on Keane's observation that social movements emerged in Japan and Latin America but civil society disappeared from social studies as a concept after the first decades of the 20th century (Keane, 1998).
[39] These events strongly influenced the writings on civil society in the field of political theory, notably Kumar (1993); Gellner (1994); Cohen and Arato (1994).

Gramsci, and a debate begun in the mid-20th century in the social studies arena regarding individualism and pluralism.

Tocqueville (1994 [1839]) wrote during the monarchic reaction to the French revolution, trying to explain the reaction by observing the experience of democracy in the USA. His view of civil society were based on the ideas of the late 18th century Scottish Enlightenment political economists, particularly Adam Smith and Adam Ferguson, who conceived of civil society as different from the political sphere and as the realm of plurality (Gellner, 1994). The political economists' ideas drew on Locke's contractualism[40] but, in contrast, did not conceive of "civil society" as equivalent to "political society" and the result of a contract between rational individuals. Rather, these thinkers maintained that civil society was harmonious because it was equal to the economic sphere, the natural order of which emerged from the division of labour (Taylor, 1995; Varty, 1997; Lively and Reeve, 1997). Tocqueville, however, concerned with the "terror" that followed the French Revolution, was wary of the conflicts that could emerge if one social group attempted to dominate the others. Observing the USA, he concluded that autonomous and voluntary associations could limit both state excesses and groups' domination aspirations (Hall, 1995). These associations were "schools for democracy" because participating in them prepared society's members to participate in political affairs. Thus, as schools of political participation, associations were at the service of the state but were autonomous from it because they came about due to the need of individuals to protect their liberties against tyranny.

Gramsci (1998 [1971]) wrote in the 1920s as a political prisoner of fascism in Italy and in the aftermath of Russia's communist revolution. He largely aligned with Hegel and Marx's criticism of the political economists' view of civil society. Hegel and Marx conceived of civil society as equivalent to political society and highlighted its inequalities rather than its harmony (Fine, 1997). Gramsci embraced Hegel's accent on the importance of intermediary bodies in mediating between civil society and the state (Taylor, 1995; Whitehead, 1997)[41] and Marx's idea that civil society existed in relation to the state. Yet, he disagreed with Hegel's view of the state as the realm that

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[40] See Locke, (1986) {1690}.
[41] See Hegel, 1967 {1821}.

could supersede inequalities in civil society, and with Marx's expectations that a revolution would inevitably emerge from the development of the economic structure and would thus put an end to those inequalities. According to Marx, the state was the source of the formal equality embedded in rights that gave existence to a "civil" society and prevented the disadvantaged classes from being aware of their objective position in the economic sphere (Marx and Engels, 1982 [1932]: 69). Similarly, Gramsci stressed that civil society was the arena in which the state constructs, via a variety of institutions, the hegemony that sustains state power. However, he argued that for the revolution to arise it was crucial that a political organisation generated a counter-hegemony in that same arena in order to confront the state (Kumar, 1993). Hence, Gramsci regarded the state and civil society as intertwined realms that could support or oppose each other, depending on the situation of domination – if a counter-hegemony challenging state power emerged in civil society, opposition prevailed.

Between the 1930s and the 1980s debates about the concept of civil society dwindled as social studies turned its attention to the state and the individual. However, the pluralist critique of utilitarianism brought into social studies a central issue that had been debated in previous theories of civil society – intermediary organisations. After the 1920s, social studies increasingly viewed the state as the main promoter of change and progress. The state-led post-Second World War reconstruction reinforced this view, but it also witnessed an increasing focus on individuals in explaining social phenomena. Individualist approaches faced challenges from several theories. Utilitarianism, the most influential individualist approach of the post-war years, conceived of the social sphere as an aggregation of rational and self-interested individuals. Pluralism was a group theory that criticised individualism, not by suggesting a focus on the state, as class-based group theories did in those years,[42] but by stressing the importance of interest groups in decision-making processes (eg Dahl, 1961: 64). These groups resembled the intermediary social organisations that had appeared in previous debates on civil society. Yet the critique of individualism was limited, since interest groups were seen as coalitions of individuals with shared interests or attitudes (Polsby, 1963: 115; Truman, 1962: 33, both in Wenman, 2003: 58; Goodin and Klingemann, 1996: 11).

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[42] For instance, Althusser's structuralist Marxism. His article on state apparatuses is key in this respect (Althusser, 1971).

These long-standing theories informed the three perspectives that emerged with the revival of the study of civil society.

The neo-conservative perspective that emerged in the 1990s draws on a libertarian reading of Locke and the Enlightenment. It takes up their arguments about the harmony between natural and commercial society (Nozick, 1988: 107-110) and incorporates the individualist approach to social studies that spread after the mid-20th century. It regards civil society as separate from the state and as composed of an aggregation of individuals. In the public-private divide, civil society falls into the latter and, if civil society can generate a civic culture, this should pursue the aim of restraining the excesses of unorganised mass politics. In this, the perspective resembles Tocqueville's disapproval of civil society's direct involvement in politics. This perspective underlay the early neoliberal approaches to civil society that accompanied macroeconomic adjustment.

The neo-pluralist perspective also draws on the Enlightenment tradition and sees state and civil society as two separate spheres. It takes the pluralist idea of the importance of interest groups in shaping government decisions. However, in response to the criticism that not all interest groups have the same possibilities of influencing government decisions because some have more resources than others, neo-pluralists suggest that the sources of plurality lie not in the organisation of labour but in community life. This emphasises Tocqueville's concern with the civic culture that associational life can engender, and stretches the focus on interest groups to include value-oriented organisations. Social organisations are still viewed as a way of protecting individuals from state excesses but they are not merely aggregations of individual interests. Moreover, plural groups are conceived of not as separate to but as constitutive of the state itself (Dunleavy and O'Leary, 1987). The debates on social capital, begun with Putnam's work (1993) and included in the MDBs' views of civil society by the mid-1990s, reflect this perspective.

The neo-Gramscian perspective continues along the lines of Gramsci's adoption of Hegel and Marx, and criticises individualist approaches to social studies without fully endorsing pluralist or class-based views. It envisages civil society as intertwined with

the state and political society and, as in Gramsci's writings, civil society is, at the same time, the space of domination and the space of potential emancipation. However, as neo-Gramscians focus on rejecting the existing power structures, they tend to see civil society as the space of freedom and the state as the space of coercion. In some theories, the elimination of the state and the political sphere is a utopian horizon, as in the case of the civil society theories that emerged in the first countries emancipated from Soviet domination (Havel, 1985). Some neo-Gramscian views retain a class component, but more often, these views combine with pluralist views of liberal democracy (Jelin and Hergsherber, 1996). Other neo-Gramscian views incorporated an identity dimension that removed references to class (Álvarez, et. al., 1998). This perspective predominated among grass-roots activists and students of social movements in Latin America.

b. Civil society and poverty reduction in this thesis

A study of the politically constructed meaning of civil society in a given social reality, as in this thesis, requires an understanding of civil society that avoids a-priori definitions. Following the neo-Gramscian perspective, civil society is seen here as an arena in which the struggles for hegemony take place. As Gramsci put it, consent is manufactured mainly in civil society, where institutions and organic intellectuals contribute to its manufacture or to the expansion of a counter-hegemonic strategy that can be led by inorganic intellectuals or a vanguard party (Gramsci, 1998 [1971]: 12, 13, 15, 204). At the same time, in line with the ontological position taken in this thesis, what civil society is in a particular social setting is defined through struggles for hegemony that are not necessarily tied to class interests. Civil society is, then, both a discourse defined by hegemonic struggles and the very arena in which these struggles for the definition of discourses occur (Munck, 2002: 357). Hence, defining *what civil society is* is a fundamental hegemonic operation that sets the boundaries of the arena in which hegemonic and counter-hegemonic projects engage in political struggles. Therefore, the focus on civil society is particularly crucial in the analysis of the struggles between neoliberalism and populism. With the multiplication of definitions and theories that followed the revival of interest in studying civil society, civil society as a signifier lost its fixed attachment to a particular content and emerged

as a floating signifier (Munck, 2002: 358, 359). Different discourses or political projects tried to fix that empty signifier to chains of equivalence and nodal points in order to articulate a discourse on it and hegemonise it. This thesis looks at such attempts made by neoliberalism and populism in the field of poverty reduction policies in Argentina of the 1990s.

Civil society as a discourse is contingent on the broader discourse in which it is inserted, in this case the poverty reduction policy area. Looking at the discourse on civil society within this particular policy field entails taking into account the characteristics of the prevalent approaches to poverty in the periods under study. Therefore, poverty reduction is broadly understood here as policies intended to benefit the worse-off sectors of the population, and the thesis situates the struggles to define the discourse on civil society within different approaches to poverty in the history of Argentina (chapter 3) and in the 1990s in particular (chapters 5, 6, 7). In that decade, the most salient debate on the definition of poverty was on structural versus income-based definitions. Structural poverty was measured using the *necesidades básicas insatisfechas* (NBI – unsatisfied basic needs)[43] method, and income poverty was determined by measures of poverty lines constructed on the basis of general consumption power[44] or the possibility of accessing a basic food and goods basket.[45] To define its universe of analysis, the thesis takes as poverty reduction policies those that the SDS – the state agency created specifically to address poverty – considered to be part of its remit (SIEMPRO, 1998, 2001).

2.3. Conclusion

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[43] The NBI method was applied for the first time in Argentina in 1984 by the *Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censo* (*INDEC* – National Institute of Statistics and Census) for the first governmental study on poverty. Using census data from 1980, the method analyses households looking at five indicators: overcrowding (more than three persons per room); housing (inappropriate types such as families in rented rooms or dangerous buildings); sanitary conditions (lack of toilets); school attendance (children aged 6-12 years who do not attend school); and sustainability capacities (more than four persons per family member with a stable job, and low educational level of the head of the household). If one of these indicators is present, the inhabitants of the household are considered to have NBI (INDEC, 1984; Feres and Mancero, 2001).

[44] The poverty line divides the population into those who live on less than US$1 a day (US$2 for Latin America) – considered "poor" – and those who do not. This calculation is based on what the Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) was in the USA in 1985 (World Bank, 1993; Ravallion, 1998).

[45] These measurements are based on household survey data, which in Argentina comes from the *Encuesta Permanente de Hogares* (*EPH* - Permanent Household Survey). The calculations set a minimum comsumption basket and if a household's income cannot purchase the basket, that household is in a situation of poverty (Altimir, 1979; 1994; 2001; ECLAC, issues since 1994).

This chapter has specified what neo-liberalism and populism mean in this thesis. Taken as political projects with three components – logical, normative and contingent – it has been argued that they are opposing and antagonistic projects but that their combination is possible. Neo-liberalism focuses on the economic aspects of the liberal doctrine and leaves the political aspects of the project available for other political projects to re-articulate. However, it should be considered that, in the history of Argentina, liberalism and populism have been constructed as opposing political projects, which has laid the ground for a persistent antagonism. Chapter 3 deals with this historical construction.

The second section considered the theoretical developments that were articulated in three perspectives on the civil society of the 1990s – neo-conservative, neo-pluralist and neo-Gramscian. The section specified that the understanding of civil society used in this thesis draws on the neo-Gramscian perspective, and is applied to the ontology behind the deconstructive discursive institutionalism that guides the thesis' analyses. As such, civil society is seen as the arena in which hegemonic struggles take place and as a discourse that defines the boundaries of that arena and, thus, the possible struggles for hegemony. Poverty reduction, in turn, is the discourse into which the discourse on civil society is inserted. Therefore, this analysis of civil society requires to take into account the variations in approaches to poverty reduction during the decade.

Chapters 3 and 4 provide further details about the contingent components of populism and neoliberalism respectively, their specific approaches to poverty and their discourse on civil society. Chapter 3 looks at the historical moulding of Argentinean populism, while chapter 4 focuses on the neoliberal project as formulated by the MDBs, considered here as key promoters of this political project.

Chapter 3

The Argentinean Populist Political Project and its Discourse on Civil Society in Poverty Reduction Policy

This chapter looks at how the discourse on civil society in poverty reduction policies emerged and changed by observing the characteristics of social organisations dealing with poverty – organisations that the 1990s discourse regarded as the core civil society actors. It shows that the Peronist populist appeal articulated diffuse understandings of civil society, which until the late 1930s had been scattered among social organisations dealing with poverty, and that by the 1980s the discourse's main features reflected the continued predominance of populism but had also incorporated elements from the liberal political project.

The first section of this chapter presents an account of the diffuse discourse on civil society and of the hegemonic struggles between populism and liberalism in Argentina up until the late 1930s. The second section focuses on the emergence of the Peronist populist project and its success in becoming hegemonic (1943-1955), when the populist discourse on civil society was first articulated. The third section looks at the years of the political proscription of Peronism (1955-1973), when the populist discourse acquired new features and consolidated. The fourth section examines the period of the military dictatorship (1976-1983) and the democratic government of Alfonsín (1983-1989), when the domestic discourse on civil society incorporated liberal elements but remained predominantly populist. Nevertheless, the conclusion highlights that the incorporation of liberal elements opened up possibilities for the liberal project to hegemonise the populist discourse on civil society.

3.1. The liberal-conservative hegemony

a. Hegemonic struggles between liberalism and populism

Liberalism and populism have struggled for hegemony since the country's early days. In the first decades of the 19th century, an elite group in the River Plate area embraced the ideals of the Enlightenment and were concerned with the rule of law and modernisation. Their liberalism clashed with the provincial *caudillos'*[46] populism, which regarded *caudillos'* decisions as above the law and advocated Catholic values as the core organisers of social life, as had been the case during more than four centuries of Hispanic domination in Argentina (Romero, J. L. 2001: 73-100). After independence the battles between Federals and Unitarians reflected the antagonism between the elites' and the *caudillos'* projects but in the mid-19th century liberalism became hegemonic. Liberalism appeared in the 1853 Constitution and expanded with the unification of the country in 1861. Yet, the struggles between liberalism and populism soon re-emerged in the opposition between civilisation and barbarism that dominated political ideology in the late 19th century (Svampa, 1994) and elements of the *caudillos'* populism started to grow within liberalism. The result was an increasingly conservative liberal hegemony in which governments combined a liberal non-interventionist state with a persistent hierarchical view of social organisation, based on the Catholic conception of divine order, and by-passed institutions by using the widespread practice of electoral fraud (Lobato, 2000: 168).

In the 20th century the struggles between liberalism and populism continued and resulted in different articulations combining these political projects. The Hipólito Yrigoyen presidencies (1916-1921 and 1928-1930) represented an attempt to develop a political project that focused on the people, by giving priority to obtaining popular support in the framework of a liberal democracy without questioning the liberal agro-export economic model (Svampa, 1994: 141, 155). In the 1930s, after a coup d'état, a fraudulent democracy was established, which involved ignoring liberal political institutions, and, against a background of international financial crisis, the governments adopted ISI strategies to complement the agro-export-based system,

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[46] Local social and political leaders

which, in contrast to the liberal premises, entailed a significant increase in state intervention in the economy. Yet, while the 1930s were far from being politically and economically liberal, populism was present in those years only in the contingent forms of by-passing democratic institutions and granting a central role to the state. Its more fundamental logico-normative characteristic– its focus on the sovereignty of the people – was absent.

It was not until the emergence of Peronism in the 1940s that populism became hegemonic. Peronism revived the struggle between liberalism and populism, since it was based on the construction of the antagonism between the masses and the oligarchy. It signified a new articulation of the populist project and its political triumph thus represented the success of a populist appeal in Argentina.

b. A diffuse discourse on civil society

At the turn of the century in Argentina, the state's non-interventionist stance, coupled with increasing social demands triggered by industrialisation and population growth, was fertile ground for the emergence of social organisations attempting to supplement insufficient state action to address poverty-related problems. The practices and views of these organisations produced a diffuse discourse on civil society – a collection of similar characteristics across different organisations that nevertheless was not articulated as a coherent discourse. These characteristics involved a mixture of opposing the state and maintaining and seeking its support; weakly institutionalised internal mechanisms of representation of members along with strong leadership; a focus on addressing corporatist social demands; the importance of Catholic views in guiding organisations' policies and practices; and the discretionary use of charity. These characteristics could be observed in the main organisations dealing with poverty before the 1940s.

Until the turn of the century, the *Sociedad de Beneficencia de la Capital* (*SBC* – Capital City Beneficence Society) and Mutual Aid Organisations (MAOs) were the most central organisations dealing with poverty-related issues. Created in 1823, the

SBC was administratively independent from the state but the latter set its objectives and responsibilities, was a key source of funding and, gradually, incorporated the *SBC* into its structure until its closure in 1947 (Thompson, 1995; Plotkin, (2003) [1993]: 139; Passanante, 1987: 11-3). Also, in the *SBC* the hierarchical view of society inherited from the Catholicism of the colonial years, continued to motivate social action, and the use of charity – in the sense of the rich giving discretionally to the poor – abounded (Moreno, 2000: 116). MAOs, which flourished in the late 19th century and were a key form of organisation until the 1910s,[47] exemplify the case of organisations that emerged independently from the state but which addressed poverty-related problems for their members, who had common national or regional origins. Also, despite proclaiming that they were governed by democratic rules, elections were rarely held in MAOs and usually a few members or one person held power indefinitely (Devoto and Fernández, 1990: 141-143).

By the turn of the century, Trade Unions (TUs) were emerging as a central form of organisation dealing with poverty-related issues. They sought to address poverty by fighting for better working conditions and salaries, and, similarly to MAOs, by providing social services such as health and accident insurance for their members. Regarding their relationship with the state, they emerged as "resistance societies" (Falcón, 1986; Falcón, 1990: 342-351) and most union leaders favoured direct confrontation with employers over demanding changes at state level (Falcón, 1990: 357). The bases, however, tended to favour less combative strategies (Bravo, 2000: 42; Rocchi, 2000: 172).

The Catholic organisations such as the *Círculos de Obreros* (*COs* – Workers' Circles) and *Acción Católica* (*AC* – Catholic Action) were evidence of the persistent presence of Catholicism and the Church in dealing with social issues in the country and the intertwined relationship between social organisations and the state. The *COs*, founded in Argentina in 1890,[48] aimed to provide an alternative to the combative political positions spreading among unions, and advocated legislation as the means to improving workers' welfare (Sábato, 2002: 148). However, they shared with the

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[47] By the turn of the century MAOs were the most widespread form of organisation, reaching a peak in 1914 with 1,202 associations and 7,885,237 members (Passanante, 1987: 63, 75; Sábato, 2002: 141).
[48] Father Grote founded *COs* in Argentina, inspired by German social Catholicism and the Papal Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891), which defined the Church's position on social issues (Passanante, 1987: 50-1).

dominant elites a preoccupation with maintaining the established order and, after the *COs* were integrated into the Church structure in the 1910s,[49] they became strike-breakers (Di Stéfano and Zanatta, 2000: 388). The *AC*, created in 1931, favoured charity-inspired social action over political action (Di Stéfano and Zanatta, 2000: 377) and, although it was autonomous from the state, it represented the triumph of the Church hierarchy's views on social action and was therefore also aligned with the decreasingly liberal governing elites' views, who increasingly held the "myth of the Catholic nation". The myth consisted of the belief that the Church and its doctrine were the nucleus of Argentinean nationality and views such as liberalism were "transplants" from foreign bodies (Di Stéfano and Zanatta, 2000: 425).

In the inter-war years, Neighbourhood Associations (NAs), such as *sociedades de fomento* (neighbourhood development boards), *bibliotecas populares* (local non-state libraries) and sports and recreational clubs, blossomed. They supplemented the state by providing services and activities for improving community life that the state was failing to offer (González, 1990: 91-128; Gutiérrez and Romero, 1995: 69-105; Romero, 1995: 181, 182; Romero, 2002: 176). However, they did not seek to replace the state but sought its intervention to respond to neighbourhood demands (González Leandri, 2001: 220). Additionally, the legitimacy of NAs' governing bodies depended more on their effectiveness in bringing improvements to the neighbourhood than on respect for rules of governance (González Leandri, 2001: 224; Romero, 1995: 176, 177) and, in turn, most decisions depended on leaders' negotiations with the state. In those negotiations the leaders' ability to deal with local *punteros* (community political leaders), municipal legislators and civil servants and, sometimes, their ability to hold a public post while running a NA were crucial, which indicated blurred boundaries between NAs and the political sphere (González Leandri, 2001: 229).

Cooperatives appeared in Argentina in the early 1900s and presented different characteristics and approaches to poverty (Passanante, 1987: 86). The most significant urban cooperative was the *Hogar Obrero (Workers' Home)*, founded in 1905 and in the 1910s the *Ligas Agrarias (Agrarian Leagues)* started rural cooperativism. This entailed the use of an alternative economic system without directly challenging the

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[49] In 1912, Msg. D'Andrea replaced Father Grote and the *CO*s were renamed Catholic Workers' Circles, in line with the Church's attempt to integrate into its structure this and the multiplicity of other Catholic organisations that had flourished since the turn of the century (Di Stéfano and Zanatta, 2000: 356, 371).

status quo, and discretionary interventions were excluded. They addressed poverty through building affordable housing, providing financial help, and developing a strategy to buy and sell goods at low prices. However, since cooperativism's underlying socialism emphasised cooperatives' instrumental aspects over political objectives, the impact of these novel approaches was limited (Passanante, 1987: 86, 90, 95). Rural cooperatives, furthermore, were initially confrontational, as they had come about as a result of a protest – the 1912 *Grito de Alcorta*[50] – but they soon developed a close relationship with the Ministry of Agriculture (Passanante, 1987: 108).

3.2. Peronism and the emergence of the populist hegemony

a. The Peronist populist appeal and its approach to social issues

A military government took power in 1943 and Juan Domingo Perón was named Secretary of State for Labour.[51] From this position, he promoted the formation of unions and intervened in labour-capital conflicts in favour of the former (Godio, 2000: 818-821). Opposition from business sectors and within the military led to Perón's removal from office and his imprisonment. Masses of people invaded Buenos Aires' central *Plaza de Mayo* on 17 October 1945 demanding his liberation, and Perón was elected President with the support of unions, the Church and parts of the military. Once in power he continued with the ISI model of economic development begun in the 1930s, and state interventionism expanded (Tedesco, 1999: 13).

The state played a central role in the Peronist political project. State interventionism was a key contingent element of the project but did not define its populist character, which resulted from its discursive logic. The populist character of the Peronist appeal was evident in its key to success – its ability to capture the diffuse views of the popular sectors and re-signify them in a foundational discourse centred on its leader

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[50] After the conflict between tenants and landowners in Alcorta, Santa Fe province, numerous *ligas* and the *Federación Agraria Argentina* (FAA – Argentinean Agrarian Federation), which brought together rural cooperatives, emerged (Sábato, 2002: 153).
[51] On the relationship between Perón and the military see Potash, 1969.

(James, 1990: 20, Sigal and Verón, 1986: 56, 57). Capturing these views entailed the construction of a political identity by dividing the political space into "the people" and an oppressive "other". Peronism generated an antagonistic "other" – the elites associated with liberalism, foreign ideas and the oligarchy – that opposed "the people" – chiefly urban workers – and gave the latter political existence by dissolving their differences and highlighting their commonalities (Laclau, 1977b; 2005a: 111, 112; Svampa, 1994: 228-9). The Peronist appeal reflected and shaped the demands of that newly constituted popular identity, whereas the liberal project was depicted as unresponsive to people's demands. Yet, this appeal included not only anti-liberal claims but also elements of political discourses that were not popular among the general population, such as elitist nationalism, which was supported by sectors of the elite and the military (Devoto, 2002; Altamirano, 2002: 215; James, 1990: 33), and clerical Catholicism (Caimari, 1995; 2002: 446, 450, 452; Laclau, 1977b: 190). Peronism even incorporated key elements of the liberal political project, such as democracy, but redefined it as "mass democracy".[52] This appropriation of non-popular and liberal notions allowed the new political project to anchor itself in existing discursive frameworks and moderated the anti-status quo tendencies of the populist appeal.

The Peronist project's approach to social issues was guided by a notion of social justice that reflected the centrality of "the people" and the state in this project. The underlying aim of social justice was to reduce the divisions between workers and capitalists and integrate the former into society by addressing their demands and making them part of the Peronist "people". This aim was pursued through a model of social policy that combined state centralisation and attempts to provide universal social services with the work of social organisations, mainly state-controlled TUs and the *Fundación Eva Perón* (*FEP* – Eva Perón Foundation). Including social organisations in this system was complementary to the populist project because it reinforced antagonism with a central organisational form of liberalism – political parties (Sigal and Verón, 1986: 63).

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[52] For more on the Peronist discourse see Sigal and Verón, 1986: especially 37-39, 54; James, 1990: 24, 33-38; Svampa, 1994: 231 and Ciria, 1983: 21, 22.

b. The articulation of the populist discourse on civil society

In line with its ability to capture the diffuse views of the popular sectors and re-signify them in a new discourse, Peronism articulated in a coherent discourse the characteristics of the organisations dealing with poverty-related issues that had remained scattered up until the late 1930s.

The diffuse views on civil society that existed before the 1940s were articulated by Perón's governments around the notion of "*comunidad organizada*" ("organised community")[53] and the populist discourse on civil society in poverty reduction emerged. The concept of *"comunidad organizada"* was a nodal point that connected the characteristics of the newly emerging discourse on civil society with the populist Peronist project. The *"comunidad organizada"* implied a form of corporatism in which organisations emerged according to areas of activity rather than political preferences or individual interests. Their conflicts were to be dealt with by organisations' representatives, under the supervision of the state, and would foster unity between different social groups, helping to constitute the Peronist "people". Also, the notion of *"comunidad organizada"* condensed the pre-Perón organisations' mix of oppositional and dependent stances regarding the state. It framed the oppositional stance in a rejection of pre-established forms of social and political organisation and underpinned the organisations' search for state support by institutionalising links between the state and social organisations. This notion constituted a way of resolving an intrinsic tension of successful populist projects, which stems from the need to somehow institutionalise these projects' fundamentally anti-status quo character. In turn, by anchoring the discourse in existing conceptions of civil society, social organisations were more likely to adopt the Peronist discourse and its project, which led to their "Peronisation". Perón himself embodied the organisations' preference for strong leadership over institutionalised rules, and Peronism became a worldview of reference for organisations. Thus, social

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[53] The concept had been present in Peronism since its beginnings but Perón announced this officially in 1952. Following the announcement, the CGE (*Confederación General Económica* – General Economic Confederation), the CGP (*Confederación General de Profesionales* – General Confederation of Professionals), the CGU (*Confederación General Universitaria* – General Confederation of University Students) and the UES (*Unión de Estudiantes Secundarios* – Secondary Students' Union) emerged and the already existing CGT (*Confederación General del Trabajo* – Trade Unions Confederation) became key in the "*comunidad organizada*" (Torre, 2002: 58; Altamirano, 2002: 219).

organisations followed the Peronist approach to poverty, addressing it in a discretionary way in accordance with Peronist perspectives, which in themselves remained linked to Catholicism. In summary, the features of the populist discourse on civil society as articulated by Peronism were:

1. Social organisations' oppositional stances were incorporated into the anti-status quo character of the Peronist political project.

2. Social organisations were both state and politically controlled.

3. Social organisation was viewed from a corporatist perspective.

4. Social organisations were "Peronised" and Catholic values continued to guide social action.

5. Discretionary intervention to deal with poverty persisted.

During the Peronist governments, the *FEP*[54] and TUs were central actors in the delivery of social services. The populist discourse emerged clearly in these organisations. The *FEP*'s boundaries with the state and the Peronist party were difficult to delineate. The *FEP* was expected to supplement the state system of social action. While the unions dealt with the needs of workers, the *FEP* was responsible for helping the poorest and those excluded from the labour market (Plotkin, 2003 [1993]: 137). Additionally, the *FEP* had the political aim of expanding the Peronist project to those not in the labour market – women, children and the unemployed – and of counterbalancing the government's dependence on union support. The *FEP*'s relationship with the state remains unclear as there are no records of state funding, but the *FEP* operated from the Ministry of Labour's offices, which shows that it was integrated into the state apparatus. The links between the *FEP* and the party could be seen in the *FEP*'s operational scheme. The *células mínimas* (minimum cells) – *FEP* community workers – were members of the women's branch of the party and

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[54] The description of the *FEP* draws on: Ferioli, 1990; Isuani and Tenti, 1989: 17, 18; Plotkin, 2003 [1993]: 137, 140, 141, 144-145, 148-150; Navarro Gerassi, 2000: 332, 333; Romero, 2002: 226, 230; Passanante, 1987: 129-131; Guy, 2000: 334-337; and Ciria, 1983: 306.

eventually these *células* operated from the *unidades básicas* (basic units) – the party's local branches. In accordance with these strong links with the state and the Peronist party, the *FEP*'s services were delivered discretionally in response to disparate demands and the political needs of the party and its leader. The unions were aligned with the Peronist *"comunidad organizada"* through the *Ley de Asociaciones Profesionales* (Law of Professional Associations), which simultaneously made the state a key promoter of unionisation and the unions strongly dependent on the state.[55] This law made the state the guarantor of unions' benefits, since it decided how to distribute them and had the power to grant or withdraw the unions' legal status. Unions announced their "Peronist" political position at the 1950 Congress of the *Confederación General del Trabajo* (CGT – Trade Unions Confederation) (Ciria, 1983: 27, 28), reinforcing the populist project's view of inextricability between the social and political spheres.

Many social organisations dealing with poverty adopted the Peronist populist discourse and became "Peronised". Since the Peronist discourse on social organisation resembled NAs' and cooperatives' own views and practices, these organisations continued operating as they had up until the 1930s and easily adopted the Peronist discourse as their own. Some grass-roots organisations such as NAs were sidelined as Peronist party local institutions – such as *unidades básicas* – proliferated and undertook similar activities. Yet, most of these associations collaborated with local party institutions (Romero, 2002: 232). Urban cooperatives, particularly housing ones, did well with Perón's disbursement of large amounts of money to provide workers with affordable housing (Ballent, 1999: 22). In addition to these material benefits, Peronism provided a political discourse for the space that the socialists' apolitical cooperativism had left vacant. Crucially, the initial Peronist alliance with the Church facilitated Peronism's permeation of Catholic members of social organisations. Moreover, the Peronist attempt to create a "Peronist Christianism", seeking to empty Catholic symbols and fill them with Peronist content, upset the Church but implicitly suggested questioning the Church's materialism, which appealed to some lay people who opposed the views of the Church hierarchy and had long been involved in social organisations dealing with poverty (Caimari, 2002: 466).

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[55] This 1945 law established that the state promoted and had to authorise the organisation of one union per economic sector, not per trade or factory, and that the unions' main role was to represent the sector in negotiations – controlled by the state – with capitalists. The Minister of Labour had to supervise union federations (James, 1990: 23).

3.3. The proscription of Peronism and the consolidation of the populist hegemony

a. Expansion of the Peronist identity

Perón governed for two consecutive periods from 1946 until 1955 when the military-led *Revolución Libertadora* overthrew him and Peronism was proscribed. Perón went into exile, and a succession of failed strategies to eradicate Peronism from Argentinean political life followed (Smulovitz, 1991). The *Revolución* governments[56] tried to eradicate Peronist influences from state and society (Tedesco 1999: 6) and the elected governments of Rogelio Frondizi (1958-1962) and Arturo Illia (1963-1966) attempted a controlled reintegration of Peronism into the political system. Frondizi attempted "Peronism without Perón" but the lack of support from Perón, refusals to grant Peronism legal political status and elections being declared null and void (Smulovitz, 1991: 121; McGuire, 1997: 145-150) hampered the initiative. Juan Carlos Onganía's dictatorship (1966-1969) aimed to reinstate "order" in a political sphere perceived as corrupt and threatened by revolutionary ideas in the wake of the Cuban revolution (De Riz, 2000: 33-40). It tried to de-politicise the popular sectors (O'Donnell, 1988: 31) and weaken the main structures of Peronism – unions – through the economic marginalisation of workers (Corradi, 1985: 90). Nevertheless, the Peronist identity proved difficult to erode and Perón's control of the movement from abroad made that erosion more difficult.

The political proscription of Peronism was an attempt to re-establish a liberal project, but it resulted in the expansion of the Peronist identity. The intention during the proscription was to de-politicise society, re-establishing the separation between the private and the public, and to dissolve collective forms of representation, eventually returning to a system of individual representation – political parties. Yet, state

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[56] The Presidents of this Revolution were Eduardo Lonardi (September-November 1955) and Pedro Aramburu (1955-1958).

intervention remained significant. Frondizi's structuralist-based *desarrollismo*[57] (developmentalism) favoured state-planned industrialisation and, although Illia focused on state deficit reduction and Onganía introduced market-oriented reforms (Corradi, 1985: 90), they kept the ISI model. More importantly, the failure of these governments to address popular demands through democratic institutions, along with the spread of revolutionary ideas, led to the deepening of Peronism's anti-status quo and anti-liberal stances (Laclau, 1977b: 190, 191). The political exclusion of Peronism resulted in the higher visibility of its political antagonist – liberalism – thereby contributing to overcoming internal differences within Peronism and enabling the Peronist identity to expand (Barros and Castagnola, 2000: 31).

Yet, the limits of this expansion of chains of equivalences became apparent as soon as Peron's return was imminent. The 1969 *Cordobazo*, a mass insurrection against the dictatorship, precipitated the end of Onganía's regime and marked the transition towards the return of Perón. When Alejandro Lanusse was appointed President by the military he announced the return to democracy, and the existence of opposing streams within Peronism started to become apparent. These sectors were the left-wing youth movement and its armed wing, *Montoneros,*[58] with which Perón entered into direct confrontation once his return appeared likely, and the unions, themselves immersed in internal struggles. The Peronist candidate, Héctor Cámpora, won the 1973 elections. He allowed the return of Perón, resigned, and held new elections. Perón won, but internal disputes within his movement worsened and he was unable to control the unions.

When Perón died, in July 1974, his wife took office and the paramilitary *Alianza Argentina Anti-Comunista* – Triple A (Argentinean Anti-Communist Alliance), formed by the Minister for Social Welfare engaged in "ideological cleansing" directed at left-wing groups. In the face of continued political chaos and persistent economic crisis, the government sought military intervention, which led to the 1976 coup (Tedesco, 1999: 10, 11, 19, 20).

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[57] *Desarrollismo* was based on economic structuralism's assumption that the deterioration of the terms of trade that affected non-industrialised countries hindered Latin American development, and it followed the recommendation to modify the economic structures that sustained those economies based on the production of raw materials for export. (On developmentalism and these premises see Nosiglia, 1983: 14-16, 59; on structuralism, see chapter 2, note 13.)
[58] For a historical account of *Montoneros* see Gillespie, 1982. For an ethnographic approach, see Anguita and Caparrós, 1997.

b. A changing approach to social issues

During the Peronist proscription, concerns with defining and addressing poverty increased and the emerging notion of "marginality" deeply shaped the approach to poverty. Initially used to refer to shantytown dwellers, the meaning of marginality later expanded to take in anyone with the characteristics of these dwellers, whether they lived in shantytowns or not, or those unemployed or on low pay (Ward, 2004: 184-5). Revolutionary perspectives held that tackling poverty required the subversion of the established system. Accordingly, scholars re-signified "marginal" in Marxist terms as "marginal mass" (Nun, 2001: 24). Thus, marginal became the term used to refer to the poor from a variety of perspectives.

Community promotion and *NBI* indicators emerged as two central tools for dealing with poverty, defined in "marginality" terms. By the late 1970s *NBI* indicators had become the main method for measuring poverty. Developed by the Economic Council for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the *NBI* method was aligned with this institution's structuralist views and was linked to the notion of marginal because it considered general living conditions and not income or consumption power (chapter 2). Community promotion, in turn, involved state or social actors' endeavours to promote the formation of community organisations to tackle poverty-related problems and would aid the marginal's social re-integration (Nun, 2001: 19-22).

c. New features of the populist discourse on civil society

During the proscription of Peronism, the discourse on civil society incorporated new elements without losing its populist character.

Community promotion replaced the notion of *"comunidad organizada"* in condensing anti-status quo claims – now also coming from revolutionary ideas – and the organisations' continued strategy of dealing with social demands by seeking state action. The fact that community promotion drew on both on a revision of structuralist ideas and on revolutionary positions facilitated the emergence of this verbal bridge.

Programmes promoting community organisation, run by the state and social organisations, aimed at counterbalancing the structuralist focus on redefining the economy but maintained the idea that the state had to deal with social action. They also sought to challenge revolutionary insurgencies; the state agency for *promoción comunitaria* (community promotion) at the Ministry of Social Welfare increasingly sought to demobilise left-wing activism at the community level (Abel and Lewis, 2002: 21, 40; Cardarelli and Rosenfeld, 1998: 29, 52, 53). At the same time, based on the Marxist notion of "marginal mass", grass-roots actors re-signified the meaning of community promotion to make it an instrument of projects with revolutionary aims framed in participatory methodologies. Popular education movements[59] became one of the most salient examples of this re-articulation (Cardarelli and Rosenfeld, 1998: 46, 47).

In the context of prioritising community promotion in dealing with poverty, the characteristics of the discourse on civil society changed with respect to the discourse articulated during the Peronist governments.

1. Social organisations' oppositional stances that had been incorporated into the anti-status quo character of the Peronist political project became more confrontational as the anti-status quo stance of Peronism radicalised in the context of political exclusion and the spread of revolutionary ideas.

2. While during Perón's government social organisation was both state and politically controlled, during the Peronist proscription organisations temporarily supplemented the state until the structuralist economic programme bore fruit and, although using more confrontational methods, organisations continued to seek state concessions as a strategy for solving groups' demands. This showed the continuation of the populist rejection of a strict separation between the private and public spheres.

3. Peronist corporatism regarded social organisation as not only in a close relationship with the state, but as emerging from areas of activity rather than from individual interests. During the Peronist proscription the confrontational strategies adopted to

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[59] Popular education consisted of an approach to education that took into account the specific culture and everyday experiences of the students and had the ultimate aim of exposing the situation of oppression to which these experiences related. The approach is based on the writings of Paulo Freire (1970).

deal with the state led to the distancing of leaders from the bases and the bureaucratisation of organisations. Yet, in the context of a "community promotion" approach to poverty and revolutionary ideas, participatory democratic practices and non-hierarchical forms of internal organisation became more widespread. This bottom-up self-organisation contradicted corporatist views but not only did unions remain central to the Peronist project but also, in a context in which revolutionary means to accessing power were prioritised, participatory governing mechanisms remained in line with populism, rejecting the liberal conception of the individual right to self-government and the notions of representative institutions linked to it. Furthermore, a focus on self-organisation reflected a core characteristic of populism – its dislike of established forms of organisation.

4. During Peron's governments social organisations were "Peronised" and the alliance of Peronism with the Church and the attempts at Peronist Christianism contributed to the endurance of the Catholic values behind social action. During the Peronist proscription there was an increasing professionalisation of social organisations dealing with poverty, and their members. Yet, revolutionary ideas permeated the Peronist political identity of organisations and their work continued to be guided by Catholic worldviews, especially in the 1960s when the II Vatican Council paved the way for adapting these values to different scenarios, allowing them to be combined with elements of revolutionary ideals. Therefore, the separation between political and technical objectives remained blurred in these organisations.

5. Discretionary intervention to deal with poverty persisted. Despite attempts to centralise social action during Peron's government and to define the characteristics of poverty during the years of Peronist proscription, social organisations continued to use selective and discretionary interventions, which reflected the populist appeal's need to retain its direct links with the people.

These changes showing the developments in the populist discourse during the Peronist proscription appeared in the key organisations dealing with poverty.

The attempt begun in 1955 to dismantle Peronism included the closing down of the *FEP* and the intervention of unions. The latter's immediate response was the

formation of a movement of workers' "resistance", which employed armed violence (James, 1990: 112-117). After Frondizi's attempt at "Peronism without Perón", the Law of Professional Associations was restored with the aim of increasing further the dependence of unions on state concessions and therefore empowering a weak state. Unions started to engage in dialogue with the government but adopted a confrontational strategy of *"golpear y negociar"* (hit and negotiate) consisting of a "hit" of mobilisation, to demonstrate union control of the masses, followed by negotiations with the government, independently from the bases. This strategy separated the bases from their leaders as union structures became more bureaucratised. However, the bases' recent memory of resistance and the increase of revolutionary movements around the world facilitated the reorganisation of workers' bases. In Córdoba, foreign companies promoted the formation of company unions, which became the seedbed for the *sindicatos clasistas*[60] (class-unions) or grass-roots unionism. They introduced several mechanisms for combating union bureaucratisation and allowing wider worker participation, including the elimination of barriers for new candidates in internal elections. After the *Cordobazo*, *sindicalismo clasista* arrived in the country's largest industrial centre, Greater Buenos Aires. Union bureaucracies lost control of their bases and the *Juventud Trabajadora Peronista* (*JTP* – Working Peronist Youth), linked to *Montoneros,* penetrated many unions (Romero, 2002: 252, 253).

There was a resurgence of NAs in the 1960s triggered by community promotion initiatives and the increase in shantytowns that resulted from the internal migration that followed the implementation of ISI strategies (Romero, L.A. 2001: 157, 158). Unlike the inter-war NAs, these NAs' focus was on fighting for tenure rights, because these shantytowns emerged as settlements on unused lands. Also, self-organisation was more common than demanding state action, and professionals increasingly provided services to these organisations. However, links with the public sphere developed through these organisations' connections with political organisations. Many community workers became political militants and the *Movimiento Villero Peronista* (Peronist Movement of the Shantytowns), linked to the *Juventud Peronista* (*JP* – Peronist Youth), and *Montoneros*, permeated many associations (Romero, 2002:

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[60] The name sought to reflect that the leaders of these organisations were usually communists.

270-271). Their influence, together with changes in grass-roots Catholic organisations and the community promotion approach's emphasis on self-organisation, contributed to the spread of participatory governing mechanisms, such as assemblies, and non-hierarchical organisational schemes.

Many cooperatives got involved in the dynamics of capitalism, losing the associational and solidarity principles behind their creation, but some remained committed to providing social services. In the rural areas they became Rural Leagues, with the first one emerging in Chaco province in 1971. Their governing mechanisms were widely participatory and were based on a non-hierarchical structure of grass-roots nucleus and delegates. They provided credit for small farmers, and demanded that the state provide protection for the sale of their products and reduce taxes. Their political action consisted of petitions and strikes (Romero, 2002: 267). Soon the leagues gained a large Catholic membership as the Church dissolved the *Movimiento Rural de la Acción Católica* (*MRAC* – Catholic Action's Rural Movement) and the leagues absorbed many of its members (Romero, 2002: 266, 267). In 1972 political activists became involved in the leagues but, by 1974, economic difficulties had made internal differences unsustainable, leading to a demobilisation which was then slowed right down by the repression that followed the 1976 coup (Archetti, 1989: 454, 460).

The 1963 II Vatican Council's focus on temporal matters facilitated both the spread of an already growing concern with the poor among Latin American Catholic organisations and the mixing of Catholic and revolutionary views (Levine, 1992: 33). The Council's principles were echoed in the Medellín (1968) and Puebla (1979) Bishops Congresses,[61] the emergence of Liberation Theology[62] and the formation of the Movement of Third World Priests (see Martin, 1992). At a more local level, in Argentina, they paved the way for the *Curas Villeros* (Shantytown Priests) movement (Vernazza, 1989), the spread of *Comunidades Eclesiales de Base* (*CEBs* – Ecclesiastical Base Communities) and the increasing political involvement of *AC* branches. In this post-Counciliar context, both community participation in organisations and professional advice from those involved in social work were sought,

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[61] The Medellin documents proposed many liturgical, structural and pastoral innovations, and at Puebla the bishops declared their "preferencial option for the poor" in the midst of the division between conservative and progressive sectors within the Church that had emerged after Medellin (Levine, 1992: 36).
[62] Gutiérrez (1974) is considered the foundational document of the movement. Analysis of the movement can be found in Dodson (1979); and Levine (1992: 31-53).

in order to understand and solve the problems faced by the poor (Levine, 1992: 35). Catholic organisations' commitment to political and revolutionary action manifested in the participation of the *Juventud Obrera Católica* (*JOC* – Catholic Workers' Youth) and the *Juventud Universitaria Católica* (*JUC* – Catholic University Students' Youth) in the 1969 *Cordobazo* and in several other insurrections of the period (Giménez Beliveau, 2004: 5).

3.4. The return of liberalism

a. Erosion and persistence of populism

By the late 1980s, populism was still hegemonic but had started to lose ground as the liberal project was re-emerging. The military dictatorship of 1976-1982 undertook a partial liberalisation of the economy. The *UCR* government focused on consolidating liberal democracy and, while avoiding endorsing economic liberalism, it took a few steps in that direction. However, although the re-emergence of liberalism eroded the populist hegemony it did not bring an end to it.

In March 1976, the armed forces seized power and tried to advance economic liberalism. Alongside the kidnapping, torture and killing of thousands of people,[63] including union workers and left-wing militants, the dictatorship, except for General Viola's brief government (March-December 1981), attempted to liberalise the economy, and neoliberalism made its first inroads in the country. The regime made liberalism appealing to the military, who until then preferred developmentalism to liberalism, by associating developmentalism with Peronism through highlighting that the focus on industrialisation made them both dependent on the power of the unions (Cavarozzi, 1992b: 61-63). Liberal economic measures, such as opening up the economy and state retraction from the economic sphere, would force unions and businesses to accept international prices rather than collective agreements, thus eroding the unions' importance (Canitrot, 1980: 7).

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[63] The official number of "disappeared" people was 8,961 (CONADEP, 1984) but human rights organisations maintain it was more than 30,000.

However, the ISI model, which had become a central contingent element of the populist project, was not abandoned. The dictatorship envisaged a strong state – as opposed to a weak one dominated by corporations (Cavarozzi, 1992b: 63, 64) – that was central in achieving the regime's goals by, for instance, regulating labour and facilitating credit for capitalists. Moreover, state economic activity expanded (Marshall, 1988: 48) and economic protectionism continued (Palermo and Novaro, 1996: 54-56; Canitrot, 1980: 43 in Cavarozzi, 1992b: 67). The failure of its economic policies, internal disputes and domestic and international pressure regarding human rights abuses contributed to the eventual end of the dictatorship. The defeat in the Malvinas/Falklands War led to negotiations with political elites for a return to democratic rule (Tedesco, 1999: 47, 50).

Alfonsín, the *UCR* candidate, was elected President in 1983. His government focused on consolidating liberal democracy, which was reflected in its investigation of human rights abuses and the reduction of both military and union power. Indeed, democracy was conceived of as the panacea to all the country's problems, as a famous phrase of Alfonsín's put it: *"Con la democracia se come, se cura y se educa"* – "With democracy it is possible to eat, to heal and to educate".[64] Additionally, the first victory for a non-Peronist in a full democratic election since 1945, when Peronism gained its first electoral success, and an ongoing process of democratisation of the Peronist party indicated an increase in pluralism (Novaro, 1994: 60-3).

Yet, the advances of liberalism were counterbalanced by an attempt to construct a new hegemonic project – the *Tercer Movimiento Histórico* (Third Historical Movement) – inspired by the *UCR*'s success in the 1983 and 1985 elections (Morales Solá, 2006: 8; Novaro, 1994: 58). Additionally, the government gave in to corporatist pressures, which managed to colonise public policy areas, and addressed social demands predominantly in accordance with the preferences of party bosses or *"caudillos"* (Acuña, 1994: 35; Novaro, 1994: 63, 74).

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[64] UCR Presidential Rally, Oct-Nov 1983

Successive economic crises led to increasing pressures on the Alfonsín government to implement economic liberalism. The government attempted to control fiscal expenditure and introduced privatisation plans, but the association of economic liberalism with the tragic experience of the dictatorship (Palermo and Novaro, 1996: 58, 59) contributed to Alfonsín's reluctance to adopt it. The government started implementing neo-Keynesian economics to stimulate demand through increases in real wages (Canitrot, 1991: 131). However, in return for continued financing, international creditors demanded liberal reforms and assumed that if Argentina signed an agreement with the IMF that would be the best indication of the country's commitment to such reforms (Tedesco, 1999: 91; Acuña, 1994: 33). In order to please creditors and obtain IMF support, the *Plan Austral* of 1985 committed to paying off the debt and focused on tackling fiscal deficit, and in 1988 the *Plan Primavera* (Spring Plan) included privatisation objectives. However, these Plans were not liberal – the *Plan Austral* involved state control of prices and wages (Tedesco, 1999: 103-108) and the *Primavera* focused on price freezes and accompanied a de facto cessation of interest payments on debt. The former failed mainly because of the government's difficult relationship with unions, whose role was crucial in managing price and wage controls (Tedesco, 1999: 105-106, 109; Acuña, 1994: 33), and the latter failed to meet fiscal goals. In June 1989, following a sharp rise in the value of the dollar, hyperinflation hit the country and Menem, who had won the presidential elections in May, took power earlier than scheduled (Acuña, 1994: 32-37).

b. State withdrawal and food aid

Liberalism also started to appear in the approaches taken by these governments in addressing poverty. The dictatorship focused on withdrawing state action from social areas and thus implemented measures in which the most distinctive features of what later became the neoliberal approach to social reform – privatisation, decentralisation and targeting – emerged. Alfonsín's government continued with a budget for the social sectors similar to that of the dictatorship, but its main action on tackling poverty was chiefly in line with the populist project.

During the dictatorship, decentralisation and privatisation of social services resulted in concentrating the provision of state social services in the poorest sectors, thus producing a form of targeting. The national state transferred the management of hospitals and primary schools to provincial governments and the role of *obras sociales*[65] and private healthcare providers increased (Isuani and Tenti, 1989: 20). Private organisations, including social organisations, had to supplement state delivery of social services. Yet, the dictatorship's repression led to the closing down of institutional channels for social demands, including social organisations (Jelin, 1997: 79). Furthermore, community promotion had ceased to be a government objective (Cardarelli and Rosenfeld, 1998: 54), and that hindered the emergence of social organisations as important actors in the delivery of social services.

Alfonsín's government did not increase social expenditure, but it was concerned with poverty, which it addressed with food aid and an approach that continued along the lines established during the populist hegemony. Public expenditure in education remained constant between 1981 and 1990, and was no different to the amount spent in the years of the dictatorship, and public expenditure decreased in healthcare, where private sector participation increased (Lloyd Sherlock, 1997: 28, 29). However, the government undertook the first official study on poverty (INDEC, 1984) and developed a significant programme aimed at alleviating poverty, the *Programa Alimentario Nacional* (*PAN* – National Food Programme). The *PAN*, approved in 1984, consisted of the distribution of food boxes that covered 30% of a family's monthly nutritional needs (Golbert, 1992: 44), based on a view of poverty as being a lack of access to nutrition, ie the inability to access the basic basket of food that covered the nutritional needs of an individual or household.

The *PAN* promoted the formation and strengthening of community farms, neighbourhood associations and mothers' associations, involved local community workers in selecting beneficiaries and delivering the boxes, and organised training and workshops for the wider community. However, state and party institutions, rather than social organisations, were the programme's main actors. The state purchased the food and employed all the community workers involved in the programme. Local political

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[65] Social welfare and healthcare providers based in trade unions.

leaders contributed to the programme in different ways, such as providing storage for the boxes. Additionally, most of the organisations involved were UCR committees or organisations linked to the party (Moreno, 2002: 319, 320). Thus, programme distribution was not detached from party politics. Indeed, *PAN* distribution was not based on the *INDEC* 1984 study data on poverty, and recipients could access the food boxes just by signing under oath that they were poor (Midre, 1992: 362).

Therefore, the *PAN*, which became a trademark of Alfonsín's administration (Midre, 1992: 360), included central elements of the populist project. The centrality of the state and of community promotion reflected key contingent elements of the populist project that had been incorporated during Perón's government and the 1960s respectively. The blurred separation between the private and public spheres, and the preference for addressing the people through weakly institutionalised channels, corresponded to the normative and logical components of this project.

c. Renewal of the populist discourse on civil society

With the advances of liberal features over the populist hegemony, the populist discourse on civil society among organisations dealing with poverty incorporated several features linked to the liberal project. However, the discourse remained predominantly populist. The support for liberal democracy and the deepening of processes begun in the 1960s – the significant increase in voluntary organisations and the technification of organisations' approaches to poverty – resulted in the incorporation of features tied to liberal normative views – the importance of individuals and a preference for institutionalised methods in addressing social demands. Yet, a view of inextricability between the private and public realms, the preference for community over individuals, and the prevalence of the political over institutional logic continued to distinguish the country's discourse on civil society and revealed the persistence of its populist character. The following provides a summary of the key modifications the discourse on civil society went through in these years.

The first two modifications related to the relationship between the private and public spheres. First, although organisations' anti-status quo stance increased during the dictatorship years, channelling it through opposition to the military regime made it supportive of democratic institutions (eg: Jelin, 1994; Jelin and Herschberg, 1996; Pearce, 1997; Roberts, 1998; Oxhorn, 1994). Struggles for the defence of individual human rights were coupled with demands for a return to a representative democratic government, reducing attachment to the notion of mass democracy envisaged by Perón. Second, during the dictatorship, organisations consolidated their role of temporarily supplementing the state in dealing with poverty, in the expectation that the state would eventually take over. When democracy returned, the UCR government supported this supplementary role, because of fiscal constraints and a decision to promote community participation. Additionally, the organisations' anti-status quo stance weakened and this made it easier for social organisations to accept state funds and guidance.

The next three changes related to the populist project's preference for community over individuals. One change was that while liberal democracy was increasingly endorsed as a system of government that preserved individual freedom, organisations continued to prefer participatory internal governing mechanisms and non-hierarchical structures that allowed direct contact between members and leaders. At the same time, strong leadership prevailed and distance between bases and leaders was common. The second change was the increase in the number of organisations during both the dictatorship and the democratic government (Luna, 1997: 3; Moreno, 2002: 317), including the emergence of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and new social movements, which co-existed alongside "old" organisations such as unions (Roxborough, 1997). This change suggested that organisations were increasingly being set up according to individuals' free will and interests. Nevertheless, corporatism remained strong, as was apparent in the continued leverage of workers' corporations rather than individuals in defining state action. This was accompanied by poverty-focused organisations' growing dependence on state funds. Finally, organisations became increasingly technical, partly as a result of the growth, in both number and recognition, of specialists who could negotiate with the state in the organisations' name, which in turn reinforced the distance between leaders and bases,

and partly because the advice that accompanied the international funds that abounded in the country in the 1980s was that organisations should technify (Forni, 1992: 520-2; Chambers 1987).

In relation to the logical component of populism, although the technification of organisations seemed to bring about political neutrality, organisations retained their political identities and, following a historical trend, member participation usually went beyond the organisations themselves and included some form of involvement in the political sphere. Thus, the growth in the number of social organisations did not necessarily reflect an increased role for individual will in forming organisations – corporatism remained strong and political allegiances and Catholicism continued to be crucial in defining organisations' preferences. Similarly, although organisations became more technical they did not stop addressing poverty in a discretionary way, with little attachment to institutionalised methods and resorting to the state and to party politics.

The new characteristics of the discourse appeared in both old and new poverty-focused organisations. The unions, a pillar of Peronism, began to support the liberal ideas of democracy and individual human rights. During the dictatorship's first years, union members "disappeared", unions were taken over by the state, and strikes were banned (Godio, 2000: 1104). However, unions continued to dominate the provision of healthcare services and, on this basis, retained political power and remained a key actor in dealing with poverty-related issues. They divided into a pro-dialogue sector, which formed the *CGT Azopardo* in 1982, and a confrontational sector, which in 1980 created the *CGT Brasil*.[66] The latter obtained crucial support from the *Pastoral Social* (Social Pastoral) of the Catholic Church, which, concerned with human rights abuses, joined forces with it. During a mass following a general strike in July 1981, 10,000 people chanted songs demanding a return to democracy (Godio, 2000: 1121; Moreno, 2002: 287-8).

Four days before the Falklands/Malvinas War started, the *CGT Brasil* organised a general strike in which human rights organisations and the *multipartidaria* (multi-

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[66] Azopardo and Brasil are the streets where the headquarters of the two CGTs were based.

party coalition)[67] participated. Later, the unions resisted Alfonsín's attempts to democratise the union movement, arguing that it was a state-control strategy (Godio, 2000: 1158), and they organised 13 general strikes during his governments. In 1987, when the forthcoming Peronist party internal elections engaged the unions in internal party struggles, their confrontation with the government started to decrease (Tedesco, 1999: 133). Therefore, their support for the liberal democracy that grew under the dictatorship was overshadowed by their determination to use non-representative mechanisms to impose their views on a democratically elected government. Yet, as the unions were such central actors in the populist hegemony, their assimilation of liberal democratic views was especially significant.

New and existing organisations started to include a focus on poverty. Above all, the Church organisation Caritas and organisations that grew out of neighbourhood and rural organisations were becoming specialised in poverty. Some human rights organisations focused on searching for people's relatives disappeared since 1976, providing legal aid and denouncing human rights violations (Brysk, 1994), and they included actions to fight poverty, which was considered a violation of basic human rights (eg *SERPAJ – Servicio, Paz y Justicia* [Service, Peace and Justice]). During the democratic government, new social movements flourished. Mainly the expression of minority groups, they dealt with poverty through awareness-raising campaigns on issues such as the environment and HIV/AIDS (Moreno, 2002: 327, 328). In particular, Caritas and newly emerging NGOs became the main organisations dealing with poverty in these years. In spite of increasing religious diversification in the 1980s (Mallimaci, 1996), Caritas – created in 1956 to counter the increasing diversification of the *AC* and for years focused on collecting money to distribute among the needy – grew significantly in that decade (Mallimaci, 1996 and 2000: 119). During Alfonsín's government, Caritas became key in delivering state social programmes because of the extension of the network of parishes that hosted *Caritas Parroquiales* (Parish Caritas) (Díaz Muñoz, 2002). In collaboration with programmes such as the *PAN* and other nutritional programmes, *Caritas Parroquiales* identified recipients of aid and distributed goods and services (Moreno, 2002: 319, 320). In turn, NAs and rural organisations underwent important transformations. During the dictatorship, NAs'

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[67] The *multipartidaria* was a coalition of parties that was formed during Viola´s de facto presidency.

main activities revolved around responding to repressive measures such as forced slum clearance (Romero, 2002: 269) and to state cutbacks in services and infrastructure for shantytowns. The organisations focused on services rather than on infrastructure (Cavarozzi and Palermo, 1995: 37) running, for instance, health centres and "*madres cuidadoras*" (childminder) schemes (Moreno, 2002: 300, 301). In urban areas, some old NAs and some new organisations became NGOs specialised in poverty-related issues, known as development NGOs (DNGOs) and usually referred to as "habitat organisations". In rural areas, DNGOs built on the experiences of earlier rural organisations linked to the *MRAC* and the Rural Leagues.

The characteristics of these emerging NGOs reflected those of the populist discourse on civil society of the time. The growth of social organisations, especially during the dictatorship's reluctance to support community organisation, seemed to signal an increase in individuals' will to organise independently from state support. Yet, many organisations became brokers of state resources once democracy returned and community promotion strategies were resumed. In programmes such as *PAN*, many NGOs and community organisations became mere vehicles of state action rather than channels for their social bases' demands. As one study showed, neighbourhood associations, for example, "began to reflect whatever the state chose to offer" (Cavarozzi and Palermo, 1995: 37). The organisations' closeness to the state was crystallised in the late 1980s with the creation of the *Mesa de Concertación de Políticas Sociales* (Social Policies Dialogue Board), formed by several social organisations linked to government programmes (González Velazco, 2002: 365).

These NGOs continued to prefer non-hierarchical forms of organisation and participatory governing mechanisms and, as professional organisations, they emerged as intermediaries between donors and their membership and the wider community. However, studies have shown that the increasingly technical profile of NGOs and their distance from the recipients of their services resulted in the prevalence of single-list systems, a lack of elections, and sometimes the appointment of outsiders to leadership positions, based on their wealth or contacts (Sirvent, 1999). A lack of information given to the membership about decision-making and members' disinterest in politics reflected the distance between leaders and the bases (Sirvent, 1999: 225).

Moreover, in the case of rural organisations, their central offices were usually in Buenos Aires (Moreno, 2002: 330, 331).

The transformation of organisations into technical NGOs appeared to accompany their de-politicisation, which was reinforced by the fear of political participation, still lingering after the dictatorship (Sirvent, 1999: 223-228). However, there was an increasing use of organisations as platforms for the leaders' political activities. The roles of the political *puntero* (ward boss) and the community leader overlapped, as did those of NGO staff and state civil servants. Nor did technification mean an end to the discretionary nature of addressing of poverty. DNGOs usually gave advice and training to grass-roots organisations of their choice and excluded those of different party colours (Cavarozzi and Palermo, 1995: 40, 42-3).

3.5. Conclusion

This chapter has shown the historical moulding and developments of the Argentinean discourse on civil society concerning social organisations involved in poverty reduction actions. The populist discourse emerged from the Peronist populist project's articulation of diffuse views and practices among social organisations dealing with poverty. When Perón was in exile, the populist character of the discourse was consolidated. By the 1980s the discourse was still predominantly populist, despite having incorporated some features linked to the liberal political project: the boundaries between the social sphere and the political sphere, which included the state and political forces, remained blurred; internally, organisations preferred non-hierarchical structures and participatory governing mechanisms to representative mechanisms of government, but with strong leaders, usually detached from the bases, continuing to guide them; both Catholicism and political identities continued to be central in defining actions taken by social organisations; and discretionary modes of dealing with poverty persisted.

However, the advance of liberalism – the increasing support for liberal democracy, the growth of voluntary organisations, and the increasing technification and

institutionalisation of actions for tackling poverty – emerged as an avenue through which the neoliberalism that arrived in the 1990s could colonise this populist discourse. The next chapter analyses the neoliberal discourse on civil society and explores whether that discourse was prepared to colonise populism, or whether it presented opportunities for populism to regain a hegemonic position.

Chapter 4

The MDBs' neoliberal political project and discourse on civil society

This chapter describes the WB and IDB discourse on civil society in the poverty reduction field. It shows that throughout the 1990s both MDBs' discourse was neoliberal, despite modifications in the late 1990s and differences in their strategies. It was neoliberal because it was part of an approach to poverty consistent with the core of the neoliberal political project – market liberalisation – and because it operationalised the normative and logical components of this project.

The distinctive features of the discourse operationalised the components of the neoliberal political project. First, civil society was seen to be mainly comprised of social organisations, and these were expected to permanently supplement the state's poverty reduction policies. Second, civil society was located in the private sphere, alongside the market and separated from the political sphere – including the state. Third, social organisations were viewed as emerging from individuals' will and interests and, fourth while this would lead to a preference for internal democratic mechanisms because they could preserve individual freedom, the willingness to undertake voluntary work emerged as a more important organisational characteristic. Fifth, participation in organisations was expected to be restricted to specific poverty reduction projects without involving influencing policy-making. Sixth, technical organisations were the central civil society actors and, seventh, organisations' poverty reduction actions were expected to use standardised technical methods. Finally, efficiency objectives were the overarching justification for all these features. The first five features reflected the normative component of neoliberalism and aimed to redraw the dividing line between the private and public spheres and prioritise the individual over the community. Stressing efficiency and the technical profile of social organisations, rather than the political objectives behind the inclusion of civil society in poverty reduction actions, revealed a preference for the logic of difference in

responding to social demands. Efficiency justifications, however, appeared to be masking the political character of the discourse.

The MDBs' discourse on civil society evolved alongside the formation of the Washington consensus (mid-1980s to mid-1990s) and its modifications in the post-Washington consensus years (mid-1990s to 2001). The first section of this chapter describes the MDBs' approaches to development before the 1990s, during the Washington consensus years and in the post-Washington consensus years. The second and third sections explain, respectively, the MDBs' approach to poverty and their discourse on civil society in the 1990s. The third section shows that, as with the modifications in the MDBs' agenda and approach to poverty, the changes in the discourse on civil society in the second half of the 1990s reflected the articulation of a more elaborate neoliberal project in which the political character of neoliberalism became more visible.

The conclusion suggests that, seemingly paradoxically, the neoliberal struggles for hegemony generated opportunities to challenge the neoliberal project. The Argentinean populist discourse on civil society and the MDBs' neoliberal one are strikingly different. Yet, the MDBs' focus on efficiency was a fundamental avenue that opened up the possibility for non-neoliberal projects, such as the populist one, to colonise neoliberalism. Changes to the MDBs' discourse on civil society after the mid-1990s and historical and institutional differences between the WB and the IDB constituted further opportunities for the advancement of the Argentinean populist discourse.

4.1. The MDBs' adoption of neoliberalism and its deepening

The WB and the IDB at first differed significantly in their approaches to poverty and their relationships with borrowing countries. By the late 1980s, however, they had converged in the adoption of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism continued to guide the MDBs' perspectives throughout the 1990s, despite undergoing important changes after the mid-1990s.

a. Differences in the early WB and IDB

The differences in the WB and IDB conditions of emergence significantly affected the relationships they established with their borrowing countries – the IDB was more sympathetic to country-members' views and the WB was more independent from these countries in making strategic decisions. The WB was founded in 1944[68] in Bretton Woods,[69] USA following an initiative by the triumphant forces to help in the post-Second World War reconstruction. The IDB[70] was created in 1959 in the midst of the Cold War and the post-Cuban revolution. The Brazilian President Juscelino Kubitschek drove the initiative forward,[71] following up on a turn-of-the-century plan to create a regional agency (Tussie, 1997: 20-1). Thus, while creditors founded the WB, the IDB was an initiative of the borrowing countries themselves (Culpeper, 1997: 12). These different origins led to the construction of a "special relationship" between the IDB and the region's countries (Nelson, 2000: 76).

The ideas that informed the setting-up of both Banks and their most central institutions reflected and reinforced their different relationships with the countries of the region. The WB originally drew on John Maynard Keynes' ideas but the less interventionist US plans of Harry Dexter White prevailed in the final arrangements (Bird, 2001: 824). The IDB, in contrast, was informed by the highly interventionist version of Keynesianism that was at its heyday in the region when the IDB was created – structuralism (chapter 3). A key institutional mechanism that is related to these different relationships between the Banks and the regional countries is their voting systems. While both systems are based on shareholding rights, the 26 Latin American and Caribbean members collectively control 50.02% of the IDB's shares,[72]

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[68] The World Bank Group consists of five institutions: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), founded in 1944 and usually referred to as "the World Bank"; the International Finance Corporation (IFC, est. 1956); the International Development Association (IDA, est. 1960); the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID, est. 1966); and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA, operational since 1988) (Shihata, 1991: 8).

[69] The WB was created alongside the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Trade Organization. Only one element of the latter survived, the General Trade Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which after its 8th Round in Uruguay, became the World Trade Organisation (WTO) (Hoekman and Kostecki, 1995: part 1).

[70] The IDB Group consists of the Inter-American Investment Corporation (IIC), operational since 1989, and the Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF), created in 1992.

[71] See http://www.iadb.org/aboutus/I/history.cfm?language=English

[72] The USA is the single largest shareholder in the IDB, with approximately 30% of the voting power, followed by Japan with 5%. Other lending members combined have 15% (BICUSA, http://www.bicusa.org/en/Institution.Structure.4.aspx, downloaded 17-10-2006).

whereas in the WB these countries' voting power diminishes, as countries from all over the world also have a share.[73] Furthermore, the IDB's "Charter" or "Agreement Establishing the IDB"[74] states that periodic Replenishment Meetings, at least once a decade, are the forum where member countries redefine the amount of capital they contribute to the Bank and agree on its investment priorities. In contrast, the WB's governing rules, stated in its "Articles of Agreement",[75] are difficult to modify and strictly forbid the Bank to get involved in borrower countries' political affairs (Shihata, 1991: 53, 60-79, 82-84), which limits the possibility of country governments' preferences being included in WB strategies.

Both MDBs pursued development and agreed that this was equal to economic growth. However, up until the 1980s they used different strategies to achieve development, and therefore their approaches to poverty differed. While in the WB a "trickle down" approach prevailed, the IDB implemented "direct actions" in the social areas from the start.

In the first years of the WB, lending for the modernisation of physical infrastructure was key to generating economic growth. Growth would have "trickle down" effects benefiting the entire population of the borrowing countries (Gilbert and Vines, 2000: 18) and would lead to poverty reduction. In the 1960s doubts about the "trickle down" approach emerged among economists who argued that growth not only required but also produced inequality and therefore undermined any poverty reduction that growth could generate (Kuznet, 1955 in Kanbur and Vines, 2000: 89). The WB did not engage with these criticisms until the 1970s[76] when, under the presidency of McNamara, poverty alleviation became an explicit goal. After 1973, a portfolio of projects specifically targeted at the poor was developed (Kanbur and Vines, 2000: 96, 97; Kapur, et al. 1997: 263, 329). Yet, the preference of some sectors of the Bank's operational staff for less interventionist approaches (Mosley, et al., 1995 in Gilbert and Vine, 2000: 22), the rise of neo-conservative governments in developed countries with influential positions on the WB board, and the reluctance of privileged groups in

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[73] The USA, despite having fewer shares in the WB than in the IDB (30% versus 17%), is the WB's largest shareholder (Tussie, 1997), followed far behind by Japan with 6% of votes cast (Wade, 2001: 1).
[74] http://idbdocs.iadb.org/wsdocs/getdocument.aspx?docnum=781584
[75] http://tinyurl.com/29dslr
[76] The International Development Agency (IDA), created in the 1960s to provide loans at non-commercial rates to less developed countries, was a step towards the emergence of a specific focus on poverty. Yet, it focused on poor countries and not on the poorest sectors of borrowing countries (Culpeper, 1997: 8-9; Mosley, 1997: 1953).

borrowing countries to adopt pro-poor policies (Bresser Pereyra and Nakano, 1998: 34), thwarted this attempt to change the WB approach to poverty. Moreover, the oil crisis of the early 1970s precipitated the liberalisation of the international economy and international private credit for middle-income countries became increasingly available, making IFI loans unnecessary and limiting these institutions' influence in borrowing countries.

The IDB strategies for achieving development were based on the structuralist[77] emphasis on the need for a structural re-organisation of internal economies and the promotion of industrial production for internal markets in the framework of regional integration. Although the IDB, like the WB, held that development stemmed from investing in infrastructure and the productive sectors, it considered the equalisation of labour productivity, led by technology innovation, to be the key to poverty reduction (Rodríguez, 1980). The IDB's more interventionist approach, and its responsiveness to regional governments' concerns about social stability in the aftermath of the Cuban Revolution, contributed to the prompt implementation of direct actions to address social problems. Therefore, the IDB's initial loan portfolios concentrated on infrastructure development and the productive sectors, as did those of the WB, but also included social projects such as water sanitation, urban development and housing (Culpeper, 1997: 88, Tussie, 1997: 21). In the 1960s, the IDB's role in the region was minor because of accelerated regional growth, which by the late 1960s had reached an annual rate of 7%, and in the 1970s this marginal role continued due to the availability of private credit (Scheman, 1997: 86, 88). In the social sectors, however, the IDB introduced a new type of social project in the mid-1970s that was aimed at involving the poor in productive activities – micro-enterprise (Lustig and Deutsch, 1998: 19; Culpeper, 1997: 98). In 1978, moreover, the 5th replenishment conclusions established the "low-income goal", according to which at least 50% of overall lending should be directed at low-income people (Culpeper, 1997: 89). Yet, adopting the low-income goal did not entail shifting the focus away from the infrastructure and productive sectors.

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[77] On structuralism, see notes 13 in chapters 2 and 3.

b. The Washington consensus years (mid-1980s – mid-1990s): MDBs' convergence –
market liberalisation and "conditionality"

The MDBs' adoption of market liberalisation as the key to development marked the convergence of these Banks' approaches to development and their focus on macroeconomic reform. The ascendancy of neo-conservative governments in the developed world and, particularly for the IDB, the failure of Latin American countries to tame inflation, contributed to the MDBs' adoption of market reform as a strategy for development. By the late 1980s, both Banks were supporting market liberalisation reforms of the "Washington consensus" type (chapter 2). The MDBs shifted from understanding development as the result of investment in infrastructure and the productive sectors to emphasising the importance of free and open markets in achieving growth. Differences remained among Latin American economists about the appropriateness of focusing on market reform – evident in the 7th IDB replenishment meetings in 1987 (Culpeper, 1997: 92) – and IDB loans continued to focus on the productive and infrastructure sectors. Yet, the IDB agreement with the WB on the importance of macroeconomic reforms such as achieving fiscal balance appeared in the growing number of loans the IDB approved to help countries' market-oriented reforms (Meller, 1989: 70). This convergence was fostered by the increasing collaboration between the two Banks after 1987, facilitated until 1992 by the USA's requirement that IDB staff work under the supervision and training of the WB (Tussie, 1997: 66, 135-6).

An increasing use of "conditionality" accompanied the emphasis on the importance of free and open markets for economic growth. At the same time as the post-debt crisis scenario aided the MDBs' consolidation as policy diffusers, because they were among the few sources of funds available for the region, the Banks actively encouraged market liberalisation through new lending mechanisms with attached "conditions" that required policy changes aimed at market liberalisation. The WB added "adjustment lending" schemes to its original project-based lending, or "investment lending" (IL).[78] These were Structural Adjustment Loans (SALs) in 1980 and Sectoral Adjustment

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[78] The main IL instruments are Specific Investment Loans (SILs), focused on economic, social and institutional infrastructure, and Sector Investment & Maintenance Loans (SIMs), aimed at aligning policy sectors' expenditure, policies and performance with countries' development priorities.

Loans (SecALs) in 1984.[79] The IDB promoted structural reform through Policy-Based Loans (PBL).

The adoption of market liberalisation is indicative of the MDBs' adoption of neoliberalism because market liberalisation entails an operationalisation of the neoliberal political project. First, by stressing the importance of market mechanisms and re-sizing the state, market liberalisation attempts to redraw the dividing line between the private and public spheres – the normative component of the neoliberal project. Second, market liberalisation involves a preference for responses to social demands based on the economic rationality that derives from the functioning of free markets, which reveals the use of the distinctive logic of discursive construction of neoliberalism – difference. Finally, market liberalisation was crucial for neoliberalism's hegemonic struggles. The emphasis on the rationality of markets helped to make neoliberal views appear neutral, and thus contributed to neoliberalism's hegemonic expansion across a wide political spectrum.

c. The Post-Washington Consensus years (mid-1990s – 2001): institutional reform and "post-conditionality"

By the mid-1990s, institutional reform had stepped into the limelight on the MDBs' neoliberal agenda, marking the transition from the Washington consensus to the post-Washington consensus (Burki and Perry, 1998; Stiglitz, 1998a, b). The latter's advocates stressed that not only markets but institutions mattered in achieving development. However, market liberalisation continued to be the core of the neoliberal project. Furthermore, instead of a significant change in the MDBs' agenda, the new consensus reflected the enhancement of the neoliberal project's strategy of hegemonic articulation.

The MDBs' views on institutional reform were similar. Interest in institutional reform appeared for the first time in the creation of loans for public sector reform at the

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[79] SALs support reforms to promote growth, efficient use of resources and sustainable balance of payments, focusing on major and crosscutting economic issues. SecALs support policy and institutional change in specific sectors (World Bank, 2000e).

beginning of the 1990s[80] and in the mid-1990s the MDBs' views on the subject appeared in strategic documents.[81] The IDB recommends greater transparency and accountability of governments, modernisation of physical infrastructure and systems of policy formulation and implementation, professionalisation of human resources, and the improvement of decentralisation processes (IDB, 1996a: iii-iv). The WB developed its strategy in terms of "good governance". The main features of the strategy are accountability, transparency and access to information, a consolidated rule of law, and adequate public management, with decentralisation as a crosscutting issue and civil service reform as at its core (World Bank, 1992; esp. 23-27; 48, 49; World Bank, 1994a: xvi, 1-3; World Bank, 1997: 7-13).

The incorporation of institutional reform expanded the neoliberal agenda's scope from the macroeconomic sphere to the politico-institutional realm. Nevertheless, while institutional reform strategies recognise that there is more to successful development than reliance on market forces (Philip, 1999: 242), they suggest that the reforms should be oriented towards market liberalisation. The WB sees "good governance … [as] an essential complement to sound economic policies." (World Bank, 1992)[82] and, similarly, the IDB states that institutional reform "... involves achieving new forms of organisation and political and social management that work with the new development strategy" (IDB, 1996a: i). Indeed, as one of the pioneers of the post-Washington consensus ideas explained, institutional reform is the distinctive feature of the post-Washington consensus but it does not replace the Washington consensus central tenets – macroeconomic stability and liberalisation. Rather, it builds on these tenets and stresses factors that the Washington consensus neglected – financial sector reform, governments' role as a complement to the private sector, and improving state efficiency (Stiglitz, 1998b: 1, 7). Thus, institutional reform continued to operationalise the neoliberal project. The focus on checks and balances mechanisms favours individual pluralist representation over the formation of popular identities.

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[80] The first WB loans for "Public Sector Management" were made in 1989; the first IDB loans for "Public Sector Reform and Modernization of the State" were made in 1990 (Annex I, figures 1 and 2).
[81] The WB strategy for institutional reform includes its 1992 good governance strategy, and this strategy's evaluation in 1994 and update in 2000. The update included and detailed further the views presented in the World Development Report 1997 on the role of the state in development (World Bank, 1992; World Bank, 1994a; World Bank, 1997; World Bank 2000a). The IDB key strategic document for institutional reform was the "Frame of Reference for the Bank Action in Programs for Modernization of the State and Strengthening of Civil Society" (IDB, 1996a).
[82] See also http://www.worldbank.com/html/extdr/backgrd/ibrd/role.htm

Similarly, calls for the consolidation of the rule of law emphasise the institutional logic of discursive formation.

The expansion to the politico-institutional realm involved realigning interests and unveiling power struggles that had crystallised in institutions (Leftwich, 1993; Casaburi and Tussie, 2000a). These political implications meant that the MDBs increasingly used dialogue to complement "conditionality" in making governments adopt institutional reform[83] (Nelson, 1992; Kahler, 1992: 126). The IDB framed this dialogue in its "special relationship" with the borrowing countries and the WB developed an "ownership" strategy to improve its connection with borrowing countries. The IDB institutional reform strategy took into account the specificities of each country (IDB, 1996a: iii-v) and, drawing on the regional governments' decisions contained in the 8th replenishment report, explicitly addressed the political aspects of such reform. For instance, in response to the governments' preferences the strategy focused on reinforcing democracy in the region. The WB, forbidden by its Articles of Agreement to interfere with borrowing countries' politics, presented its strategy in managerial and administrative terms that masked the political character of the reforms (Philip, 1999: 234-236; van Cranenburgh, 1998; Bryld, 2000: 701). Moreover, the WB strategy seemed to assume that its recipe was easily universalisable and it therefore neglected the reality of each country (Philip, 1999: 426; Martinussen, 1998). However, in 1996 the WB started to develop an "ownership" strategy, which sought to improve the Bank's relationship with borrowing countries and focused on dialogue, persuasion, training and delegation of control to country offices to achieve government compliance with its recommendations. In 1999 "ownership" became a formal strategy, when the WB announced the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) (Wolfensohn, 1999).

Relying on dialogue rather than conditionality to advance institutional reform seemed to present the possibility for political projects other than neoliberalism to advance their views. By acknowledging the political character of institutional reform, the IDB acknowledged the openness of discourses and therefore the possibility of debate. The

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[83] Conditionality became more widespread but reflected the growing importance of institutional reform. SALs increased in the 1990s – in the 1980s they totalled $27 billion across 191 operations and in the 1990s they reached $72 billion across 346 operations. Yet, conditions on Fiscal and Trade Reform went from 47.6% in 1980-84 to 14.1% in 1999 and conditions on Public Sector Reform and the Social Sectors – fewer than 15% of the conditions between 1980 and 1984 – totalled 51.6% in 1999 (World Bank, 2001).

WB's ownership strategy, similarly, seemed to favour the widening of the WB approaches by incorporating countries' views. However, the promotion of institutional reform involved an operation of hegemonic articulation, which actually sought to expand the neoliberal hegemony. The use of technical language to highlight that rationality and efficiency that guided economic reform was repeated in institutional reforms (Hildyard and Wilks, 1998) and contributed to "suturing" (chapter 1) the discourse on these reforms and to closing the door to alternative political projects. Additionally, the WB's repositioning as a "knowledge Bank"[84] limited the ownership strategy (Pender, 2001: 397; Cammack, 2004: 196, 198), since it implied that the Bank possessed a *"monopoly of 'development knowledge'"* (Cammack, 2004: 190). The WB regarded itself as a "unique reservoir of development experience …, [which] position[s] us" – said the WB president when presenting the idea of the knowledge Bank – "to play a leading role in this new global knowledge partnership" (Wolfensohn, 1996). Hence, ownership "… means commitment to carry out policies identified as sound by the Bank as the sole authoritative provider of development knowledge" (Cammack, 2004: 202).

4.2. The MDBs' neoliberal approach to poverty reduction

Both MDBs' approaches to poverty reduction, into which their discourse on civil society was inserted, were neoliberal throughout the 1990s. They were formed in the Washington consensus years, when their core characteristics – targeting, decentralisation and participation – emerged. The modifications introduced in the second half of the 1990s refined rather than altered this neoliberal approach.

a. Targeting, decentralisation and participation

Following the convergence on the importance of market liberalisation for development, by the early 1990s the WB and the IDB had both adopted a neoliberal approach to poverty. The distinctive features of the neoliberal approach to social

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[84] First formulated in 1996, this notion was first documented in a "strategic compact" approved in 1997 (Laporte, 2004).

issues in the 1990s were targeting, decentralisation and privatisation (Garland, 2000: 6; Díaz Muñoz, 2004: 14; Vilas, 1997: 934; Sheahan, 1998; Lustig, 1995; Cortés and Marshall, 1999: 199). In the area of poverty reduction targeting was central, decentralisation crosscut the approach, and, increasingly through the 1990s, privatisation took the form of participation.

The approach was neoliberal because its main features contributed to market liberalisation and operationalised the normative and logical components of neoliberalism. Targeting, decentralisation and participation attempted to redraw the dividing line between the public and private spheres by saving state resources and expanding the market. The implementation of these three features put into practice the logic of difference by preferring individualised and institutionalised or technical responses to social demands. Yet, in turn, these technical responses activated the political character of neoliberalism because their apparent neutrality helped neoliberalism's hegemonic struggles. Civil society participation in poverty reduction policies played a crucial role in the formation of political identities supportive of neoliberalism, and hence the next section explores this political character in more depth.

In the heyday of the Washington consensus (1988-1994), poverty reduction gained ground in the MDBs' goals and the neoliberal approach took shape. During the early Washington consensus years (1985-1988), the focus on macroeconomic reform led the MDBs to practically neglect poverty issues. Although the World Development Report of 1980 (WDR1980) (World Bank, 1980) established poverty reduction as a WB priority, the WB resumed a "trickle down" approach to poverty. Yet, since market reform rather than investment in infrastructure would trigger the trickle down effect, the approach was elsewhere labelled "trickle-down-plus" (Kanbur and Vines, 2000: 91). IDB loans continued to concentrate on the infrastructure and productive sectors (IDB, various). As with the WB, the IDB's development strategies of the 1980s introduced a focus on human capital factors – health and education – but a growing focus on market reform resulted in the marginalisation of poverty-related concerns (Kanbur and Vines, 2000: 97-100, Culpeper, 1997: 90, 92-3). In 1982, the IDB achieved the low-income goal established in 1978 for the first time, but failed to do so again until the end of the decade. The 7th replenishment (1987) debates focused

on adjustment, and poverty and social issues were not discussed (Culpeper: 1997: 89). By the late 1980s, however, growing evidence of increases in poverty[85] and criticism by Northern NGOs contributed to poverty's return to centre stage in both Banks. The MDBs' project portfolios showed soaring investment in the social sectors and fewer loans for the productive sectors (Annex I, figures 1 and 2). The projects funded through this investment shaped the neoliberal approach to poverty, alongside the MDBs' strategic documents.

In the Washington consensus years, the MDBs' poverty reduction strategies focused on targeting, which was explicitly linked to neoliberalism's focus on free markets and state reduction. The WB's WDR1990 emphasised the need to improve economic management, open up the economy and stimulate labour-intensive growth. Targeting the poorer sectors in the delivery of health and education services and making social safety nets available to them would contribute to achieving those aims (World Bank, 1990: 7). Targeting was functional to the neoliberal objective of keeping fiscal accounts balanced. It promised to achieve social goals with less strain on the budget (Sheahan, 1998: 186) and contributed to enhancing markets by helping those unable to enter the labour market to do so (Toye and Jackson, 1996: 56). The 8th replenishment (1994) renewed the IDB's attention to poverty and the focus was placed – as in the WB – on employment creation and targeted investments in health and education. Accordingly, the "low income goal" was revived and a new category of "targeted" projects, in which at least 50% of beneficiaries are poor, was created (IDB, 1994: 21; Morley, 1997: 19). The low-income target was applied not just in employment projects, which led to focusing on basic education, primary health, poor neighbourhood improvements and micro-enterprise (IDB, 1994: 20, 21). In both Banks, targeting became the defining variable of a poverty reduction intervention. A WB Operational Directive (OD)[86] on poverty reduction, following up on the WDR recommendations, established that projects could qualify as poverty reduction actions if they contained a specific mechanism for targeting the poor (Toye and Jackson,

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[85] In the region, income per capita fell by 11% and those living on less than US$2 a day increased from 26.5% of the population in 1980 to 31% in 1989 (Morley, 1995a, chapter 1).
[86] OD 4.15, December 1991. Operational directives are statements of procedures to follow in accordance with the Bank's objectives. They can be compulsory, or reccomendations of good practices. See: http://tinyurl.com/4ul864. This OD became compulsory when it became an operational policy in July 2004. See: http://tinyurl.com/4cnxoa.

1996: 57).[87] Similarly, the IDB established that a poverty reduction oriented project should be either geographically targeted at poor areas or include a significant majority of poor people as beneficiaries (IDB, 1994: 21).

Decentralisation and participation were less prominent elements of the MDBs' strategies for poverty reduction in this period, but were key practices of the MDBs' most salient interventions in the area – social safety nets (SSNs) and social investment funds (SIFs).[88] SSNs, originally emergency and temporary interventions to deal with the effects of adjustment and stabilisation on the most vulnerable sectors of the borrowing countries' populations (Lustig and Deutsch, 1998: 10), evolved during the 1990s into a form of social protection against the impact of natural or economic shocks on the poor (Morley, 1997: 12; Lustig, 2001: 1). They could be implemented through a variety of social actions, including cash transfers, income-generation programmes and infrastructure work (Husain, 1997: v). SIFs initially operated as short-term SSNs to soften the impact of structural adjustment policies on the poor,[89] providing temporary employment in infrastructure projects to that target population (Warren, 2003; Deutsch, et al., 1998: 1, 3). Thus, like SSNs, SIFs were targeted interventions. What was specific about SIFs was their decentralised character and their emphasis on community and private sector involvement in providing public services, avoiding the governments' bureaucratic channels.[90]

b. Refinement of the neoliberal approach

In the post-Washington consensus years, while the MDBs' approaches to development and poverty changed, the scope of change was limited because market liberalisation continued unchallenged. The changes reflected more an enhancement of the neoliberal strategy of hegemonic articulation than a deviation from the normative and logical components of neoliberalism.

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[87] Complementary to OD 4.15 was the WB policy paper "Assistance Strategies to Reduce Poverty" (1991), which recommended Poverty Assessments for checking governments' commitment with poverty reduction objectives and for evaluating their achievements (Toye and Jackson, 1996).
[88] The first SIF that gained international recognition and support was implemented in Bolivia in 1986 (Graham, 1992). Deutsch et al., 1998: 1, 25 provide more details on SIFs in the region.
[89] See http://tinyurl.com/53amzf
[90] For more details about WB SIFs see Glaessner, et.al. (1994). On IDB SIFs see Goodman (1997).

First of all, there was a reappraisal of the strategies' focus on human capital. In the WB, the focus on institutional reform, the Mexico Tequila crisis and the appointment of a new WB president in 1995 – Wolfensohn – facilitated the incorporation of economic theories and economists critical of the "trickle-down-plus" approach[91] (Pender, 2001: 403, 404). GDP[92] growth started to be valued not as a goal in itself but because it contributed to improving human welfare indicators such as nutrition, education and health (Kanbur and Squire, 1999: 1, 2). The IDB, drawing on evidence that the poor benefit less from growth (Londoño and Székely, 1997), stressed that for growth to have an effect on poverty reduction the state needed to guarantee equality in the distribution of the benefits of growth, an approach known as "growth with equity" (Teitel, 1992).

Nevertheless, the focus on human capital was based on studies that suggested that such factors help the functioning of free markets (Kanbur and Vines, 2000: 103). The pillars of the WDR2000 poverty reduction strategy reflect the continued importance of market freedom as a normative horizon. The first pillar, opportunity, suggests that making markets work for the poor will help them to increase their skills and thus reduce inequalities in asset distribution (World Bank, 2000c: 9). The second, empowerment, means enhancing poor people's capacity to influence state institutions and to hold them accountable for ensuring the rule of law (World Bank, 2000c: 38-9). The poor would thus help to guarantee that the state worked efficiently and predictably, facilitating the functioning of free markets. The third pillar, security, recommends ensuring the availability of social protection for the poorest and those most vulnerable to crises, so that risks can be taken in the market (Cammack, 2004: 205) and so that the conflicts that market reforms might bring about can be cushioned (World Bank, 2000c: 169). The IDB poverty reduction strategy focused on the same central points as the WB strategy: enhancing the poor's access to market opportunities; building human capital by upgrading poor people's skills; changing the distribution of assets, including land reform; and providing social protection and safety nets for the unemployable and for vulnerable populations, ie those particularly at risk at times of economic or natural crises, such as women and young people

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[91] This includes the appointment of Joseph Stiglitz as chief economist in 1997.
[92] Gross Domestic Product

(Lustig and Deutsch, 1998: 16-28, 20, 24, 25; Morley, 1997: 4, 8, 12). These similarities show that, although the IDB holds that the state has an important role in guaranteeing equity, it also envisages it as enabling markets to work for the poor.

Second, the meaning of targeting broadened and targeted interventions became permanent features of social action. Not only low-income sectors but also vulnerable populations become targets of poverty reduction actions. An IDB task manager for poverty reduction programmes in Argentina explained that, in selecting target populations, whether they were "... unemployed or not was not so important, what mattered was that they were weak…" (Traverso, 2003). At the same time, by 1997 SSNs had become income maintenance programmes that protected the poorest in economic or natural crises (Lustig and Deutsch, 1998: ii; World Bank, 1997: v). Also, both MDBs started to envisage targeted interventions not just as temporary emergency interventions, but as SSNs that should be permanently available as insurance and social protection mechanisms (Lustig and Deutsch, 1998: ii; World Bank, 2001: 169; World Bank, 1997: 2; World Bank, 2000c: 170). Thus, targeted programmes stopped being compensatory social policies intended to correct a temporary situation until the state resumed social security provision (Bresser Pereyra and Nakano, 1998: 35) and became consolidated as a permanent strategy for coping with poverty. This consolidation reinforced the neoliberal aim of re-drawing the dividing line between the state and society, by making the reduction of state intervention in social action permanent.

Third, the emphasis on participation and decentralisation increased. This change drew on lessons learned from SIFs – in which participation and decentralisation were central – and from the introduction of institutional reform in the MDBs' agenda. SIFs seemed to become less important during the 1990s. Yet, what happened was that the SIF model of channelling funds – providing funds to community groups or other local actors for small-scale initiatives, avoiding government bureaucracies – became the backbone of most of the MDBs' poverty reduction projects, even if they were not strictly social funds. Observers within the IDB remarked: "…funds have effectively become the primary means by which many governments … undertake actions in poor communities" (Deutsch, et al., 1998: 1). Simultaneously, SIFs changed. Community development aims gradually replaced employment creation objectives. Also, while the

focus on infrastructure development remained, participation objectives were stressed (Warren, 2003; Deutsch, et al., 1998: 3; Lustig, et al., 1999: 5). Participation, echoing the MDBs' growing concern with institutional reform, referred increasingly to both social organisations and local governments. The proliferation of the SIF management model, the focus on participation and the inclusion of local governments reinforced the decentralisation and participation features of the neoliberal approach to poverty. These changes also embodied new efforts to redraw the dividing line between the private and the public. Focusing on participation, moreover, reflected the Banks' aim of enhancing dialogue and achieving ownership of their recommendations, key in the process of constructing political identities to support the neoliberal political project.

Innovation clearly occurred in these years, yet the core pillars of the approach to poverty remained the same. US power placed a tough limit on the possibilities of the post-Washington consensus ideas generating deep changes in the MDBs' approach to poverty. Epitomic of US power were the events that led to the resignation of the original lead author of the WDR2000, Ravi Kanbur, who attempted to move the centre of attention in the WB's poverty strategy from growth to empowerment. The US Treasury insisted on highlighting economic growth and free markets as the route out of poverty. Kanbur refused to change the WDR and eventually resigned. The WDR was modified and, as shown above, opportunity and market freedom occupy central stage (see Wade, 2001; BWP, 2000; Denny, 2000). Alongside US power, the persistence of a 'market-liberalisation' mindset among operational sectors of the WB (Kanbur and Vines, 2000: 100), staff habituation to established practices and the continuation of approved projects also played a role in limiting change. Continuing with the disbursement of loans for projects approved in the early 1990s and the influence of the WB, contributed to the IDB retaining a market freedom-based strategy for poverty reduction.

Most crucially, what limited the scope of change in the neoliberal approach to poverty was that the post-Washington consensus itself, the framework within which innovation in the poverty approach occurred, did not challenge the normative component of neoliberalism, retaining market freedom as the ultimate objective. The post-Washington consensus and its poverty reduction strategy might not have included a straightforward rejection of interventionism or a commitment to the idea

that free markets work perfectly (Cammack, 2004: 209), but it continued to ultimately defend the freedom of the individual over and above the community. It also continued to attempt to re-establish the divide between the private and public spheres in order to facilitate freedom in the former, as that would ensure a thriving economy. Furthermore, the post-Washington consensus approach to poverty embodied a better designed and more ambitious societal transformation project, in which the generation of political identities that could contribute to hegemonising neoliberalism became more important. The discourse on civil society, therefore, became crucial because this discourse defines the arena in which hegemony is constructed.

4.3. The MDBs' neoliberal discourse on civil society

Throughout the 1990s, the MDBs' increasing concern with civil society was apparent in the growing number of projects with some form of civil society involvement, the Banks' internal structure, and the launching of key publications on participation. For instance, according to the WB, while between 1973 and 1990 the percentage of WB-funded projects including civil society participation remained below 20%, since 1994 the percentage has hovered around 50% (World Bank, 2000b: 5). In the late 1980s, the IDB Small Projects Programme and internal sectors of the WB, mainly the Africa Desk, were focusing on community participation issues (Sollis, 1992: 164-5; Stiles, 1998: 202). The WDR1990 and the OD 4.15 (note 19) incorporated participation issues into the WB's poverty reduction strategies (Shihata, 1991: 39). The WB established the Civil Society Unit (initially "NGO Unit") in 1992 (Clark, 2002) and the IDB established the State, Governability and Civil Society Division within the Sustainable Development Department in 1996 (Castagnino, 2003). By 1996, both Banks had published their participatory strategies (World Bank, 1994a; 1996; IDB, 1996b).

Throughout these years, the MDBs' discourse on civil society in poverty reduction was neoliberal because it was part of a neoliberal approach to poverty and because, in itself, it operationalised the neoliberal political project. The main characteristics of the discourse emerged during the Washington consensus years, and during the post-

Washington consensus years key innovations were introduced. However, the innovations did not challenge the features of the neoliberal discourse that had emerged in the early 1990s. Rather, these changes were in accordance with the deepening of the political character of neoliberalism that was taking place alongside the rise of institutional reform in those years. Historical and institutional differences between the WB and the IDB shaped their strategies on civil society. Yet both Banks recommended and implemented similar actions for incorporating civil society into their poverty reduction actions, resulting in their discourse on civil society acquiring similar characteristics in practice.

a. *The Washington Consensus years: key features emerge*

In these years the main characteristics of the MDBs' discourse on civil society emerged.

First, social organisations were seen as the main civil society actors. They were expected to supplement the state in poverty reduction policies and this supplementation was expected to become permanent. Building on the experience of social funds, social organisations' main role in MDB poverty reduction actions was the administration and implementation of MDB-funded state social programmes. At the same time as targeting crystallised as a permanent feature of the neoliberal approach to poverty, reflecting the definition of new boundaries between the state and society where the former intervened less in the latter, the aim of making civil society organisations permanent supplements of the state in poverty reduction policies appeared in the WB's main participatory strategy. The strategy stated that participation "…support[s] and prepare[s] poor people to own and manage assets and activities in a sustainable manner" in order to eventually withdraw non-community originated social interventions (World Bank, 1996: 4). Contrastingly, the IDB stressed that working with civil society in poverty reduction projects helped to improve citizens' relationship with the state (IDB, 1996b: section 1, 5), reflecting the IDB's historical focus on the role of the state in development. Yet, since the mechanisms of civil society participation that the IDB suggested, as shown below, are similar to those

of the WB, in practice social organisations also tended to supplement state withdrawal from the social areas.

Second, civil society was located in the private sphere, alongside the market and separated from the political sphere, which included political organisations and the state. Civil society organisations were seen as emerging independently from the state and were conceived of as located in the private realm as a third sector vis-à-vis the market. This means that the MDBs regarded these organisations as a counterpart to the market at the non-economic level, ie the non-profit sector of the private sphere (Anheier and Seibel, 1990).

Third, social organisations were viewed as emerging from free individuals' will and interests and, fourth, while it could be concluded from this that internal democratic mechanisms were preferred, the will to work voluntarily, ie on an unpaid basis, was more valued as a characteristic of organisations. The MDBs conceived of civil society as voluntary social organisations emerging from free individuals' decision to organise for a particular purpose. While the MDBs' strategies did not state a preference for any particular form of internal organisation, it can be assumed that these organisations were expected to be democratically organised, as this could preserve individual freedom. But what was clearer was that voluntary organisation meant both organisations emerging from free individuals' decisions (voluntary=chosen) and self-funded organisations (voluntary=unpaid or not for profit). This reflected the contextualisation of the notion of individual will in the framework of a political project that prioritised economic over political aspects and thus conceived of civil society as a third sector alongside the market, as the MDBs' definitions of civil society showed:

> *"… people organized into productive units by their own initiative to seek satisfaction for their collective needs. Implicit in this definition is the understanding that civil society organizations are beyond the context of the production of goods and services determined by political mandate (governments) or equity mandate (business)." (IDB, 1996b)*

"… the arena in which people come together to pursue the interests they hold in common – not for profit or the exercise of political power, but because they care enough about something to take collective action." (World Bank, 2000d: 3)

Fifth, participation in organisations was expected to be restricted to specific poverty reduction projects, without involving influencing policy-making. Analysts[93] and MDB staff noted this. The first head of the WB NGO/Civil Society Unit commented in an interview that the Bank

"… saw NGOs as potential cheap sub-contractors to help [in project implementation] ... so... [the WB believed] there was nothing fundamentally wrong with the projects but ... [the problem] was just how they were implemented. So no need to involve NGOs at the design stage, no need to change the projects at all…" (Clark, 2002)

This limited participation resulted from the characteristics of the MDBs' work and their recommendations regarding participation. The MDBs worked with civil society through operational collaboration and policy dialogue. The former involved funding organisations indirectly – through Bank-funded national state programmes – and directly – through small grants. The latter included indirect MDB-civil society contacts within project loans and direct contacts established through consultations and disclosure of information procedures. Operational collaboration in the form of indirect funding[94] and policy dialogue activities in the form of consultations within MDB projects prevailed because most of the MDBs' work in borrowing countries consisted of project loans to governments. Participation thus comprised consultations at the project design, administration of funds and implementation of sub-projects stages, to help to adjust a preconceived idea of a project to the specificities of each case. Re-enforcing this restricted participation, the MDBs' strategies recommended stakeholder participation – participation by those affected by a given project, including

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[93] See Nelson, 1995 and Casaburi, et al., 2000; Tussie and Tuozzo, 2001: 116 for Argentina

[94] This was noted in both MDBs' documents (eg World Bank, 1998b) and interviews. For instance John Clark, from the WB, said *"Maybe a few million goes as grants to NGOs… [but] most of the money goes through the governments." (Clark, 2002)*. Mariel Sabra, from the IDB explained: *"There were donations to civil society through small projects or specific joint Bank-NGO projects beyond the Bank's loans portfolio [but] the bulk of Bank resources go to loans." (Sabra, 2002)*

community members or beneficiaries, non-governmental organisations, private enterprises, government officials and Bank staff (World Bank, 1996: 125-127; IDB, 1996b: section 4; Schwartz and Deruyttere, 1996: 10). Since social organisations participated as stakeholders, their participation was restricted to specific projects.

Sixth, the MDBs preferred technical organisations and, seventh, these organisations were expected to implement standardised technical methods to address poverty. As analysts have indicated, the MDBs tend to equate civil society with NGOs (Casaburi, et al., 2000: 219-20; Rabotnikof, et al., 2000: 40; Rabotnikof, 1999: 10, 13). Banks documents and practices point in that direction. Although the MDBs include in their definitions of civil society grass-roots organisations, informal groups, church groups, research institutions and professional associations, NGO is the overarching term that refers to civil society organisations in general (World Bank, 1996: 158). Equating NGOs with civil society is less evident in the IDB's strategies, which include NGOs as one type of civil society organisations alongside grass-roots and other organisations (IDB, 1996b: section 1, 5). However, since organisations in poor communities usually lack the funds and skills to participate, intermediary NGOs are, in practice, crucial for both Banks (World Bank, 1996: 153-158; Stiles 1998: 210). Furthermore, technically skilled organisations had the skills to address poverty with standardised methods that would not be based on political preferences. Crucially, preferring technically skilled organisations meant excluding politically oriented organisations that performed social actions in the communities – including trade unions or political parties – from the MDBs' working definition of civil society.

Finally, efficiency objectives were the overarching justification for involving civil society in MDB projects and they underpinned the discourse's features. Both MDBs advocated participation because of its efficiency in terms of contributing to project sustainability by guaranteeing an adequate use of resources, and by achieving project objectives that expert-based (or non-participatory) projects could not achieve (World Bank 1996: 4; IDB, 1996b: section 1, 3). In terms of the discourse features, NGOs are embraced because their closeness to and expertise in working with local communities guarantees efficiency, rather than because participation in itself is considered crucial for development (Nelson, 1995). Similarly, stakeholder administration and

implementation of projects is recommended because it is cost-effective compared to the results of public sector provision of social services (Sollis, 1992: 163).

The first five of these features reflected the normative component of neoliberalism, which aimed to redraw the dividing line between the private and public spheres and prioritised the individual over the community. At the same time, limited to project-level participation, civil society organisations operate in isolation from one another. Therefore civil society involvement in poverty reduction actions fostered social fragmentation rather than identity formation, which reflected a preference for dealing with social demands individually and thus operationalised the logic of discursive formation characteristic of neoliberalism – difference. Stressing efficiency and the technical profile of social organisations, also revealed a preference for the logic of difference in responding to social demands. Efficiency justifications underpin all the features that operationalise the logic of difference. Yet, the alleged political neutrality of efficiency objectives helped to make this neoliberal discourse appealing to supporters of varied political positions, because it involved the implementation of the logic of equivalence.

Efficiency objectives activated the logic of equivalence present in neoliberalism – as in all political projects – firstly by creating social antagonisms. The logic of equivalence builds on the articulation of different demands as equivalent in terms of being equally non-satisfied by the established institutional system. Highlighting the efficiency underpinning the MDBs' discourse on civil society involved stressing the inefficiency of competing discourses. Second, efficiency justifications attempted to generate new chains of equivalence by connecting the demands other discourses were failing to address within the boundaries of the discourse that emerges from the creation of an antagonist (chapter 1; Laclau, 2005b: 35-37). Just as the "end of history" arguments supported the neoliberal preference for market reform (chapter 2), efficiency objectives made the MDBs' recommendations on civil society seem detached from particular political perspectives, and therefore enabled the discourse to gain support from different political positions. Accordingly, generating the commitment of beneficiaries, a central objective in the MDBs' participatory strategies, not only helped project sustainability but also conferred on the project the strength to resist social and governmental opposition (Rabotnikof, 1999: 11).

Similarly, while the MDBs stressed that civil society participation made projects more efficient because it facilitated a process of social learning that could enable social change (IDB, 1996b: section I; World Bank, 1996: 5), since civil society participation is project-based, dialogue occurs within a predefined framework – the MDBs' projects. Thus, this social learning leads mainly to the expansion of the MDBs' views.

b. Post-Washington consensus years: innovation and continuity

In the mid-1990s, the introduction of institutional reform, criticism of MDBs' approaches to participation, and the arrival of Wolfensohn and the development of ownership strategies in the WB, led both Banks to put civil society in the limelight and four interrelated innovations emerged in the MDBs' discourse on civil society.

First, the social capital perspective emerged in both Banks. The WB adopted the notion as early as 1994 (Seragelding and Steer, 1994: 34) and introduced social capital as a key area of WB concern with the launch of the Social Capital Initiative[95] in 1996 and the WDR97 (World Bank, 1997: 114). The IDB had sponsored studies, publications and seminars on social capital since 1998 (PNUD/BID, 1998; Kliksberg, 2000a; Kliksberg and Tommassini, 2000) and in 2001 launched the Interamerican Initiative of Social Capital Development and Ethics (IDB, 2001). Despite differences in the MDBs' rhetoric, they agreed on the positive effects of social capital on development and on the need to intervene to help social capital emerge or strengthen. The WB understands social capital both as organisations and as rules – formal or informal – that facilitate social organisation (World Bank, 1997: 77). This Bank stresses that institutions can play a key role in their formationthe formation of social capital? (Banco Mundial, 1997: 130; World Bank, 2000a: 130) and that a type of social capital, which the WB calls "linking", is crucial for development because it concerns liaising with decision-making institutions (World Bank, 2000c: 128). The IDB stresses the cultural cohesion that social capital produces and, like the WB, it associates social capital with organisations and rules and holds that social capital is a complement to economic development (Kliksberg, 2000a and b). Both MDBs, thus,

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[95] See http://go.worldbank.org/XSV70MA600, downloaded 02-09-2008.

advocate the implementation of policies to mobilise social capital (Kliksberg, 2000a: 25, 26; World Bank, 2000c: 10, 130) but see social capital and institutional aspects as affecting each other. This "synergic" view, in which state and society engage in an embedded relationship (Evans, 1996; Evans (ed.) 1997; Portes and Landolt, 2000),[96] suggests a reconsideration of the private-public divide that the Washington consensus aimed to establish (Edwards, 2001: 3).

Second, the use of the term civil society increased, and its definition broadened as the variety of organisations considered part of civil society grew. The focus on social capital building meant that the MDBs started to include organisations that were not project stakeholders in participatory policies. As such, trade unions, political movements and local state organisations started to be included in MDB definitions of civil society. Since the IDB's first writings on participation already included a variety of actors as part of civil society, this change concerned the WB more. The WDR1997 held that NGOs were a portion of civil society (Banco Mundial, 1997: 132) alongside *"labor organisations, … foundations, and the private sector."* Although in 1998 the WB was still referring to civil society as NGOs (World Bank 1998a), NGO was starting to mean also non-profit economic-related civil society organisations such as trade unions, professional associations and grass-roots organisations (Banco Mundial, 1997: 129). Soon after, the term civil society started to appear in WB documents.[97] In 2001, the NGO Unit was renamed the NGO and Civil Society Unit, after the definition of civil society was broadened to become:

> *"…the space among family, market and the state; [consisting of] research and policy design organizations, labor unions, the media, NGOs, grass roots associations, community based organizations, religious groups and many others…" (World Bank, 2000d: 1)*

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[96] Although the Banks adopt a social-based understanding of social capital, most famously developed by Putnam (1993), their views reflect an institutional approach (Rothstein and Stoll, 2002). The academic debate on social capital in these years can be summarised in three views. One focused on individuals' skills, such as trust and tolerance, which membership of social organisations can foster (Putnam, 1993). Another emphasised the generation of structural rules from these memberships, which can have both positive and negative effects (Portes, 1995, Coleman, 1990). The third, the institutionalist perspective, stressed the importance of institutions in fostering social capital (Levi, 1996; Fox, 1996). For more on the social capital debate see Putzel, 1997; Harriss and De Renzio, 1997; Harriss, 2002; Fine, 2001 and the "bowling alone debate" triggered by Putnam's article on civic engagement in the USA (Putnam, 1995b and American Prospect issues 25 and 26, 1996).
[97] For example, a 1998 report on NGO involvement in WB projects (World Bank, 1998b).

Therefore, civil society was starting to be located not exclusively in the private realm but also at the intersection between the latter, the public sphere and the state.

Third, the conceptualisation of the relationship between state and civil society changed following the rise of institutional reform objectives, the introduction of the social capital perspective and the redefinitions of civil society. First, local governments increasingly became partners in participatory projects, and started to manage funds, hire NGOs and contribute to the identification and selection of sub-projects (Warren, 2003). Second, the MDBs bestowed a new role on civil society – keeping the state accountable and advocating policy change. The notion of empowerment connected this new role for civil society with the Banks' institutional reform agenda, in which accountability was key. The WDR2000 stated that empowering poor people entailed "[r]eforming public administrations and other agencies… to increase their accountability and responsiveness to poor people…" (World Bank 2000c: 9). Thus, empowering means strengthening participation in political processes and local decision-making in order to improve governance (World Bank, 2000c: 110). In the IDB's institutional reform strategy, civil society's participation was not limited to the check and balance of state institutions, it included improving the relationship between civil society and the state (IDB, 1996a: iv, v). Yet, in its poverty strategies the IDB refers to empowerment in the same way as the WB does, implying also an emphasis on accountability and check and balance issues (Morley, 1997: 15).

Fourth, direct links between domestic civil societies and the MDBs increased. The relationship between civil society and the MDBs changed from being mainly mediated by nation states to becoming increasingly direct. This change built on the relationship that Northern NGOs had been developing with the WB and, to a lesser extent, with the IDB, since the 1980s through advocacy campaigns,[98] which started to shape what was later known as global civil society (Edwards and Gaventa, 2001; Scholte, 2000; Anheier, et al. 2001; Taylor, 2002, among others). The change was evident in the MDBs' attempts to consult civil society about their strategies and, to some extent, in increases in direct funding for civil society. The WB started to consult

[98] These campaigns included environmental issues concerning Bank-financed projects, the impact of structural adjustment and the abolition of the Banks.

with civil society in the Adjustment Lending[99] participatory reviews and the participatory Country Strategy Programmes (CAS), which set out the Bank's priority lending areas and budget in each country.[100] Other examples are the participatory Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP),[101] the WB's Thematic and Sector Strategies,[102] the creation of the Inspection Panel[103] and the expansion of the NGO-World Bank Liaison Committee.[104] Correspondingly, the NGO Unit, which until the late 1990s focused on mainstreaming work with civil society among WB staff and promoting network formation among stakeholders, turned its attention to international advocacy networks and focused on keeping civil society organisations informed about opportunities for interaction with the WB (Garrison, 2003; World Bank, 2000c).[105] Because of the IDB's closer relationship with the region's states, IDB Country Papers (CPs) and other strategic papers continued to be prepared with national governments only, assuming that, if governments were democratic, they represented their civil societies. Although in 1994 the IDB launched the Independent Investigation Mechanism, akin to the WB's Inspection Panel (IDB, 2004b: 3), governments rather than civil society organisations used it (Nelson, 2000: 91). Nevertheless, the IDB, following the WB, set up an informal NGO working group to guide civil society-IDB direct interaction – the Interdepartmental Group on Participation and Civil Society (GIPSC) (Nelson, 2000: 81), and in 2000 it started exploring a strategy for citizenship participation in the design of strategic papers[106] (IDB, 2000a; 2000b; 2004a; Perfit, 2003). Regarding funding, while in the 1990s the IDB reduced direct funding for civil society organisations and favoured indirect funding (Sabra, 2002; IDB, various), the WB's Small Grants Programme, launched in 1983 to fund civil society organisations (Bosoer, 2002), gained importance in the late 1990s after its management was decentralised to country offices.

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[99] Launched in July 1997, only seven countries participated in these reviews (Hearn, 1999: 19).

[100] The first participatory CAS in Latin America were in 1996 in Colombia and Peru. In Argentina, the first experience of CAS was in 1998 (Tussie and Tuozzo, 2001: 109-110).

[101] They are prepared between a low-income country, the IMF and the WB. They set out the plans to foster growth and reduce poverty within the framework of a three-year economic adjustment programme.

[102] These establish the Bank's objectives in areas such as the environment; urban transport; rural development; participation; anti-corruption; health, nutrition and population; mining; telecommunications and information technology; and urban and local government. See http://www.World Bank.org/whatwedo/strategies.htm

[103] The Inspection Panel was created in 1994 to monitor the application of WB policies and directives, and to recommend to the Board appropriate compensation if violations occurred.

[104] In 1981 the WB established the NGO-World Bank Liaison Committee to examine collaboration with NGOs (Hudock, 1999: 49-50, Chiriboga, 2001: 77). Since this was more in response to Northern NGOs' demands than to those of borrowing country organisations, the former dominated the debates (Nelson, P. 2001: 64, 65). In 1997, regional structures emerged as the committee became a "working group". In Latin America, the NGO network "Latin American Association of Popular Organisations" (ALOP) led the way in this (Chiriboga, 2001: 77; Hudock, 1999: 49-50).

[105] See also http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/overview.htm, downloaded 25-07-01.

[106] This strategy was approved in 2004 (IDB, 2004a).

Although these post-Washington consensus innovations modified the MDBs' discourse on civil society, the key characteristics of the discourse as shaped in the early 1990s remained central.

The discourse stayed focused on organisations that were seen mainly as voluntary and independent from the state, and which were expected to supplement the latter. First, by 2001 the WB's social development website was describing NGOs as private and non-profit organisations that were independent from government and in which voluntarism was key.[107] Similarly, the IDB "Initiative on Social Capital" (IDB, 2001) described civil society as principally composed of voluntary and private actors, and social capital as aimed at strengthening voluntary work (Yamada, 2001: 10). Second, while the incorporation of state actors in participatory processes suggested the emergence of a more blurred private-public divide, not only were organisations still expected to supplement the state but also to keep it accountable, which redrew the divide and reinforced the preference for defending the private sphere from state interference. This appears in the WDR1997, which, despite stressing the importance of the state in development, depicts civil society organisations as supplementing state failures in providing services and pressuring the state to improve its services (Banco Mundial, 1997: 132). Additionally, increasing direct consultation with civil society contrasted with the state strengthening objectives behind institutional reform, because direct consultation entailed bypassing the state. Above all, although overlaps between the private and public spheres were acknowledged, civil society and the market were still seen as operating on the basis of the same rationalities, where individual freedom was central (Casaburi and Tussie, 2000a: 32; Casaburi, et al., 2000: 216).

Civil society participation continued to predominantly occur in relation to the MDBs' project loans, despite the increase in direct consultation and disclosure (Malena, 2000: 19-34; Tussie and Tuozzo, 2001: 114). Indeed the proportion of projects with civil society participation was close to 50% of the WB project portfolio in the second half of the 1990s, whereas it had never exceeded 40% before 1994. In the social assistance sector this trend was more marked and between 1995 and 1999 these projects

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[107] Printout from the WB Social Development website, NGOs and Civil Society section. Downloaded 06-07-2001.

accounted for between 55% and 88% of the sector's projects (World Bank 2000b).[108] Direct funding for civil society remained small. For instance, the amount approved for each project within the Small Grants Programme was less than US$5,000 and no more than ten organisations per country per annum received this (Larrecochea, 2000). Additionally, a study showed that the introduction of the notion of social capital did not produce changes in the type of participation promoted in WB poverty reduction projects (Fox, 1997: 971). Furthermore, while social capital building was to be pursued through a variety of actions, for example research diffusion and reforming legal systems,[109] the strategy most actively recommended regarded the level of social policies and, therefore, of project loans (Kliksberg, 2000b: 49).

The Banks continued to prefer working with technical organisations and, therefore, other organisations with a well-established presence in Latin America – such as trade unions – usually remained excluded from MDB poverty reduction activities (Tussie and Tuozzo, 2001: 112). The key WB policy dealing with civil society participation, the Good Practice (GP) 14.70, was revised in 2000 but NGOs were seen as synonymous with civil society (Note 3 of GP 14.70, February 2000). In the field, since efficiency remained the core justification for participation and social capital building, the Banks continued to work with specialist organisations to guarantee project sustainability (Rabotnikof, et. al., 2000: 54), and NGOs continued to be selected according to their ties to local communities and their technical skills, because these guaranteed project efficiency (Malena, 1997: 1). Establishing direct links with civil society organisations beyond the projects did not signify a waning focus on technical organisations involved in MDB projects. Rather, as the WB experience in consulting about its CAS in Argentina showed, the organisations that had created links with the Banks through operational collaboration were those that engaged in direct relationships with the Banks (Van Loc, 2002; Martina, 2002).

Efficiency objectives continued to be the justification for including civil society in MDB activities and for the introduction of the social capital perspective. These objectives were still a central argument for mainstreaming civil society participation

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[108] These data refer to project proposals approved, and are not based on post-implementation evaluations of the actual inclusion of civil society in the projects.
[109] For instance, the WB promoted the creation of a legal framework to regulate NGOs (Tuozzo, 2004: 109), and the IDB sponsored a publication on fostering the creation and work of civil society organisations through regulation (Oliveira, 1997).

particularly in the WB, where economic and legal sectors were used to dealing with macro-economic interventions and resisted civil society involvement in projects (Ibrahim, 1998). Similarly, both MDBs justified the focus on social capital building by saying that it would make their social projects more efficient (World Bank, 2000c: 10, 130; Kliksberg, 2000b: 46). As the WB put it, "… the density of social networks and institutions and the nature of interpersonal interactions that underlie them, significantly affect the efficiency and sustainability of development programmes".[110]

As the main features of the discourse on civil society remained important, these innovations, rather than representing the ebbing of the neoliberal character of the discourse, complemented the refinement of the neoliberal political project that was underway in these years. First, the changes accompanied the MDBs' institutional reform and helped the generation of support for the normative views on which they were based. For instance, the inclusion of local state institutions in participatory processes deepened neoliberalism's decentralisation objectives (Harriss and De Renzio, 1997: 930-1). Also, building social capital would result in empowering local communities, which thus could help to correct a key problem of decentralisation processes – the rising power of local elites (World Bank, 2000c: 9). Second, the discourse continued to promote participation, with the underlying objective of making the state work in favour of markets (Cammack, 2004: 204). Checks and balances mechanisms would compel the state to deliver services efficiently – a principle considered to rule the markets – and restrict the scope of state intervention to allow the private sphere to operate freely.

In a reflection of the deepening of the political character of neoliberalism, during the post-Washington consensus years it was not only efficiency that masked the political positions implicit in the neoliberal discourse on civil society. Also the exclusion of certain groups from the interaction between civil society and the state had moulded civil society in accordance with neoliberal normative views since the first MDB projects that included civil society. During the post-Washington consensus years, this moulding by exclusion appeared more relaxed on paper, where civil society actors linked to the previously hegemonic project were considered, but not in practice.

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[110] From http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/scapital/scindex.htm

Furthermore, the increase in direct relationships between the MDBs and civil society in those years also embodied universalisation aims, since they were additional dialogue mechanisms aimed at making borrowing countries adopt MDB recommendations. If governments lacked the expertise or were unwilling to adopt these recommendations, civil society could emerge as an ally of the Banks and support their initiatives. Not surprisingly, analyses of the WB CAS consultations with civil society suggest that they appeared to be more a case of "including civil society in order to add legitimacy to the strategy which remains fundamentally intact" (Hearn, 1999: 13).[111]

4.4. Conclusion

This section compares the neoliberal and populist discourse on civil society and explores the opportunities that non-neoliberal discourses, such as the populist one, may have found to conquer the increasingly refined MDB neoliberal discourse on civil society in the poverty reduction area.

Comparing the domestic and historically shaped populist discourse on civil society in the poverty reduction area, as described in chapter 3, with the MDBs' discourse, striking differences appear at first glance. First, while in the MDBs' discourse organisations are expected to take over state tasks, in the populist discourse supplementing the state is a provisional solution. Second, the location of civil society in the private realm, in the MDBs' discourse, alongside the market and separated from the state, contrasts with the search for state funds and guidance in the case of the Argentinean populist discourse. Third, the view of organisations as emerging from free individuals will and interests, which presupposed that, fourth, democratic internal mechanisms would prevail, although it emphasised the voluntary – unpaid – character of organisations' activities, differed from two other features of the populist discourse. One, in the Argentinean populist discourse political preferences significantly affected the formation of organisations. Two, despite the increasing endorsement of liberal democracy as a political system, organisations tended to prefer participatory

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[111] For Argentina see Tussie and Tuozzo, 2001.

mechanisms and non-hierarchical forms of organisation that could preserve direct contact between members and leaders who, at the same time, were markedly strong and autonomous from the bases. Fifth, instead of limiting civil society participation to specific projects, the populist discourse conceived of participation in social organisations as involving participation in the political sphere, in relation to both the state and specific political projects. Sixth, the neoliberal preference for technical NGOs differs from the populist discourse in which political identities, and Catholic views, were crucial in defining organisations' actions, despite poverty-focused organisations in the country having gone through technification processes. Seventh, while the MDBs expected social organisations to address poverty using standardised technical methods, in the populist discourse organisations usually tackled poverty in accordance with their political positions and without following fixed institutional patterns. Above all, while efficiency appeared to be the main justification of the underlying features of the neoliberal discourse and masked the political objectives that guided the definition of these features, in the populist discourse the objective of constituting political identities in order to become hegemonic is overtly the core of the discourse and cross-cut all its features.

Despite being so strikingly different from the Argentinean populist discourse on civil society that had been hegemonic until the late 1980s in the country, the MDBs' neoliberal discourse on civil society gained hegemony during the 1990s but contained opportunities for non-neoliberal discourses to colonise that hegemony. The main opportunities lay in the MDBs' focus on technical and efficiency issues that affected their rhetoric on participation, the changes in the discourses after the mid-1990s, and the differences in IDB and WB strategies.

Focus on efficiency and technical matters. Neoliberalism's emphasis on the economic aspects of liberalism using technical and managerial language to refer to political matters, left the political space available for other discourses. This was a key interstice that allowed the entrance of populism. In addition, a paradoxical consequence of focusing on efficiency was that the MDBs appeared to be paying lip service to the implementation of civil society participation. Indeed, civil society participation was recommended but not compulsory, except for projects related to the environment, and those involving population resettlements and dealing with

indigenous populations, in which the main focus was on consultation.[112] Participatory strategies were for guidance only and the WB's key policy on civil society involvement was the Good Practice 14.70, which is only advisory in character. Moreover, throughout the 1990s there was no specific budget earmarked for the promotion of civil society participation (Etchegaray, 2002; Clark, 2002), which was thus highly dependent on task managers – MDBs' staff responsible for the design and implementation of Banks projects in the countries – and state programme officers. Task managers are evaluated in terms of the efficient use of resources rather than the level of participation reached in the projects they manage (Mori, 2003). In the IDB, both task managers and civil society specialists admitted that they rarely worked together to infuse projects with the Bank's views of civil society participation (Traverso, 2003 and Perfit, 2003). As a result, participation could be sacrificed for the sake of cost-saving or fulfilling other more tangible results such as infrastructure, or irrelevant participatory exercises could be organised to "tick the box" of community participation in evaluation processes (Anigstein, 2002; Daniels, 2003, Levine, 2003). However, lack of real attention, coupled with an available rhetoric on civil society and participation, presented an opportunity for other discourses to colonise the neoliberal discourse.

Changes in the discourse after the mid-1990s. The recognition that political objectives underpin a discourse impairs the core universalisation strategy of a discourse such as neoliberalism, which is based on a proclamation of political neutrality. Further weakening the neoliberal struggles for its universalisation, this recognition involves opening up to discussion neoliberalism's normative component. The aim of generating synergies between civil society and state institutions, which underpinned the MDBs' notion of social capital, involved the presupposition of the interconnected nature of civil society and the political sphere. The notion of ownership, being an important tool for hegemonic construction, especially if framed in the "knowledge Bank" ideas, involved an acknowledgment of the political implications of the neoliberal project and the importance of universalising neoliberal

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[112] In the WB, these directives are explicit in OD 400, on environmental projects; OD 4.20, on indigenous populations; and OD 4.30, on resettlements (see Casaburi, et.al., 2000: 218). The IDB "Strategies and Procedures for the Interaction between the Inter-American Development Bank and Non-Governmental Environmental Organizations" (1990) was the first step towards the development of a policy framework on participation. A subsequent document stated that "direct beneficiaries and the general public must participate ... in the preparation of the terms of reference for the EIA [Environmental Impact Assessment]" (1990), and the "Strategies and Procedures on Socio-Cultural Issues as Related to the Environment" (1990) brought into environmental assessments the issue of resettlements and indigenous peoples (all in Schwartz and Deruyttere, 1996: 3).

particular views. Furthermore, as the neoliberal strategies of hegemonic struggles were enhanced with the post-Washington consensus, the political character of the discourse became more evident. This openness of the discourse was protected by insisting on efficiency objectives and retaining the scope for interaction between civil society and the state, framed within specific projects. However, as the political aspects of new notions such as social capital, ownership, and the intention to include non-technical organisations in the definition of civil society were not articulated by the MDBs' discourse, they constituted avenues through which non-neoliberal projects could permeate the neoliberal discourse.

Differences between the IDB and the WB. Despite the general agreement between the MDBs' discourses on civil society, variations in the MDBs' corporate cultures and institutional characteristics were reflected in differences in their strategies regarding civil society, and could be taken as opportunities to resignify their neoliberal discourse. For instance, the IDB's declared intention to link civil society strengthening with the construction of democracy was an opportunity for discourses that were more focused on political matters than neoliberalism was to colonise the neoliberal discourse on civil society. Also, while the WB notion of ownership provided an opportunity for countries to advance their views, the notion was framed in the knowledge Bank perspective. This perspective assumed that the WB position was the correct one regarding development and related matters such as poverty reduction and civil society participation. In contrast, the IDB's decisions were more in tune with the region's governments and this represented an opportunity for a greater margin in the negotiation of approaches. The MDBs, furthermore, are not monolithic. There are groups and individuals with different ideas and interests, with different backgrounds and positions in the institutions, more markedly in the WB than in the IDB where there is a "culture of control" that aims to ensure that rules are obeyed (Culpeper, 1997: 50). Interviewees both at state and Bank level stressed that ideas from MDBs' official documents were adopted in different ways at the operational level and were adapted for the Latin American environment in particular (Etchegaray, 2002; Díaz Muñoz, 2002; Senderowitz, 2003).

Whether and how these opportunities were re-signified by neoliberalism or populism in struggling with each other to hegemonise the discourse on civil society, needs to be explored on an empirical base, which is the objective of the following chapters.

Chapter 5

Neoliberalism meets Peronism: the formation of the neopopulist discourse (1990-1994)

This chapter focuses on Carlos Menem's first government. It analyses the political struggles underpinning the formation of the neopopulist discourse on civil society in the poverty reduction policy area and explains the discourse's main characteristics. In other words, the chapter maps the factors that moulded this discourse and traces the key discursive operations embedded in it.

In those years, the national state's discourse on civil society in the poverty reduction policy area was, at first, a disjointed neopopulist discourse (1990-1992) and, later, the neopopulist discourse emerged (1993-1994). In the former, neoliberalism and Argentinean populism co-existed in parallel. In the latter, elements of these political projects and their discourses on civil society were combined in a non-conflictive way under the hegemony of neoliberalism. However, populism figured more in the discourse on civil society than in the approach to poverty in which it was inserted.

The discourse was neopopulist because it articulated elements of neoliberalism and Argentinean populism and also because it was inserted in a neopopulist approach to poverty. The key elements of the neopopulist approach to poverty were a focus on coordination and targeting based on *NBI* indicators, a definition of poverty as integral, centred on self-esteem and "the neediest", and an emphasis on social organisation. This third element concerned the government's discourse on civil society in this policy area, which articulated elements of the neoliberal and populist project around the notions of social organisation, state promotion and solidarity. The notion of solidarity was key in allowing populism to have greater importance in this discourse than in the government's approach to poverty.

Undertaking the genealogical step of the analytical model proposed in this thesis, the chapter maps the events and actors that influenced the formation of this discourse. The government's endorsement of neoliberalism, aided by the existence of a critical juncture or discoursive dislocation, such as the hyperinflationary crisis, was combined with a populist logic of discursive formation, which became more visible in the second part of this period. The combination of neoliberalism with the populist logic defined the conditions of possibility for the formation of the approach to poverty and the discourse on civil society within it.

The pressure of non-partisan opposition – UNICEF, the Catholic Church and social protesters – was crucial in making the government incorporate poverty into its agenda. Nevertheless, the government's neoliberalism led to the persistence of a non-interventionist stance towards poverty, which made poverty reduction's institutional dynamics and its policy makers' crucial in shaping the approach to poverty and its discourse on civil society. This persistent non-interventionist stance also made it necessary to resort to MDB funds, which reinforced neoliberalism in this policy area. However, neoliberalism's stress on the logic of difference, or institutional and technical responses to social demands, created spaces for other political projects to permeate the neoliberal framework, since the contents of the logic of equivalence that neoliberalism was implementing as a political project were left unarticulated. Populism advanced through those spaces, helped by the resilient populism within the government's neoliberal orientation, and policy makers in this area could advance their political views. Additionally, the ongoing redefinitions of the MDBs' approach to poverty since the early 1990s, which involved a shift of focus in their discourse on civil society from individuals to organisations, facilitated the entry of political projects that, like populism, favoured the community over the individual.

The first section looks at the mix of neoliberalism and populism at the government level. The second section focuses on the government's approach to poverty. The third section presents the main discursive articulations behind the neopopulist discourse on civil society. The conclusion explains how the hegemonic struggles between neoliberalism and populism were reflected in the discourse on civil society in poverty reduction.

5.1. Menem's first presidency: neoliberalisation and populism

President Menem's endorsement of neoliberalism was combined with the use of the populist logic, which became more visible in the second half of his first government. Menem's adoption of neoliberal economic reforms involved the emergence of neoliberalism as the normative horizon guiding the government's actions. However, since the beginning of this government, the populist logic had prevailed both in the bypassing of established institutions and in the way in which political and social actors were addressed. From 1992 onwards populism regained strength, especially when the deepening of the neoliberal reform required the re-alignment of traditional Peronist political identities and Menem embarked on a reform of the National Constitution that would enable him to run for re-election.

In the first two years of Menem's first presidency, neoliberal reform was the government's core objective and the Convertibility Plan of 1991 embodied the government's embracement of neoliberalism by-enlarge. After winning presidential elections with 47% of the popular vote in May 1989, Menem took power amidst social instability and a monthly inflation rate of around 200%.[113] He tackled inflation with adjustment. He adopted a programme of economic reform centred on the reduction of fiscal imbalances via the reorganisation of the state – mainly through privatisation[114] and state reduction – and the liberalisation of markets – including the liberalisation of salaries and consumer prices, the reduction of subsidies, and measures to open up the country to international trade. A new hyperinflationary crisis in March 1990[115] and a new rise in inflation in September led to deepening adjustment,[116] but inflation had led to low liquidity and recession which resulted in a decline in tax revenues and the impossibility of complying with the fiscal deficit targets agreed with the IMF. The government appointed Domingo Cavallo as Minister of Economy in March 1991. He soon announced the "Convertibility Plan", the most

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[113] Unless otherwise stated, the data and ideas presented in this paragraph and the following one are from Acuña, 1994, especially 37-8, 41-3, 46-8.

[114] This included the privatisation of telecommunications (*ENTEL*), airlines (*Aerolineas Argentinas*), utilities – water (*OSN*), electricity (*SEGBA*), gas (*Gas del Estado*), oil and gas (*YPF* and its related companies) – and military-linked enterprises, such as *Fabricaciones Militares*.

[115] This crisis followed a similar pattern to the hyperinflationary episodes under Alfonsín's rule. The monthly increase in consumer prices reached a high of 95.5% in the first trimester of 1990 (Acuña, 1994: 41).

[116] This included reforming state structures, state worker redundancies, and an increase in the number of items liable to value-added tax (Acuña, 1994: 38, 42).

visible element of which was the establishment of a fixed exchange rate of $1=US$1 but which was essentially a programme of neoliberal reforms aligned with the neoliberal project.[117] In order to redraw the boundaries between the state and the market and to achieve fiscal balance, the Plan called for the acceleration of the privatisation process, further reducing state jobs and functions, and improving tax collection. It also included plans for market liberalisation through trade liberalisation and the flexibilisation of the labour market.[118] The Plan helped the government reach an agreement with the IMF in June 1991 (Crespo, 1991) that allowed the country to enter the Brady Plan to negotiate the external debt and regain access to international financial markets.

However, price stability, achieved in the framework of neoliberal reforms, and populist strategies to construct power interacted in synergy during Menem's first government. In many cases, institutions were bypassed because this was seen as necessary for advancing neoliberal reform. For instance, the increase in the number of members of the Supreme Court enabled the appointment of judges supportive of Menem's rule and helped avoid objections to reforms based on the Constitution (Acuña, 1994: 42-3). Similarly, the government made extended use of executive decrees – laws sanctioned by the President without the intervention of Congress. Between July 1989 and August 1994 Menem issued 336 *decretos de necesidad y urgencia* (need and urgency decrees), while only 25 such decrees had been passed between 1853 and July 1989 (Ferreira Rubio and Goretti, 1998: 33). This expanded use of decrees served to enact rapid neoliberal reform in critical areas such as privatisation, deregulation and the reform of the labour market (Ferreira Rubio and Goretti, 1996: 443).

The bypassing and manipulation of institutions debilitated already divided political and social actors, such as parties and unions, through which opposition to Menem's neoliberalism could be channelled. An internal opposition emerged among the deputies of the *Partido Justicialista* (*PJ* – Justicialist, or "Peronist", Party) in the Congress – the *Grupo de los 8,* a group of eight Peronist deputies who objected to

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[117] For the complete text of the convertibility law see La Nación 28-03-1991.
[118] Labour flexibilisation objectives were included in parts of the Convertibility Plan, for instance, lowering labour costs such as compensation for lay-offs and accidents, and reform of the unions' main source of funding – the *obras sociales* – which would decrease their bargaining power (Acuña, 1994: 48).

Menem's neoliberalism. The main opposition party, the UCR, divided into supporters of ex-president Alfonsín, against neoliberalism, and supporters of Angeloz, in favour of it. Menem's bypassing of the parties' arena of debate – Congress – and of his own party institutions further weakened these parties and their attempts to resist neoliberal reform. After Menem took office, the CGT divided into the Menemist CGT San Martín and the oppositional CGT Azopardo. Yet Menem retained the support of the bulk of the unions by manipulating this division and generating union competition over state resources, which Menem used to punish opponents and reward supporters (Murillo, 2001: 150).

Unlike populism in the past, which main support came from organised labour, support for this government's neoliberal reforms came from non-organised individuals (Weyland, 1996). The importance of the populist logic was reflected in how political support was acquired. Individuals' support was not mainly sought through the implementation of the logic of difference – through differential and fixed responses to individual demands – but through leaders with whom people could identify, and who could reflect and mould the people's identity. Thus, recruiting celebrities who generated support due to their popularity reinforced the support Menem had from independent individuals, as shown in the positive image ratings he obtained in the opinion polls. Ramón "Palito" Ortega, a former singer, and Carlos Reutemann, a former Formula One racer, are two cases in point (Novaro, 1994: 14).

Following the launch of the Convertibility Plan, the neoliberal hegemony peaked for two years, after which limitations started to appear. In 1992 inflation decreased, reaching 1970 levels with consumer prices increasing by only 17.5%, and GDP grew by 9% (Acuña, 1994: 48). The success of the Plan generated important political support for the government's plans and helped suture the neoliberal discourse. Price stability facilitated both the implementation of many of the Plan's neoliberal reforms in areas beyond the macroeconomic sphere, and the 1993 electoral victories. Yet, the exchange rate parity resulted in an overvalued peso after the inflation that followed the Plan and the foreign currency reserves and capital inflows sustaining the parity had diminished by late 1992, once the largest privatisations had been completed. Moreover, the country's growth rate slowed down – from 8.2% GDP growth in 1993 to 5.8% in 1994 (Annex I, figure 13) – and unemployment, badly affected by state

bureaucracy cuts, the suspension of subsidies, and rationalisations in newly privatised companies, soared from around 6% up until 1992 to 9.9% in 1993 and 10.7% in 1994 (Annex I, figure 6).

At the same time as the neoliberal Convertibility Plan's success was contributing to the expansion of neoliberalism, the limitations that started to emerge in 1992 facilitated the advancement of alternative discourses. The use of the populist logic gained visibility, and normative and contingent elements of Argentinean populism re-emerged. The success of the Convertibility Plan and the political victories it brought about strengthened Menem's intention to run for re-election. Yet, the Constitution forbade re-election and thus its reform appeared necessary. In turn, continuity with neoliberal reforms beyond the macroeconomic level required negotiations not only with policy makers, but with conflicting social interests. The populist logic was paramount in reaching agreement on the Constitutional reform and in the negotiations of policy reform with new actors.

Many commentators stress the consensual character of the Constitutional reform (Novaro, 2001). However, both conceiving the reform mainly as a means for Menem to achieve presidential re-election and the way in which the reform was agreed demonstrated the prevalence of a populist logic and project. In order to reduce internal party opposition, Menem bypassed the party and instead established talks about the reform with Peronist provincial governors. These discussions were framed in negotiations on the redistribution of fiscal resources between the nation and the provinces in the framework of the *Pacto Federal* (Federal Pact) (Eaton and Dickovick, 2004: 97). To deal with the main opposition party, Menem devised the *Pacto de Olivos* (Olivos' Pact). The *Pacto* gave the reform a consensual framework and allowed the opposition to include proposals for the reform that embodied attempts to counterbalance the concentration of power in the presidency and to make the reform go beyond re-election objectives – for instance, the creation of a Cabinet Chief and of the *Consejo de la Magistratura* (Magistrates Council). However, the populist logic stood out in the strategies that paved the way to the agreement of the *Pacto de Olivos*. Menem attempted to manipulate parliamentary rules regarding the number of votes needed for Constitutional reform and used pressure and threats to bring about a

popular referendum, preferring plebiscitarian means, thus linking the leader directly with the people and bypassing representative institutions (Novaro, 2001, 64).

The expansion of neoliberal reform beyond the macroeconomic realm could have led to an increase in institutionalised dialogue between the government and the people (Bambaci, 1999: 125). Yet, while the government indeed negotiated more with Congress after 1993 (Panizza, 2000b; Llanos, 2002), this was after the PJ obtained a majority in both the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. Moreover, in the negotiations between the unions and the government to advance labour reform populism gained territory. In early 1992, with the exception of the teachers' and state workers' unions which formed the CTA to oppose the government, the CGT reunited, mainly to block government attempts to liberalise the labour market. However, this was only a shift from subordination to cooperation, "effectively restraining" the government's neoliberal plans but still supporting the government (Murillo, 2001: 151).[119] This collaboration resulted from the CGT's difficulty in opposing individuals – including workers themselves – satisfied with economic stability and from unions' partisan loyalty (Murillo, 2001: 167), which showed that historical populism was still effective. Furthermore, the validity of the populist logic of bypassing institutions was present in Menem's strategy of obtaining union support by threatening to issue executive decrees to reform labour legislation – especially to reform the *obras sociales*, the main source of union funding. However, labour reform was minimal in these years, as the unions managed to shape government plans according to their preferences – moulded during the hegemony of Argentinean populism – showing the endurance of not only the logic but also the contingent aspects of populism.

Therefore, two periods can be identified in the government's position towards the hegemonic struggles between neoliberalism and populism. First, the government focused on neoliberalism, and second, from 1992 onwards, although neoliberal reform continued to organise the government's views, populism expanded. While before 1992 the populist logic was mostly at the service of advancing neoliberal reform, starting in that year this logic spread and other elements of the populist project re-emerged.

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[119] For details on the unions-government relationship during these years, see Murillo 2001: 134-150, 168.

5.2. Poverty: from non-interventionism to incorporation

In its first years this government was non-interventionist concerning poverty, which precluded debate about poverty-related problems and allowed for a disjointed coexistence of elements of both the neoliberal and populist projects. Once inflation was under control, social expenditure in the country decreased to levels below those of 1985 (Annex I, figure 3). Yet, in the few poverty reduction policies implemented, state-centred programmes coexisted with others that privileged individuals' initiatives, and policies attempting to reduce state expenses shared with other policies the objective of constructing political support through a discretionary distribution of resources. Three sets of policies illustrate this disjointed approach to poverty: social emergency policies that followed hyperinflation; decentralisation measures; and the *Programa Federal Solidario* (*PROSOL* – Federal Programme of Solidarity).

In 1993 poverty started to become part of the government's agenda and the neopopulist approach to poverty emerged. The approach combined populist and neoliberal views in a non-conflictive way within a neoliberal framework. First, coordination and targeting were based on *NBI* indicators; the former were central in the neoliberal approach to poverty and the latter were part of the structural conception of poverty developed in the years of populist hegemony. Second, poverty was understood as integral – defined by not just economic but multiple factors – focusing on self-esteem and referring to the poor as "the neediest". The notion of integral poverty and a focus on self-esteem reinforced the neoliberal focus on coordination and attempted to prevent poverty reduction policy from appearing as interfering with the functioning of the economy. Meanwhile, dealing with self-esteem factors required strategies that exceeded the neoliberal focus on managerial matters and defining the poor as "the neediest" facilitated the connection between the targeting of the poor and the populist historical and logical concern with the marginal and the underdog. The articulation of this approach appeared in the *Plan Social* 1995 (Social Plan 1995).

Institutional factors and policy makers in the poverty reduction policy area were crucial in shaping the neopopulist discourse. Non-partisan opposition from UNICEF, the Catholic Church and social protesters meant that the government incorporated poverty reduction into its agenda, by creating an ad hoc area in the cabinet, the *SDS*. The government nevertheless retained a non-interventionist stance towards poverty. This twofold response led to the emergence of four institutional characteristics of the poverty reduction area. First, the MDBs emerged as an important actor because national funds for poverty action were insufficient. Second, informal channels and, third, policy makers were crucial in defining the outcome of decisions due to the lack of government commitment to this policy area. Fourth, in the context of the increasing centrality of populist objectives at the general government level, policy makers could bring in not only their technical profile but also their experience within the populist discourse of Peronism. The design of the *PROMIN* programme and the formation of the *SDS* reflected these dynamics.

a. A disjointed approach to poverty (1990-1992)

Like the MDBs' trickle-down-plus approach to poverty at that time, and in line with Washington Consensus neoliberalism, the Argentinean government saw poverty as either an unavoidable element of all societies or as a result of inadequate macroeconomic policies. Therefore, there was no need for the state to intervene directly, since macroeconomic neoliberal reforms would produce economic growth, ultimately overcoming any remaining poverty. In addition, avoiding poverty issues could save state funds and would mean not intervening in the private sphere, contributing to the neoliberal project's aims of re-drawing the boundaries between the private and public spheres.

This non-interventionism with regard to poverty precluded debate about poverty-related problems and allowed a disjointed co-existence of elements of the neoliberal and populist projects, as can be observed in social emergency programmes that followed hyperinflation, decentralisation measures, and *PROSOL*.

The social emergency programmes aimed at dealing with the consequences of hyperinflation were *PAN* and the *Bonos Solidarios* (Solidarity Bonds). Both regarded poverty as an emergency and, therefore, as temporary. Yet, *PAN* was in line with populism and *Bonos* with neoliberalism. *PAN* was state-centred and contained elements of community organisation, whereas *Bonos* distributed money to individual beneficiaries who were free to decide how to spend it. However, the populist logic was present in both. The programmes shared an understanding of poverty as a lack of access to a basic basket of food that covered the nutritional needs of an individual or household, and a vague definition of who the poor were that paved the way for the discretionary distribution of resources, despite official data on poverty being available since 1984.[120] Indeed, local party leaders distributed *PAN* food boxes and the *PJ* and the divided *CGT* distributed the *Bonos* (Midre, 1992: 370) as the government tried to foster competition between the CGTs and sectors of the *PJ* to keep them under control.

Decentralisation measures cross-cut the early 1990s' poverty reduction policies in Argentina. Yet, decentralisation did not entail innovation in poverty reduction thinking, and its focus on managerial matters allowed for the infiltration of populism, making decentralisation a crucial instrument in building political alliances beyond political party structures. Of the three distinguishing features of the neoliberal approach to social issues in the 1990s – decentralisation, privatisation and targeting – in the early 1990s in Argentina decentralisation measures were implemented in all social sectors,[121] privatisation occurred more in the areas of social security, health and education;[122] and targeting emerged only after poverty was incorporated into the government's agenda. Decentralisation affected the programmes that were then considered as focused on poverty reduction – nutritional programmes. In 1991 two of these programmes were decentralised to the provinces – the *Programa de Políticas Sociales Comunitarias* (*PROSOCO* – Programme of Social Policies for Communities), which incorporated the resources of *Bonos* and *PAN*, and the *Programa Social Nutricional (PROSONU* – Social Nutritional Programme)

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[120] The first study on poverty in Argentina was published in INDEC (1984).

[121] See Repetto et al., 2001a and b on the decentralisation of schools and hospitals, Ansolabehere (2003) for the cases of housing and nutritional programmes, and Repetto et al. (2001c) for nutritional programmes.

[122] In those years the government promoted the creation of private educational establishments, transformed the public pensions system into a private bank-run system of retirement insurance (Lloyd Sherlock, 2000; Alonso, 2000; Alonso and Repetto, 2004) and attempted to privatise the union-run health services as a package of labour flexibilisation measures (Bambaci, 1999; Murillo, 2001).

(Ansolabehere, 2003, 629; Vinocur and Halperin, 2004: 28). Decentralisation consisted of transferring programmes' managerial responsibilities and funds through the provinces' co-participation in national taxes revenues and reflected efforts to re-size the national state. It did not entail new approaches to poverty. It continued an initiative started by Alfonsín (Makón, 2002) and decentralised resources were expected to be used for the purposes established by the original programmes. Although there was no oversight of this (Ansolabehere, 2004, 629) and the national state did not train provincial staff to run the programmes (Repetto and Alonso, 2004, 28), the policies remained untouched. Furthermore, without oversight or training on the functioning of the programme, the national government could use decentralisation as an instrument to transfer resources in order to build political alliances beyond political parties' structures.

PROSOL, created in 1992, was an attempt to introduce a new approach to poverty. Yet, the programme could not be implemented due to the lack of government commitment to addressing poverty. *PROSOL* regarded poverty as an integral phenomenon produced by multiple causes and thus did not focus on any one aspect of it, such as nutrition. It proposed a combination of targeted assistance and actions to strengthen government agencies and training for social leaders. Although all these elements later became part of the neopopulist approach to poverty, since poverty reduction was not a government priority and programme managers constantly changed, *PROSOL* implementation was difficult and its attempt to redefine the approach to poverty proved ineffectual (Repetto, 2001: 187-189).

b. Opposition, incorporation and subsequent articulation of the neopopulist approach to poverty (1993-1994)

By 1991, structural poverty had decreased from 22.3% of households living with *NBI*[123] in 1980 to 16.5%. However, official studies showed that structural poverty had increased compared with mid-1980s data and in the early 1990s income poverty remained high compared with historical levels (Powers, 1995: 95). Unemployment

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[123] See chapter 2.

rose from 6.3% in 1990 to 9.9% in 1993 and 10.7% in 1994 and in 1994 the population living below the poverty line – those who cannot afford a basic basket of goods – reached an unprecedented high of 19% (Annex I, figures 4, 5, 6).

Despite these data showing poverty increases, the government only took account of them when concerns were voiced by three non-partisan opposition actors: the Argentinean office of United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Catholic Church and social protesters. Parties and unions that claimed that these worsening indicators were the consequence of adjustment were not heard, since they were weak, bypassed and manipulated. In contrast, the voices of UNICEF, the Catholic Church and rioters were heard because they were well-positioned actors in the international scenario or because they could influence private investment. Although the government had a generally good relationship with the Catholic Church, internal sectors had been criticising the government because of the social costs of adjustment since the beginning of the decade, and in 1992 the Church hierarchies joined in with this criticism and even the Pope reprimanded the government (Powers, 1995: 110). At the same time, a group of social scientists based in the local branch of UNICEF had, in a number of publications since the early 1990s, been outlining the consequences of adjustment for poverty in the country. They highlighted that the character of poverty was changing, becoming more linked to lack of income than to lack of basic infrastructure (eg Beccaria and Minujin, 1991; Beccaria and Vinocur, 1991; Minujin (ed.), 1992). They also made a number of public declarations in the media criticising the lack of government social policies and child and maternal health policies (La Nación, 7-02-1991 and 1-04-1991). Social protests and riots involved criticism of the government's treatment of social issues. They started with state employees, pensioners and teachers, who were particularly affected by the unemployment, modification of the pension system and reduction of teachers' wages that privatisation and state retrenchment measures produced. In 1993, as several provinces joined the national government's plans to reform the state (Adam, 1993: 1), violent protests and riots spread to the interior of the country (Powers, 1995: 123; La Nación, 17-12-1993).

The government's response to these actors was twofold: it continued to deny the existence of poverty and, therefore, the need for intervention to address it; and at the

same time it gradually incorporated poverty reduction into its agenda. The government avoided talking about poverty and instead highlighted the achievements of social programmes and the economic plan as a whole and re-interpreted data on poverty to stress the reduction of structural poverty (Powers, 1995: 94-103, 111-114; La Nación, 29-07-1993). While the Church claimed that poverty was at the root of the spread of cholera, the government claimed that it was due to poor personal care and hygiene (La Nación, 17-02-1993). The government responded with force to social unrest. (Powers, 1995: 124) and the President declared that he did not understand "the game UNICEF [was] trying to play" (La Nación, 18-06-1993) with its publications on poverty. Nevertheless, the government approved a programme designed and backed by UNICEF – *PROMIN* – and launched a Social Plan in early 1993, with both UNICEF and the Church called to participate in monitoring activities (La Nación, 28-01-1993). Later, on the verge of the election of representatives to the Assembly that would deliberate Constitutional reform and the possibility of re-election, the government realised that its plans needed to be more comprehensively formulated and acquire further visibility. Thus, it created the *SDS* in late 1993 and launched a new Social Plan in late 1994.

This twofold response led to the emergence of the distinctive institutional features of the poverty reduction area which constituted the institutional conditions within which the approach to poverty took shape – the inclusion of the MDBs, the importance of informal channels and, linked to both, the weight of policy makers and their technical and political background. The design of *PROMIN*, the first MDB-funded poverty reduction action of the decade, and the creation of the *SDS* illustrate the emergence of these features.

The approval of *PROMIN* represented the government's incorporation of UNICEF's criticism and the attempt to adapt them to the government's views. It also showed the importance of informal connections, policy makers' technical background and MDB funds in shaping the policy. The design of *PROMIN* was begun in the first days of Menem's government by a UNICEF-based team, yet the programme was not approved until 1993. When the government took on this initiative, its project leader, UNICEF's Pablo Vinocur, rather than being assigned a government post, was contracted as an external consultant, arguably because of his links with the PJ

dissident *Grupo de los 8*. According to a source close to UNICEF Argentina "the war [between the government and UNICEF] broke out when UNICEF lost control of PROMIN" (Rovere, 2002), and the focus in UNICEF media appearances on mother and child health issues seems to confirm this assertion (eg La Nación, 7-02-1991). Yet, when Avelino Porto became Minister of Health, a member of the Vinocur team – Elsa Moreno – became Secretary in his Ministry, which created an initial informal channel through which UNICEF could continue shaping PROMIN (Vinocur, 2002). Later on, Julio Cesar Araoz replaced Porto and appointed Alberto Maza as Secretary in his Ministry. Friendships going back to university between Maza and *PROMIN* team members signified a new space through which UNICEF could advance its views. The team then resumed negotiations with the WB to secure funds for the programme in view of the government's lack of commitment to it. The negotiations built on the programme designers' links with the WB developed in the framework of their work in the WB *Programa Nacional de Asistencia Técnica para la Administración de los Servicios Sociales* (*PRONATASS* – National Programme of Technical Assistance for the Administration of Social Services) during Alfonsín's government (Vinocur, 2002). Additionally, as a member of the *PROMIN* staff asserted, the technical character of both the team members' profile and the language used in the programme proposal was crucial in getting WB funds (Barral, 2002).

The setting up of the *SDS* led to the emergence of these same institutional characteristics. The government created the *SDS* in February 1994. Its objectives were coordinating initiatives to combat poverty based in different national agencies and implementing control and evaluation mechanisms (Repetto, 2000: 211; Díaz Muñoz, 2004: 15). Being directly dependent on the Presidency gave it a strong mandate. Yet, the government's unremitting non-interventionist stance put the *SDS* in conflict with the rest of the ministries and meant that it had no new resources (Repetto, 2000: 611, Cortés and Marshall, 1999: 201). The main consequences of this were that *SDS* policy makers became crucial in decision-making processes in the poverty reduction area but also that they had to resort to MDB funds and rely on informal channels and their technical profiles to enable the SDS to gain leverage within the government.

SDS' policy makers used informal connections and their technical backgrounds to deal with conflicts with the cabinet and with the insufficiency of funds. Some of these

conflicts stemmed from the division produced in the Ministry of Health, which until then had managed social action, by the creation of the *SDS*. Other conflicts arose from the *SDS* coordinating mandate, which entailed overseeing the policies of different ministries. Crucially, the *SDS* had to deal with a Ministry of Finance opposed to intervention in social areas and thus reluctant to approve funds for them. Yet, the *SDS* authorities' technical knowledge and links with the Ministry of Finance and the MDBs helped. The first head of the *SDS*, Luis Prol, did not have experience in the social area (Repetto, 2000: 611) but was a renowned efficient functionary, especially because of his work at the Ministry of Economy on the privatisation of state companies. One of Prol's key advisers was Viviana Fridman. She identified herself, and was viewed, as "... a technical Under-Secretary…I came from the capital markets… I had no experience of public service" (Fridman, 2002). She also had good friends in Cavallo's Ministry of Finance – Daniel Marx and Carlos Sánchez, Secretary of Finance and Under-Secretary of External Debt respectively – and both she and Prol had worked with the WB and were friends of Myrna Alexander, the WB representative in Argentina at the time (Fridman, 2002). The MDBs were willing to lend to a country such as Argentina, which had increasingly good rates in the international creditor market (Etchegaray, 2002 and Flood, 2002). Yet, as Fridman explained, the mastery of the technical language required in negotiating with the Ministry and international creditors, and personal connections, were central in developing the strategy that enabled the *SDS* to get the funds needed to increase its budget (Fridman, 2002).

Informal channels and policy makers' technical knowledge brought MDB funds and neoliberal views into the *SDS*. Neoliberalism could expand subtly and the chances for non-neoliberal alternatives to be articulated were reduced both because of the neoliberal stress on technical issues and the importance of informal channels in the formation of the *SDS*. The importance of informal channels made the formation process seem random and disconnected from any clear political objective. The coordination mandate of the *SDS* seemed apolitical and policy implementers involved in poverty reduction action during that period viewed the arrival of external loans as casual and detached from broader neoliberal reforms. The coordinator of *FOPAR*'s community participation area considered that: "Banks have to lend. …. There is a chain of complicity …leading to a loss of global rationality" (Flood, 2002). The

coordinator of *SIEMPRO* assumed that the formation of the SDS was detached from the process of state reform: "State reform is something different, in the hands of the Ministry of Finance" (Novacovsky, 2002).

However, as the links between the *SDS* objectives and the broader neoliberal project were unnoticed, other political projects could permeate the neoliberal one without encountering significant resistance. The government's increasing populism paved the way for policy makers to base their decisions not only on their technical knowledge but also on their experience within the populist project of Peronism. The appointment of Eduardo Amadeo as head of the *SDS* in July 1994 represented both the objective of reforming the Constitution and the appointment of a functionary with a strong technical profile but who was also a Peronist. Menem chose Amadeo because he was loyal to Eduardo Duhalde, Menem's ex-Vice President who was becoming a key opponent within the PJ and whose support the President needed in order to guarantee favourable results in the Constitutional elections because he governed the politically important – in terms of PJ supporters and population size – province of Buenos Aires. Amadeo's technical profile built on his training as an economist and his experience as president of the Provincial Bank of Buenos Aires between 1987 and 1991, where he built his reputation as a good administrator. As a PJ deputy he led the education committee and developed some expertise in social issues. His wife's work in social organisations provided him with insights into social promotion and his alignment with Duhalde associated him with a preference for grass-roots politics, as reflected in Duhalde's creation of the *Liga Federal* (Federal League) – a provincial PJ internal stream focused on municipal mayors and other local party leaders (La Nación, 12-06-1990). Amadeo, once at the SDS, invited Fridman and her team to continue with their work in the *SDS*. This mix of technical, political and personal background reflected in the SDS approach to poverty.

The institutional features that emerged during the setting up of the *SDS* constituted the conditions within which the approach to poverty took shape. The first attempts at articulating this approach appeared in the *Plan Social* 1993, but the Plan had little impact. It emphasised coordination and targeting but consisted of an aggregation of

programmes rather than an outline of an official position regarding poverty,[124] and it retained a focus on nutritional programmes (Vinocur and Halperin, 2004: 28, 29). Furthermore, the Plan lacked funds and support from the government and relevant policy makers, such as the head of the Ministry in charge of the area, Araoz, whose attention, at the time the Plan was launched was focused on the PJ's internal elections in his province of origin, Córdoba.[125]

It was not until the *Plan Social* 1995 that the government's approach to poverty took shape and showed its neopopulist character. This Plan, launched in late 1994, set up a three-year plan for the social area (SDS, 1994: 22) and although it did not include new government funds for poverty reduction, it had an impact because it was formulated from within an institutional space created with the specific mission of addressing poverty – the *SDS*. The key distinguishing features of the 1995 Plan's approach to poverty were:

1) **a focus on coordination and targeting based on *NBI* indicators**
2) **an understanding of poverty as integral, which stressed self-esteem factors and defined those in poverty as "the neediest"**
3) **an emphasis on social organisation.**

The focus on coordination and targeting based on *NBI* indicators reflected the adoption of a key pillar of the neoliberal approach to poverty and of a structural conception of poverty developed in the years of populist hegemony in the country. The Plan's core aim was the modernisation of the management of poverty reduction actions (SDS, 1994: 15; Díaz Muñoz, 2004: 17; Repetto, 2001). The Plan stressed that, in that modernisation, efficient technologies and re-organising existing policies were more important than resources, which therefore did not need to be increased (eg SDS, 1994: 13, 23). Targeting was the central tool in achieving modernisation (SDS, 1994: 16). As Amadeo explained, the strategy consisted of targeting, re-organising existing actions and training staff: "I... say: objective "children", objective "women", objective "the old". I organise programmes, staff them, set objectives and measure

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[124] For more details on the measures included in the Plan see La Nación 8-01-1993a.
[125] These elections were particularly important for Menem's re-election plans since Córdoba was one of the few provinces governed by the UCR, and had a strong non-Menemist contender within the PJ, De la Sota.

outcomes" (Amadeo, 2002). As in the MDBs' strategies (chapter 4), targeted policies became synonymous with poverty reduction policies (SDS, 1994: 27) and through this displacement the *SDS* sought to legitimise its interference with other Ministries and to increase the budget it controlled. Thus the Plan included programmes that were beyond the *SDS*'s direct control but the *SDS* claimed it had to coordinate and monitor them because they were targeted at the poor.[126] Making targeting synonymous with poverty reduction action also contributed to the avoidance of the term poverty, helping the government to continue to deny the existence of poverty.

The targeting criterion chosen was *NBI* indicators. Therefore, while the government seemed to incorporate the critics' focus on the "new poor", in terms of those who needed state help for their re-integration into society (SDS, 1994: 14), choosing *NBI* indicators, which refer to long-standing and extreme situations of poverty, distanced the government from its critics, who stressed that new poverty was linked to income and unemployment problems. This choice adapted the term "new poor" to the government's neoliberal position that unemployment-linked poverty was temporary and the proper functioning of free markets would correct it. As Amadeo put it:

> "*When I came into Social Development … I … supposed ... we were experiencing ... a change of model… which would produce temporary unemployment…that ... my job was to protect the historically poorest sectors and those damaged by the transition" (Amadeo, 2002).*

However, choosing *NBI* as the key criterion involved the iteration of a concept that stemmed from structuralist approaches to poverty (chapter 4) dating back to the 1960s, when populism was hegemonic in Argentina (chapter 3). Located within the framework of neoliberalism, the adoption of *NBI* indicators helped to avoid broad state interference in the economic sphere and saved state resources, since only *NBI* data were available and generating other data was costly.

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[126] The existing programmes included in the *Plan Social* that fell directly under the remit of the *SDS* were Ayuda Solidaria para Mayores (*ASOMA* – Solidarity Help for the Elderly) and *Programa Alimentario Nacional Infantíl* (*PRANI* – National Children's Food Programme); programmes with international funding created during Prol's years, *FOPAR* and *SIEMPRO;* and two national programmes created under Amadeo, *PFSC* and *CENOC*. The rest of the *Plan*'s budget came from programmes considered to be targeted at the poor but not under the direct remit of the *SDS*. These comprised *PROSOCO, PROSONU* and the *Fondo Nacional de la Vivienda* (*FONAVI* – National Housing Fund), all in provincial hands since their decentralisation in the early 1990s (Ansolabehere, 2003: 630), the *Programa Social Agropecuario* (*PSA* – Social Farming Programme*)*, in the Secretariat of Agriculture and Fisheries, *Pro-Huerta* (Pro-Farm), in the National Institute of Farm Technology, and *PROMIN*, in the Ministry of Health.

Second, the understanding of poverty as integral – defined by not just economic but multiple factors – with a focus on self-esteem factors and a definition of the poor as *"los más necesitados"* ("the neediest"), also reflected the articulation of neoliberalism and Argentinean populism. The notion of integral poverty and a focus on self-esteem reinforced the neoliberal focus on coordination and attempted to prevent actions to deal with it from interfering with the functioning of the economy. Seeing poverty as not just linked to nutritional problems but as the result of multiple material and non-material dimensions, reinforced neoliberalism because it led, according to the Plan, to a focus on coordinating the multiple actions required to tackle such poverty rather than on expanding intervention (SDS, 1994: 17). Moreover, an understanding of poverty as integral shifted the focus beyond both income and structural factors, implying that poverty reduction policy did not involve interfering with the functioning of the economy. Yet, at the same time, this integral understanding entailed expanding the strategy beyond mere administrative reform and required intervention in the private sphere of individuals. Similarly, an interest in self-esteem, which was depicted as hindering the integration of the poor into the benefits of neoliberal reforms (SDS, 1994: 10), showed the presence of non-neoliberal views, drawn from Amadeo's own background as a developmentalist economist and his wife's studies in social psychology (Amadeo, 2002), and required strategies that went beyond the neoliberal focus on managerial matters. Defining the poor as "the neediest" enabled a connection between the targeting of the poor and the populist historical and logical concern with the marginal and the underdog. The term displaced the word "poor", in line with the government's decision to avoid talking about poverty, and was a conceptual bridge that attempted to assimilate the targeted structural poor of the Plan with those not included in the 1940s' Peronist welfare system and under the "marginal" of the 1960s.

Third, the Plan proposed social organisation as a key strategy, together with the central aim of modernisation and the tool of targeting, to help to reduce poverty. It was in this feature of the approach that populism was more evident. This point is analysed next, since it specifically concerns the government's discourse on civil society in poverty reduction policy.

5.3. The neopopulist discourse on civil society

Before 1993, the government discourse on civil society in poverty reduction action was in accordance with the prevailing disjointed approach to poverty. As such, an individualist and market-based conception of civil society co-existed with the persistence of state-centred conceptions of community promotion and the continued inclusion of corporations and political actors in the government's discourse on civil society, which corresponded o the neoliberal and populist projects' normative components, respectively.

When the neoliberal hegemony was consolidating and populism was gaining spaces, the neopopulist approach to poverty emerged. The discourse on civil society in poverty reduction action corresponded to the neopopulist approach to poverty, in which neoliberal and populist views mixed in a non-conflictive way under the hegemony of neoliberalism. However, populist elements were more significant in this discourse than in the approach to poverty. The neopopulist discourse on civil society in poverty reduction was articulated around the notions of:

1) **social organisation**
2) **state promotion of social organisation**
3) **solidarity.**

a. Disjointed neopopulism in the discourse on civil society (1990-1992)

During this period, the discourse on civil society was a disjointed combination of elements drawn from the neoliberal and Argentinean populist discourses on civil society. This was not only the result of being part of a disjointed neopopulist approach to poverty but also reflected the government's intention to dismantle political identities associated with the populist hegemony in order to construct new political identities around neoliberalism. The government's preference for non-organised sectors over established political organisations or corporations reflected this aim. Yet, these organisations were still rooted in society and building political identities in itself

entailed the application of the populist logic. This disjointed co-existence of elements of the neoliberal and populist discourses on civil society can be seen in the three sets of policies referred to above – social emergency measures, decentralisation, and the *PROSOL* programme.

Both *PAN* and *Bonos Solidarios* referred to civil society in their design and delivery but understood it in different ways. The *Bonos* focused on the marginal sectors, who were the worst affected by hyperinflation. They highlighted the role of individuals, markets and state retrenchment. Individuals received cash transfers and were free to decide how to spend that money. The delivery system was in the hands of market actors such as food producers and shops, and, since the staff was *ad honorem* and the system was funded by voluntary contributions from the private sector, its implementation did not entail an increase in state expenditure (Midre, 1992: 362, 364, 371). In contrast, *PAN* attempted to involve community groups in programme activities such as training and programme delivery, and the state purchased the food and employed all the community workers involved in the programme (chapter 3). Yet, like *PAN,* where local party members distributed food boxes, representatives of traditional corporations – the heads of *Caritas*, the divided CGT and the *Unión Industrial Argentina* (*UIA* – Argentinean Industrial Union)[127] managed the *Bonos* and the PJ and both CGTs distributed them[128] (Midre, 1992: 361, 366-70).

Decentralised measures and policies trying new approaches to poverty, such as *PROSOL*, tried to place centre stage the concept that later became the nodal point of the neopopulist discourse – social organisation. Yet, the disjointed co-existence of discourses continued. The decentralisation of *PROSOCO* and *PROSONU* was accompanied by the aim of including community organisations in their implementation, but this inclusion varied between provinces (Ansolabehere, 2003: 635-640). In the province of Buenos Aires, for instance, *PROSONU* was soon incorporated into the provincial school kitchens programme, which already included a community organisation component, and in the province of Mendoza the programme included social organisations in order to align itself with the broader provincial aims

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[127] The *Bonos*' Managing Council also included government representatives: the Minister of Health and Social Action, The Minister of Work and Social Security and the Minister of Internal Affairs.
[128] Peronist deputies received 70,000 bonds to distribute during their visits to the provinces, 7,000 were given to the armed forces and prison wardens, and civil society council members – both CGTs, Caritas and *Cruz Roja* (Red Cross) – received 64,000 (Midre, 1992: 368, 370).

of efficient expenditure. Yet, the province of Córdoba, governed by the UCR, continued to prefer a state-centred model of social policy delivery, despite supporting the national neoliberal economic programme. *PROSOL* could be delivered through provincial or municipal governments and NGOs, grass-roots organisations and cooperatives (Salas, 1999: 59). Yet, the lack of importance given to this programme by the government and the differences in the provincial governments' commitment to include civil society in policy implementation precluded the expansion of this programme's ideas.

b. Articulation of the neopopulist discourse on civil society (1993-1994)

The *Plan Social* 1995 outlined an official discourse on civil society. In this Plan references to civil society appeared mainly in references to social organisation, which became a nodal point that articulated the neoliberal and Argentinean populist discourses on civil society.

Social organisation entered the government's approach to poverty with the aim of helping the neoliberal objective of re-drawing the dividing line between the public and the private by contributing to state retrenchment. While decentralisation was introduced in the poverty reduction area in the early 1990s, the other two pillars of the neoliberal social reform, targeting and privatisation, became central with the *Plan Social* 1995. Yet privatisation in this policy area referred to social organisations rather than to market actors, as had been the case with the privatisation of the social security and education systems in the early 1990s. The *Plan* regarded social organisation as the key strategy to aid its main objective – to modernise the management of poverty reduction policies without increasing state expenditure in that area. Social organisation was portrayed as a critical tool in combating poverty (SDS, 1994: 11) because an efficient use of resources would only emerge if framed within efforts to strengthen social organisation (SDS, 1994: 9). Amadeo reaffirmed this idea:

> *"My objective was to make the administration of resources efficient ... What I did was to introduce organisation. That is, one of the principles of my*

programme was that I would not have a single programme without a social organisation component." (Amadeo, 2002)

The focus on social organisation was in line with the other two elements of the Plan's approach to poverty – an integral definition and targeting. The counterpart of an integral definition of poverty was an emphasis on re-integrating the poor into society, which, the Plan suggested, the involvement of beneficiaries in social organisations could help to achieve. Community participation experiences could reinforce the development of individuals' capacities and their sense of integration into society (Díaz Muñoz, 2004: 17). In turn, as the coordination of policies targeted at the poor undertaken in different government agencies was central to achieving this multi-purpose task of integrating the poor, the Plan also sought to mainstream a focus on social organisation across the ministries dealing with poverty.

This focus not only reflected the background of the head of the *SDS* but also resulted from the financial strategy developed during the formation of the *SDS*. Amadeo's inclination to work with social organisations drew on the influence of his wife experience with community work and on his Peronist background. It was already part of his worldview in his years at the Buenos Aires Province Bank when he said, referring to the early 1990s hyperinflation, that "the people responded very well by getting organised to help each other and this will be absolutely necessary in the 1990s" (La Nación, 26-02-1990). Also, the incorporation of social organisations for the purposes of saving state resources aligned the *SDS* with the MDBs and the Ministry of Economy views, helping to negotiate resources with them. The *SIEMPRO* coordinator confirmed that

> *"the money available for social programmes had been very little up to then and all this changed in 1994 when a clear strategy appeared. This strategy was clearly seen in work with civil society in the programmes." (Novacovky, 2002)*

The focus on social organisation reflected the alignment with the MDBs' neoliberal discourse but also enabled the entrance of the Argentinean populist discourse on civil society, in particular a notion of social organisation as a process and as an alternative

to individualist forms of political representation. Since in the early 1990s the MDBs were increasingly supporting the involvement of social organisations in combating poverty (chapter 4), the Plan's focus on social organisation aligned the government's discourse with the MDBs' neoliberalism. However, while NGOs were the central actors of civil society in the MDBs discourse, the Plan did not refer to any particular form of social organisation, which implied a broader definition of civil society than that of the MDBs in these years and an emphasis on social organisation as a process and not just as an entity. Thus, the apolitical stance of neoliberalism appeared to be adapting to the populist rejection of political party divisions and a preference for social organisation as a form of political mobilisation. In fact, despite the importance given to technical issues, the Plan subordinated technical matters to the political objectives of constructing identities through the promotion of social organisation. Only in the last part of President Menem's cover letter accompanying the Plan is reference made to the importance of rationalising and coordinating actions to deal with the problems of "the neediest". In this letter, the reference to a rational and coordinated approach to social issues is framed in a call for social consensus: "allow me to stress the word 'together'… because [poverty reduction] must be a concerted effort of all political parties and social organisations. A true state policy" (SDS, 1994: 1). These words resembled a populist call for social and political agreement beyond party flags by resorting to the social field rather than the political one to find common ground for consensus. At the same time, the Plan incorporated the community promotion approach to poverty that emerged in the 1960s and the voluntaristic ways of dealing with social needs that flourished in the mid-1970s during the dictatorship and in the 1980s during hyperinflation in Argentina.

The second feature of the neopopulist discourse was the emphasis on state promotion of social organisation. In the context of a focus on social organisation geared towards the objective of redrawing the dividing line between the private and the public and helping to save state resources, state promotion aimed to make social organisation a permanent supplement to the state in poverty reduction policies, as in the MDBs' neoliberal discourse. However, the Plan stressed that the state was to play a central role in promoting social organisation, which involved the possibility that organisation could become dependent on state funds and guidance. The Plan states that the state should support any person's initiative and intention to participate either as an

individual or within communities or associations, instead of reducing them to the status of clients (SDS, 1994: 10). Furthermore, the Plan suggests that the state should make available instruments to support, and therefore promote, these initiatives:

> *"… as long as this becomes a state policy and citizens are aware that there is a decision – and instruments – to foster solidarity and to support their vocation of organisation, they will find new incentives in order to solve, through that channel, their social problems." (SDS, 1994: 10)*

Hence, the neoliberal discourse and its objectives of permanent supplementation prevailed. But the door was opened for organisations involved in programmes to develop a dependent relationship with the state and for them to expect that the state would resume intervention in the social sphere, as in the Argentinean populist discourse. Moreover, in conjunction with the understanding of social organisation as process and political mobilisation, state promotion could also be geared towards the generation of political identities.

Despite the seemingly balanced amalgamation of the neoliberal and populist discourses in the notions of social organisation and state promotion, the third feature, solidarity, is presented as the basis of social organisation (SDS, 1994: 9) and revealed that populism weighed greater in this discourse than in the broader neopopulist approach to poverty in which it was inserted.

Populism's relatively greater presence in this discourse resulted from the focus on solidarity because, first, solidarity reflects a communitarian rather than an individualist view of society. Solidarity in itself relates to notions of social organisation that emphasise the homogeneity of a society united around a cause (Rosen, 1995: 1) rather than a differentiated society. Solidarity assumes the pre-existence of community to which solidarity would come to enhance members' ties, since it implies they share mutual concern for one another (Archard, 2006: 188). Considering solidarity as the basis of social organisation, which is crucial to achieving the objective of modernising the poverty reduction area, implies the need for political and not just administrative reform in this area.

Second, solidarity acted as a conceptual bridge between the Plan's focus on state promotion of social organisation and the MDBs' focus on sustainability as the core of efficiency solidarity, adapting the latter to the Argentinean populist discourse. As the Plan puts it: "there is no sustainable social policy if it does not take place in a framework of solidarity that maximises people's organisation" (SDS, 1994: 1). This link with sustainability seems to put solidarity at odds with Argentinean populism since sustainability aims are contrary to long-term state intervention. Yet, the connection of sustainability with state promotion through the term "solidarity" – as in the title of the Plan, *políticas de promoción y solidaridad con los más necesitados*[129] – highlighted solidarity's association with another feature that developed within the Argentinean populist discourse from the 1960s onwards, community promotion. Therefore, while solidarity's communitarian implications were iterated by being framed in a predominantly neoliberal approach to poverty which carried out promotional actions intended to stress the individual's will to organise, associating solidarity with state promotion counterbalanced that iteration in favour of the Argentinean populist discourse.

Third, the chain of equivalences that resulted from the articulation of sustainability and state promotion through solidarity inserted the rationalising aims that made this *Plan* neoliberal within the populist political aim of constructing collective political identities. The objective of constructing political identities was, in fact, the main objective of the Plan, despite its stated mission of technical reform. According to the Plan: "Resources and technology are important, but the ethical environment where social policies are implemented is fundamental: solidarity…" (SDS, 1994: 9), and solidarity was seen as the "soul" of the tough neoliberal priorities of saving state resources, rationalisation and coordination (Plan Social, 1994: 2).

In summary, the discourse on civil society contained in the *Plan Social* 1995 to combat poverty articulated, through the key concepts of "social organisation", "state promotion" and "solidarity", elements of the neoliberal and populist political projects and discourse. Despite being inserted into a predominantly neoliberal approach to poverty, the discourse showed more populist elements.

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[129] Promotion and solidarity policies for the neediest

5.4. Analytical summary and conclusions

This chapter has shown how the neopopulist discourse on civil society in poverty reduction policy emerged. The discourse was neopopulist because it was inserted into a neopopulist approach to poverty and because it articulated neoliberalism and Argentinean populism and their discourses on civil society. In the first years (1990-1992), elements of these political projects co-existed in a disjointed discourse. When the government incorporated poverty into its agenda, the approach to poverty and the corresponding discourse on civil society combined neoliberalism and populism in a non-conflictive way under the hegemony of neoliberalism. However, populism figured more in the discourse on civil society than in the approach to poverty in which it was inserted.

The events and actors that influenced the formation of this discourse are mapped in table 2. The government's adoption of neoliberalism (b1), aided by the existence of a discoursive dislocation (a1) such as the hyperinflationary crisis, was combined with a populist logic of discursive formation (b2), which became more visible in the second part of this period. This combination at the general government level defined the conditions of possibility for the formation of the approach to poverty and the discourse on civil society within it.

Before poverty was incorporated into the government agenda, the disjointed co-existence of neoliberalism and populism in the civil society discourse resulted from the broader government style of relating to social actors, trying to address them as individuals but with the aim of generating political support, and from being a discourse inserted in a similarly disjointed approach to poverty. When poverty was incorporated into the government's agenda after non-partisan opposition demands on the state to do so (a2), policy makers in the poverty reduction area became crucial in shaping the area's discourse. In the framework of the government's non-interventionist stance, policy makers acted in an institutional environment in which informal channels (c1) and their own technical backgrounds were pivotal in

TABLE 2: Actors and Factors Shaping the Neopopulist Discourse on Civil Society (1990-1994)

Dislocation Hyperinflation (a1)	**Neopopulist Approach to Poverty and Discourse on Civil Society** *Plan Social* 1995

Government's neoliberal stance (b1)

Ministry of Economy's resistance (b1.1)

MDBs' entrance (d):

(d1) technical requirements

(d2) focus on organisations

Profile of policy makers (c2): technical (c2.1) and political background (c2.2)

Government's growing populism (b2)

Dislocation: Social costs of adjustment (a2):
- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -
Non-partisan political pressures

Institutional processes in the introduction of poverty reduction action: (c1) *SDS formation*

constructing the area (c2.1). Yet, given the presence of populism in the government's discourse, policy makers' political backgrounds, shaped by their allegiance to the populist project of Peronism, were also included in that construction (c2.2).

Faced with resistance at the national cabinet level from sectors committed to the neoliberal project (b1.1), policy makers resorted to the MDBs to obtain the funds that the state did not grant to the newly created area. The MDBs, at the same time, were

starting to increase their work in social areas and were willing to lend to Argentina. Their neoliberal focus on the logic of difference, or institutional and technical responses to social demands (d1), highlighted policy makers' use of their technical knowledge to shape the area's discourses and reinforced the neoliberalism within the discourse. Yet, this focus on technical matters allowed for political projects centred on the formation of political identities to permeate the discourse and policy makers introduced their views, which were also shaped by their political allegiances. In addition, (d2) the MDBs' ongoing redefinition of their approach to poverty and discourse on civil society was going through a shift of focus from individuals to organisations, facilitating further the entrance of political projects prioritising the community over the individual, such as populism, into this discourse.

The resulting approach to poverty reduction, in which the discourse on civil society was inserted, had three distinctive features – a focus on coordination and targeting, a definition of poverty as "integral", and an emphasis on social organisation. Within these three features, elements of neoliberalism and Argentinean populism were mixed. Coordination and targeting appeared to be in line only with neoliberal aims, yet the choice of *NBI* indicators introduced a key element associated with the years in which the populist project was hegemonic. Defining poverty as integral called for a neoliberal focus on coordination but also required intervention beyond pure administrative reform. Social organisation was presented as at the service of the neoliberal aim of rationalisation and therefore as limiting the intervention of the state in the private sphere. However, this element of the approach had more affinities with populism, as the characteristics of the discourse on civil society of those years indicated.

The neopopulist discourse on civil society articulated around the nodal point of social organisation and included two other central features – state promotion of social organisation and solidarity. The chains of equivalences constructed around the nodal point of social organisation and the notion of state promotion suggested that the government's discourse agreed with both the neoliberal and the Argentinean populist discourse on civil society. Yet, the importance given to the notion of solidarity showed a preference for views that prioritised the community over the individual, which in Argentina had been historically embedded in populism. Therefore, the notion

of solidarity was key in allowing for a greater importance of populism in this discourse than in the government's broader stances and the approach to poverty in particular.

In terms of hegemonic analysis, in this period there was a non-conflictive articulation of neoliberalism and Argentinean populism, but neoliberalism set the boundaries for the possibilities of discursive articulation. Populism was absorbed by and reframed within a predominantly neoliberal approach to poverty and discourse on civil society, which revealed the expansion of neoliberalism's hegemony. Populism, however, permeated the overall neoliberal orientation of the *Plan Social* and it occupied an important space in the discourse on civil society.

During Menem's first presidency neoliberalism and populism co-existed well in the neopopulist discourse on civil society. Yet, the antagonism between these political projects, stemming from their opposite normative components and their historical struggles for hegemony, did not vanish behind this discursively articulated co-existence. As the next chapter shows, when the first policies based on the *Plan Social* 1995 were negotiated and implemented, populist views grew within the neoliberal hegemony over the discourse on civil society in poverty reduction policy and brought to light the ineradicable contradictions between the two political projects.

Chapter 6

Neopopulism at work: the technopopulist years (1995-1999)

This chapter looks at Menem's second presidency (1995 to 1999). It analyses poverty reduction policies[130] that implemented the neopopulist discourse on civil society outlined in the *Plan Social* 1995 and maps the factors and actors embedded in the re-articulation of that discourse. In these years the discourse on civil society in poverty reduction policies became a technopopulist version of neopopulism, as populism gained ground and neoliberalism strengthened its focus on technical matters in order to retain hegemony.

Between 1995 and 1997 the neopopulist discourse gained specificity. Neoliberalism consolidated its hegemony in the discourse since the key features of the neopopulist discourse – social organisation, state promotion and solidarity – were filled with contents predominantly attuned to neoliberalism. However, populism retained its presence in the discourse. First, some political organisations and organisations moulded during the years of populist hegemony were included alongside mostly technical organisations in programme implementation. Second, state promotion of social organisation did not strengthen organisations enough for them to become a permanent supplement of the state in policy implementation; it made them dependent on state funds and guidance. Third, as solidarity contributed to interpreting voluntary organisations in terms of "voluntary (unpaid) work", the neoliberal focus on the role of individuals' will and interests in creating organisations independently from the state was downplayed. This enabled communitarian views of society and the objective of constructing political identities, both central to populism, to permeate the focus on unpaid work.

After 1997, populism expanded within the discourse but neoliberalism remained hegemonic by stressing technical and methodological issues, to which the

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[130] For details on the selection of programmes, and a list and summary of those analysed here, see chapter 1, and annexes II and III.

advancement of populism had to adapt. Populism advanced by resignifying the new features that were emerging in programme contents and implementation – municipalisation, employment strategies, the importance of leaders, and the concept of social capital – which appeared as floating signifiers available for discursive articulation. Yet, as neoliberalism had taken root in the *SDS* in the first two years of the implementation of the *Plan Social*, the expansion of populism was framed within a marked stress on neoliberal methodologies and technical language, which were expected to keep the advance of populism at bay. Therefore, while the discourse was becoming more populist, neoliberalism remained hegemonic and the non-conflictive co-existence of the two projects was maintained.

While policy makers had been highly influential in moulding the approach to poverty and its corresponding discourse on civil society during Menem's first administration, in this period the President's second re-election plans were crucial in defining the direction of change in this policy area, and state actors – policy makers and implementers – and the MDBs defined the specificities of these changes. The President's objective of running for a second re-election became paramount and led to a focus on the re-construction of political support and the reduction of neoliberalism to a veneer. Institutional changes in the poverty reduction policy area and programmatic changes reflected this advance of populism. However, mainly to keep the IFIs' support despite macroeconomic problems, the government maintained the neoliberal veneer, which limited the expansion of populism and was reflected in the increased focus on the formal and technical aspects of neoliberalism. Within the framework set by the changes in the government discourse, state actors and MDBs facilitated the expansion of Argentinean populism but, at the same time, adopted a focus on neoliberal formal requirements and techniques as an antidote to the advances of populism. Nevertheless, as the conclusion highlights, the neoliberal hegemony was weakening as the normative and contingent levels of the discourse were being colonised by populism.

The first section of this chapter deals with the transformations in the government discourse. The second section explains the changes introduced in the poverty reduction area. The third section analyses the formation of the technopopulist discourse on civil society and explains its characteristics. The conclusion summarises

the chapter and explains how the hegemonic struggles between neoliberalism and populism were reflected in the technopopulist discourse.

6.1. Menem's second Presidency: second re-election with a veneer of neoliberalism

During Menem's second government, neoliberalism became a veneer as the focus shifted from neoliberal economic reform to a new re-election. Increasing criticism of the Washington Consensus ideas at the international level (chapter 4) helped the government to distance itself from neoliberalism. But it was the President's decision to run for a second re-election and two dislocations – rising unemployment and the official party's electoral defeat – that led to this departure. The urban rate of unemployment was over 18% in May 1995 (Annex I, figures 6 and 7). This was linked to the international 'Tequila Crisis'[131] but was not detached from the consequences of the implementation of neoliberal reform, as the opposition, who were becoming more influential because they were reorganising as a political force, pointed out. The opposition's increasing importance resulted in the second dislocation – the defeat of the official party in legislative elections in 1997.[132] After this defeat, the President's interest in a second re-election, which he had expressed soon after assuming this second presidency (Monti and Vega, 1995), intensified. The President interpreted the defeat as a lack of popular support for ex-Vice-President Eduardo Duhalde (Ollier, 2001: 109), who led an anti-Menemist stream in the *PJ* with the aim of becoming the 1999 presidential candidate, and whose wife lost in the highly populated and traditionally Peronist province of Buenos Aires. With increasing unemployment and a stronger opposition, the President sought support for his new re-election plans in sectors traditionally loyal to Peronism – the popular sectors. Yet, since neoliberal reform had up to then provided the government with important electoral victories, he also had to show that there was no return to the populist past.

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[131] A financial crisis triggered by the abrupt withdrawal of external capital in late 1994 in Mexico.
[132] The governing party came second behind the *Alianza*, and obtained only 36.3% of the votes, compared to 44.9% in the 1995 presidential elections (Dirección Nacional Electoral, 1997 and 1995).

The reduction of neoliberalism to a veneer was evident in the handling of fiscal accounts, a neglected state reform project and the relegation of economic and neoliberal sectors within the government. Fiscal deficit objectives agreed with the IMF were achieved not by controlling state expenditure but by renegotiating them, as in 1998, and by taking out more loans. The latter became apparent in 1999, when debt repayments caused the deficit to soar to $7,094.5 million, 39% above the target agreed with the IMF (La Nación, 26-01-2000 and 20-05-1999).[133] Regarding state reform, the government approved the Second State Reform Law in 1996 to reduce the state structure. Yet, by early 1998, seven Secretariats and other Under-Secretariats had re-emerged and numerous decrees had modified the law (La Nación, 29-01-98). Similarly, in July 1996, Roque Fernández, known as a neoliberal economist but more open to political sectors of the government, replaced Cavallo, whose political aspirations were beginning to jeopardise Menem's objectives for 1999 (Morales Solá, 1996). The economic area of the government lost importance in favour of the Cabinet Chief. This newly created post, instead of limiting presidential power, as the UCR intended when it proposed its creation through Constitutional reform, was reduced to an instrument of presidential will. Furthermore, the Second State Reform Law delegated to the Cabinet Chief parliamentary powers to modify the national budget (Novaro, 2001: 71).

The government's responses to social demands appeared to be acquiring a higher level of institutionalisation, but the bypassing of institutions continued and was used to advance populist objectives rather than neoliberal reform, as during Menem's first government. Several scholars have indicated that centralised decision-making and the bypassing of institutions had decreased by the mid-1990s, as representation improved with a more organised opposition (Novaro, 2001: 103) and political and social actors were included in decision-making processes (Bambaci, 1999). Yet, the strategies the President used to seek its core objectives, such as the second re-election, showed that the bypassing of established rules continued. The President tried to modify the Constitution via the Senate – where the President had a loyal majority – and resorted

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[133] In 1996 the government carried forward expenditure to the following year's accounts and issued bonds to avoid exceeding the US$6,500 million fiscal deficit agreed with the IMF (La Nación, 3-01-1997). In 1997 the state spent US$883 million more than in 1996 but argued that improvements in tax collection had helped it to comply with the deficit agreed with the IMF (Oviedo, 1998). In 1998, fiscal deficit decreased but the target of US$3,500 million agreed with the IMF could not be achieved, and the government had to renegotiuate with the IMF a new target of US$3,850 million to accommodate the end-of-year deficit of US$3,849 (La Nación, 20-01-1999).

to the Supreme Court of Justice – where he had supportive judges – to remove the sections of the Constitution that stated he could not run for re-election twice. Similarly, the President's insistence on having internal elections in the official party, and the formation of the *Alianza* (*Alianza por el Empleo, la Justicia y la Educación* – Alliance for Jobs, Justice and Education) in August 1996, uniting the two main opposition forces, *FREPASO* (*Frente País Solidario* – Solidarity Country Front) and *UCR*, seemed to be improvements in the system of representation. Yet, Menem sought internal elections because Ramón "Palito" Ortega, his candidate for 1999 if the re-election plans failed, lacked the support of the party structure, which was under Duhalde's control (Levit, 1996). Also, the *Alianza*'s criticism of the government's lack of respect for institutions and of the spread of corruption (Charosky, 2002: 198-9) did not make the government improve in these respects. Instead, Menem avoided responding to this criticism and, instead, focused on articulating in his discourse demands relating to what had historically been at the core of the Peronist discourse, and which he had neglected until then – social issues. Regarding trade unions, the government continued to resort to decrees and secret negotiations in dealing with them and aimed more to obtain their political support than to implement neoliberal labour reform. Threats to use, or actual use of executive decrees, were aimed at advancing the government's labour reform plan, which was different from that promoted by the IMF, and at preventing the CGT from supporting Duhalde's candidacy for 1999 (Ollier, 2001: 108). The popular sectors, treated as atomised individuals for most of Menem's first government, were looked at in a different light in this period because important sectors of the government held that if Menem sought a second re-election he needed to establish more visible links with those sectors. Hence, he started to have more public engagements, especially of the type concerned with social action (La Nación 30-08-1996).

After 1997, the populism's colonisation of the neoliberal hegemony became more marked. Reading Duhalde's wife's electoral defeat as the opportunity to advance further with his second re-election plans, Menem reshuffled the cabinet (Obarrio, 1997) and intensified efforts to regain contact with the popular sectors. He stopped calling for internal elections in the *PJ* and appointed Ortega as head of the *SDS,* from where they could challenge Duhalde's control of the *PJ* structure and establish direct

contact with the popular sectors. Erman González – who had close links with the unions – replaced Caro Figueroa – who, as Minister of Labour, agreed with the IMF and the Ministry of Economy views on labour reform. The reform approved in September 1998, therefore, reflected more the views of the CGT, which were rooted in the populist project of Peronism. Negotiations leading to that reform continued to be characterised by threats of issuing decrees, of secret negotiations, and by the exclusion of dissident sectors of the CGT or business groups (La Nación 1-10-98), rather than by plural, institutionalised dialogue. Popular protests with roadblocks and pickets led by the unemployed came into the limelight in 1996 and 1997 in the provinces of Neuquén, Salta and Jujuy.[134] The government responded by sending in the army and by implementing temporary employment programmes and transferring money directly from the Executive to the communities and municipalities affected. These actions represented an arbitrary distribution of social funds, an intervention in the labour market and a bypassing of established institutions, all of which were in line with distinctive features of Argentinean populism.

A wider adoption of elements of Argentinean populism was limited by the increasing need of IMF's. The Argentinean economy was not as healthy as the high growth of those years seemed to indicate.[135] International lenders and investors were concerned with the slow reduction of unemployment,[136] with the ability of the banking system to cope with the high level of debt, and with current and trade account imbalances. The devaluation of the real in Brazil and the overvaluation of the Argentinean peso that resulted from maintaining the exchange parity with the dollar, made the scenario more unstable. To retain access to funds, the government focused increasingly on pleasing the IMF, whose views affected the international lenders and investors.

Nevertheless, the IMF seemed satisfied with the government complying with only basic neoliberal requirements. The IMF objected to the advances of populism and the government's attempts to regain contact with the popular sectors. For instance, in the

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[134] In June 1996, the protests in Neuquén were in Cutral-Có and Plaza Huincul and were about the new governor's plans to cancel a contract for the production of fertilisers signed by his predecessor with a foreign company (La Nación, 26-06-1996). In the same areas in May 1997, a large teachers' protest involved a fatality. Between June and August 1997, unemployed workers from the state and the privatised YPF led protests in Jujuy and Salta.

[135] While GDP growth in 1995 was -2.8%, it was 5.5% in 1996 and 8.1% in 1997. In 1998 the overall growth was 3.9%, but recession started in the last trimester of that year with -0.4% of annual variation. (Annex I, fig. 13 and Ministerio de Economía, 2005).

[136] Despite improvements in 1998, in 1999 unemployment was around or above the 1995 record high, eg 17.5% in Greater Buenos Aires, 19.2% in Tucuman and 18.2% in Mar del Plata (Annex 1, figure 7).

negotiations for the extended facilities loan,[137] the government planned to place the funds from the privatisation of *Banco Hipotecario* in a special fund to combat poverty (La Nación, 5-04-1997), but the IMF recommended using them to reduce debt, thereby reducing state expenditure on debt servicing and reducing state deficit. Yet, after the *PJ*'s electoral defeat, the IMF reaffirmed its support for the government in order to, in the context of the Asian crisis,[138] avoid the failure of another country renowned for its commitment to neoliberalism. Signs of confidence were the announcement of the extended facilities agreement just two days after the official party electoral defeat (La Nación, 29-10-1997), and the re-setting of fiscal deficit targets at the end of 1998, to avoid the need for a waiver. Also, as second re-election plans were gaining momentum, compliance with formal IMF requirements became almost the only indicator of government adherence to neoliberalism. The formalities observed by the government included passing labour reform legislation through Congress, keeping up the appearance of a pluralist dialogue during the negotiations leading up to that, and responding to social protests with employment programmes designed and funded jointly with the MDBs.

6.2. Poverty: the technopopulist approach

In accordance with the government's combination of a veneer of neoliberalism with the increasing importance of populism, in the poverty reduction area populism grew but was adapted to an increasing focus on technical matters linked to the neoliberal project. At the institutional level, the influence of sectors favourable to populist views increased. At the programme level, populism permeated changes that were emerging in programme design and implementation:

1) **universal poverty reduction actions,**
2) **employment strategies, and**
3) **work with municipalities.**

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[137] The extended facilities agreement concerned second-generation reforms – labour flexibilisation, tax reform and judicial reform.
[138] The first global economic crisis followed a crash in the Hong Kong housing market that led to plummeting markets in Wall Street.

The Second State Reform Law, the announcement of new Social Plans, and the replacement of Amadeo with Ortega as head of the *SDS* modified the *SDS*'s internal organisation and within it sectors favourable to the populist project gained presence to the detriment of those advocating neoliberalism. The Second State Reform Law established that international loans had to be administered by the Ministry of Finance rather than by the agency that obtained the loan.[139] While the aim was to rationalise the use of state resources, the measure contributed to the construction of the neoliberal veneer, since once in the hands of the Ministry of Finance the funds could be redirected to comply with fiscal deficit targets. In the *SDS*, the area dealing with international funding – the *Unidad de Financiamiento Internacional* (*UFI* – International Funding Unit), coordinated by a renowned technical functionary, Viviana Fridman – became less influential as it lost control of those funds. Moreover, the restructuring of state dependencies entailed in the Reform involved replacing Fridman at the Under-Secretariat of Social Projects with Silvia Gascón,[140] who had a sound knowledge of the politics of poverty reduction policy, as opposed to Fridman who, as she explained, "... had practically nothing to do with the Ministries in the provinces…" (Fridman, 2002). The Social Plans announced in 1996 and 1997 designated the Cabinet Chief as coordinator of poverty reduction funds. The measure was not implemented but it meant a reduced presidential support for the *SDS* and its predominantly neoliberal approach to poverty (Díaz Muñoz, 2004: 17), and the concentration of the management of poverty reduction action in the hands of the President, since the Cabinet Chief echoed the Executive's will. In 1998, Ortega replaced Amadeo at the *SDS*, reflecting a further move towards populism since, as explained above, the replacement was intended to help the President's re-election plans.

Yet, due both to a path-shaping effect and the need to comply with MDB requirements, the technical aspects of the neoliberal-dominated approach to poverty continued to be stressed and populism adapted to them. The neopopulist approach to poverty expressed in the *Plan Social* 1995, in particular its coordination priorities and

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[139] *"Before, if you secured international funding for a programme, the funds were sent directly to it. Afterwards, everything had to go to the National Budget and the Ministry of Finance had to approve the release of the funds. That is when 'international funding' became 'fuente 22' [of the National Budget]" (Rodríguez Larreta, 2002).*
[140] Until then she had been *ASOMA* coordinator.

the aim of technifying poverty reduction policy, took root in the *SDS* in the Amadeo years. Therefore, although the weight of the sectors linked to the MDBs and their neoliberal perspectives decreased in the overall focus of the *SDS*, the programmes continued to implement the approach. Moreover, the MDBs' influence continued because most MDB programmes were already being implemented and because the *SDS* staff's reputation as good technocrats helped in negotiating new MDB funds (Díaz Muñoz, 2002).

When Ortega became Secretary he encountered an *SDS* staff identified with a discourse of technification and coordination priorities, and programmes designed along those lines. Two divisions emerged within the *SDS*. First, the programme staff remained loyal to the outgoing Secretary's approaches and regarded those who arrived with the new Secretary as "*técnicos*" supporting a political project (Tamargo, 2002). Second, the head of the *SDS* focused on achieving high visibility of *SDS* actions, whereas the Under-Secretary of Social Development, Rodríguez Larreta, focused on the efficient administration of the *SDS* budget. This split involved the separation of technical matters from the increasing efforts to regain direct contact with the popular sectors, and helped to make those efforts appear to be aligned with the neoliberal-dominated neopopulist approach. Rodríguez Larreta, for instance, pointed out how the execution of funds remained tied to budget plans.

> *"For sure the image was one of a more political management, because he put*
> *his face out there, he was there in the floods with his boots on, with the water*
> *up to his knees. From that point of view it became politicised… but that had*
> *nothing to do with the use of funds" (Rodríguez Larreta, 2002).*

Yet, in the administration of *SDS* funds his focus was on using all the available resources, rather than on ensuring that they were utilised according to objectives: "in 1998 fund execution reached a high level… around 88-90%, that is a very good figure" (Rodríguez Larreta, 2002). In fact, the increase in national public expenditure on poverty reduction action from around $200 million between 1995 and 1997 to almost $300 million in 1999 (Annex 1, figure 9)[141] was generally spent on

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[141] The increase is more significant when the provincial and municipal levels are included – consolidated public expenditure – $1,887 million in 1995 and $3,184 million in 1999 (Annex 1, figure 8).

emergencies such as floods and other highly visible actions (Rodríguez Larreta, 2002). Sometimes the funds were used to comply with fiscal deficit targets, disregarding *SDS* arrangements with the MDBs and the Ministry of Finance about a "*blindaje social*" (social armour),[142] guaranteeing that poverty reduction funds were not affected by adjustment (Díaz Muñoz, 2002; Makón, 2002; Etchegaray, 2002; Novacovsky, 2002).

Although the neopopulist approach expressed in the *Plan Social* 1995 was not officially redefined, discursive elements linked to populism started to gain spaces in the neopopulist approach by resignifying the three characteristics that were emerging in the design and implementation of programmes – universal poverty reduction action, unemployment strategies and municipalisation. Yet, these new elements had to adopt the techniques and methodologies of the neopopulist approach in order to permeate it. Universal action did not become part of the approach, unemployment did so only partially, but municipalisation, despite most openly incorporating populist objectives, was easily integrated.

First, challenging the first pillar of the neopopulist approach to poverty, there were attempts to move from targeting to universal approaches that based poverty reduction policy on income poverty indicators, linked to unemployment, rather than on structural poverty ones. In 1997 Amadeo challenged the MDBs' understanding of unemployment as a temporary problem, and the idea of universal poverty reduction action based on guaranteeing a minimum threshold of income – what interviewees referred to as "human income" or "citizen income" – started to emerge among *SDS* policy makers (Amadeo, 2002; Cafiero, 2002). This challenge informed two programmes launched in this period – *Becas* and *Trabajar*. However, in their final design the programmes constituted temporary solutions to employment problems, and thus a view of unemployment as a transitional situation continued to be reproduced and universal approaches were not adopted (Amadeo, 2002).

New IDB programmes incorporated a notion of poverty based on income poverty indicators, but NBI continued to be the main targeting criteria in both MDBs. In part,

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[142] With the IDB, this occurred in the framework of sectoral loan 871/AC-AR.

this resulted from the MDBs' non-interventionist approach and their reluctance to expand intervention in the labour market by adding unemployment-linked issues such as unemployment indicators or actions that resembled income supplements to its programmes. However, IDB programmes approved after 1996 included income poverty as a targeting criteria. PAGV combined unemployment rates with NBI and the poverty line (IDB, 1997: 42, 43) to target beneficiaries. *PROMEBA*'s targets were neighbourhoods with 75% of their population with NBI, but the programme documents made it clear that that target covered people in the first income quintile, which was the WB's poverty line (IDB, 1996c: 32). However, since the WB's preferred measurement of poverty was the poverty line, which refers to income poverty, the persistence of targeting with NBI indicators did not denote the endurance of neoliberalism but, more specifically, the endurance of neopopulism and its particular mix of neoliberalism and populism. The lack of data on income poverty was what prevented the widespread use of income poverty to target poverty reduction actions, which, ultimately, reflected the increasing challenges faced by domestic supporters of the MDBs' views and the consequent insufficient strength to impose their priorities.

Second, unemployment issues nevertheless permeated the second pillar of the neopopulist approach – the understanding of poverty as integral – through the concept of vulnerability, as *FOPAR* II, *PROAME* and *PAGV* (World Bank, 1998c: 8, 9; IDB, 1998: 1; IDB, 1997 respectively) showed. Tackling unemployment entailed, on the one hand, interfering in the economic realm, which went against neoliberal reccomendations, and, on the other, a consideration of poverty in terms of income, which implied a move away from the structuralist definitions of poverty tied to the years of populist hegemony. But, since structural poverty remained the main targeting criteria, the departure from neoliberalism stood out. Vulnerability was related to the notion of integral poverty, since it considered poverty beyond its material dimensions (IDB, 1997: 3) but also referred to those more at risk of falling into poverty because of a reduced income. Tackling unemployment continued to be excluded from programme objectives (eg *FOPAR* II, see World Bank 1998c: 2) but policy makers and implementers included actions to combat unemployment at the implementation stage without reporting on them (Etchegaray, 2002). These actions were implemented by disregarding rules established in programmes and in accordance with the level of

social unrest or the potential for the political support of certain localities, ignoring programme targeting criteria and the neoliberal preference for the logic of difference. However, despite the advances of populism implied in the introduction of actions to tackle unemployment, these actions were adapted to targeted policies and were delivered according to a methodology in which social organisations supplemented state action, as prescribed by the neoliberal-dominated neopopulism.

Finally, municipalities started to be included at different stages of programme implementation, and that affected the neopopulist approach's focus on social organisations. Since the incorporation of municipalities into social programmes affected in particular the third pillar of the approach to poverty – a focus on social organisation – this innovation is analysed in more depth in the next section.

6.3. The technopopulist discourse on civil society

This section looks at how the discourse on civil society in poverty reduction policies became a technopopulist version of neopopulism, as populism gained ground and neoliberalism strengthened its focus on technical matters in order to retain hegemony. This transformation was seen in the design and implementation of poverty reduction programmes with civil society participation components, which put in practice the neopopulist discourse outlined in the *Plan Social* 1995. The programmes studied here typically operated along the lines explained in Table 3.

a. The specification of the neopopulist discourse: neoliberalism's expansion and populism's resilience (1995-1997)

Between 1995 and 1997 the neopopulist discourse gained specificity. The key features of the neopopulist discourse – social organisation, state promotion and solidarity – were filled with contents predominantly attuned to neoliberalism, but populism remained part of the discourse.

First, in line with neoliberalism, the policies analysed focused on technical social

TABLE 3: Typical model of programme implementation

Source of Funds	National Agency	National Programme / Policy (Project for the MDBs)		Programme Implementation		

Project-Loan MDBs
 	
(after 1996)
 	
National Budget
	SDS	Selection:
		
		PROMIN (Min of Health)
		FOPAR
		SIEMPRO
		PAGV
		PROAME *(funds transference)*
		PROMEBA
		    (project presentation for prog selection for funding)
		CENOC
		PFSC
		
		    (evaluations)
			[provincial or local government]
			After 1997
			
			NGO
			(1 or 2 per targeted province)
				(identification of COs and Sub-Projects – government also before 1997)
				
				(funds transference)
				
				(sub-project presentation)
				
				(presentation of results)
					In targeted localities:
					
					Community Organisation
					CO (1)
					
					CO (2)
					
					CO (N)
						Sub-Project (1)
						
						Sub-Project (2)
						
						Sub-Project (N)

organisations and avoided political organisations. In accordance with the *Plan Social* 1995 the programmes focused on social organisations. However, in a move towards neoliberalism and away from the Plan's view of organisation as a process, technical organisations were central. The programmes claimed to work with a wide range of organisations, from NGOs to community organisations. Programmes such as *FOPAR*, *PAGV*, *PROAME* and *PFSC* even sought to include local organisations not formally constituted as such ("informal groups"), like the *Núcleos de Beneficiarios* (*NuBs* – Beneficiaries' Groups) in *FOPAR*.[143] Yet, technical NGOs had overall control of the projects. The importance of administration and state-saving aims in the implementation of the *Plan Social* made specialist organisations central. NGOs were the intermediary organisations that selected community-based organisations and their projects, administered programme funds and provided training (table 3). While

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[143] In Argentina, social organisations have to register as a *"persona jurídica"* (a legal entity) in order to receive funds from the state.

nationally funded programmes appeared to be keener on working with community organisations (PFSC, 1995), NGOs controlled the *PFSC* in each province (Denis, 2002) and *CENOC*'s most important activity, training, was in the hands of specialised and technical NGOs (Orlowsky, 2002). Furthermore, according to programme documents organisations from the political sphere were excluded from programme implementation and policy implementers also avoided working with state or party organisations. They preferred to work with what they regarded as "the purest level of civil society" (Tamargo, 2000) because they believed it was free from corruption. They "… sent the money to NGOs to ensure quality, transparency, to avoid suspicion" (Candiano, 2002).

Second, state promotion of social organisation aimed to generate a civil society capable of permanently supplementing the state in poverty reduction policy delivery. As a programme coordinator of those years noted: "there was the idea that…implementing programmes through social organisations was a way of working that would have to be adopted more and more frequently" (Luna, 2002). The assumption in all of these programmes including civil society organisations was that by working within these programmes organisations would be strengthened by acquiring skills and experience. More straighforwardly, *PROMEBA* aimed to build an alternative to state direct building of social housing. The programme only provided cash subsidies to, and undertook the monitoring of, private companies and community organisations that were in charge of construction (Pisoni, 2003: 32). In *PROAME*, the budget section of the project loan document even included the financial contribution of the executing organisations. Further contributing to this aim of permanent supplementation, two national programmes were specifically devoted to strengthening social organisations, *PFSC* and *CENOC*, and some MDB-funded programmes included training, resources and assistance for organisations' development.

Third, solidarity was interpreted as "voluntary work", which, together with the aim of making social organisations a permanent supplement of the state, was in line with objectives of saving state resources. The programmes rearticulated the notion of solidarity by using it as an anchor to resignify the neoliberal focus on voluntary associationism in terms of voluntary or free work. As such, the organisations involved in programmes could not charge for services and human resources provided; they

could only get funding for materials and activities. In accordance with neoliberalism, civil society in neoliberal terms – while no longer an amalgamation of individuals in the market – was regarded as a sector that contributed to a country's economy through unpaid work, in this case by saving state resources (Anheier and Seibel, 1990; Luna, 2002).

Furthermore, the importance of solidarity – the discourse feature in which populism had most weight – was eclipsed by the restriction of civil society participation to the level of sub-projects, which was in accordance with the MDBs' neoliberal discourse, and precluded the formation of political identities, so central to populism. Limited to sub-project level, participation in poverty reduction policies generated a low level of social synergies in the communities, which precluded the emergence of solidarity links among its members and hampered the articulation of social demands other than those the programmes addressed. Additionally, the referent to which those demands should be presented was unclear, as community organisations rarely knew where the funds and the programme contents came from (Etchegaray, 2002). Even at the sub-project level, although according to programme documents the community participated in the design, evaluation and execution of projects, in most programmes participation was narrower than that. In *PROMEBA* it was limited to "workshops of agreement" about projects that had already been designed (Tau, 2002) and in the health component of *PROMIN* it was limited to the promotion of the programme (Barral, 2002). Limiting participation to sub-project level reflected both the MDBs' neoliberal discourse and policy implementers' idealisation of civil society. Policy implementers defended restricting participation to the level of sub-projects. Even those who had been committed militants in social organisations considered micro-level participation positive. They argued that it isolated the activity of social organisations from interests at play in the political sphere that could interfere with the community's projects. In the words of *PROMIN*'s coordinator for community participation, "if participation exceeds the micro-level, proposals that damage political interests can appear…. and that would be the start of a little problem" (Anigstein, 2002).

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Although the specification of the contents of the main features of the neopopulist discourse showed the expansion of neoliberal features, Argentinean populism continued to be part of the discourse.

First, some political organisations, state institutions, and organisations moulded during the years of populist hegemony were in practice included in programme implementation. Therefore, the neoliberal aim of redrawing the boundaries between the public and the private was jeopardised by this reinforcement of existing overlaps between these spheres in the provinces and localities where programmes were implemented. The programmes frequently encountered a low level of community organisation in the localities where they were implemented (Etchegaray, 2002). They tried to encourage the formation of groups but the organisations involved in the programmes were usually existing community organisations such as parish groups, neighbourhood associations and nurseries (Barral, 2002; Etchegaray, 2002; Pucci, 2002), which had operated in the past within the hegemony of populism. Also, while organisations involved in programme implementation may not have been political, they were "politicised" in that for the organisations' members their past or current political militancy was important. As an interviewee put it, while NGOs did not have political labels, there was a "diaspora politicisation" (Flood, 2002). This was especially so in programmes working in areas where the organisations had been born out of political struggles, for example the *PSA*, which worked in rural locations (Bordelois, 2002), and *PROMEBA*, which dealt with habitat organisations (Tamargo, 2002). Additionally, in order to be included in the programme, that "politicisation" had to be linked to the official party and official party organisations could even be included in programmes if, for instance, they posed as newly formed groups that were independent from the party (Manóvil, 2005). State institutions, also part of the political sphere, could also be included in these programmes. In many localities where the programmes were implemented the sphere of civil society organisations and the state markedly overlapped. Sometimes members of the most important community organisations were also part of the local or provincial state bureaucracy (Martina, 2002), or state-funded organisation, eg nurseries, were the most important community organisations (Barral, 2002).

While policy implementers' "idealisation of civil society" (Flood, 2002) led them to express a preference for excluding political organisations from poverty reduction policies, in practice they tended to favour the inclusion of some of them They valued working with existing community organisations over groups that emerged or grew alongside neoliberal-inspired programmes, because of their roots in the community. They assumed those roots would guarantee project sustainability and thus efficient use of resources, but they also chose existing organisations because of their history of commitment to the social struggles of the community (Candiano, 2002; Barral, 2002). Policy implementers regarded the overlaps between state and private organisations at the community level as part of the reality of the programme context and thus believed they had to adapt to them (Peña, 2002). Moreover, policy implementers valued the potential of politicised organisations for channelling community demands, and therefore welcomed their inclusion (Richards, 2002).

Second, since state promotion of social organisation was directed towards the objective of saving state resources and civil society participation was limited to sub-projects, organisations were not sufficiently strengthened to become a permanent supplement of the state in poverty reduction policy implementation. Instead, state promotion made them dependent on state funds and guidance, which reinforced the blurred dividing line between the private and public spheres. As saving state resources prevailed over state promotion, targeting and a small budget reduced the scope and impact of the promotion of social organisation. Nationally funded programmes created especially for the purpose of strengthening civil society had few funds. The MDBs' advocacy of participatory strategies was not accompanied by MDB funds earmarked for strengthening social organisations (Etchegaray, 2002). Moreover, several interviewees highlighted the lack of attention given to civil society participation in the MDBs' evaluations, which focused mainly on fund execution (Vinocur, 2002; Barral, 2002) or bureaucratic compliance (Sabra, 2002). In fact, the promotion of social organisation depended on the will of programme and area coordinators. For example, *PROMIN*'s coordinator prioritised infrastructure construction and fund execution, in line with the government's interest in visible actions and the MDBs' measurement of efficiency based on fund execution. But even when a programme's explicit aim was to create a culture of participation, or its coordinators, as in *PAGV* and *PFSC*, were committed to promoting social

organisation, participation also depended on the predisposition of local communities to participate, which varied considerably across geographical areas (Alonso, et al., 2003: 112; Barral, 2002; Etchegaray, 2002; Candiano, 2002). The programmes could only foster this culture if it already existed (Díaz Muñoz, 2002; Barral, 2002) and, as participation in programmes could be included as a programme component but be minimal during implementation, the chances of strengthening civil society through involving social organisations in programme implementation were reduced. As a result, very few of the new groups survived after the projects had finished (Díaz Muñoz, 2002; Etchegaray, 2002) and the expansion of already existing organisations became dependent on state funds. The latter was the case of large specialist organisations working with *PROMIN* such as the *Sociedad Argentina de Pediatría* (*SAP* – Argentinean Society of Paediatricians) and the Argentinean branch of the Red Cross (Barral, 2002).

Third, as solidarity served as an anchor for interpreting the neoliberal notion of voluntary organisation in terms of "voluntary work" (*trabajo voluntario*), the neoliberal focus on the role of individual will (*voluntad individual*) in creating organisations independently from the state was de-emphasised. This enabled communitarian views of society and the objective of constructing political identities, both central to populism, to permeate the focus on unpaid work and turn it into "solidarity work" (*trabajo solidario*). Although the importance of solidarity in the *Plan Social* 1995 decreased when the Plan was implemented, solidarity was still expected to motivate organisations to engage in unpaid activities; it was about doing it for the community rather than for individual gains. Similarly, unpaid work perpetuated organisations' reliance on state funds, which appeared compatible with the populist logic of the constitution of political identities. Providing numerous project-based subsidies to a significantly stable group of intermediary NGOs contributed to their constitution as such, and NGOs started to develop a political identity despite their participation being limited to contribute to make sub-projects efficient. Although with the exception of *PROAME* (PROAME, 2000; PROAME, 2000b) interviewees refused to show lists of the organisations to which the funds were transferred, several organisations were repeatedly mentioned. These included, for example, *Servicio Habitacional y de Acción Social* (*SEHAS* – Housing and Social Action Service) of Córdoba Province (*PFSC*, *PAGV*, *PROMEBA*) and *Casa de la*

Mujer (Woman's House) of Misiones Province (*FOPAR*, *PAGV*, *PFSC*). Therefore, a significantly stable group of organisations emerged and became strong supporters of the neopopulist approach to poverty reduction. Their influence started to be seen during the Ortega years, when they joined the internal *SDS* staff in supporting the outgoing Secretary's methods and priorities. The role of policy makers was crucial in the formation of this stable group, since they selected the NGOs when a programme arrived in a new province – to a great extent in accordance with the experience of other programmes there (Orlowsky, 2002).

Finally, the difficulty in strengthening civil society via involving social organisations in policy implementation was not only the consequence of focusing on the neoliberal priority of saving state resources or limiting participation to sub-project level. It also reflected the resilience of populism – its focus on constructing political support and the government's prioritisation of constructing direct links with the people in an attempt to regain support from the popular sectors, which led to a focus on infrastructure rather than on community development objectives. The MDBs' focus on the execution of funds as a project evaluation criteria facilitated this (Barral, 2002; Mori, 2003). For instance, while *PROMEBA* documents stated that the programme was not one of infrastructure construction with a community development component but the other way around, the coordinator said that community participation was *"window dressing"* (Tau, 2002). Similarly, in *PROMIN*'s most participatory component – child development – participation was hindered by the programme coordinator's focus on fund execution and infrastructure (Barral, 2002), and *FOPAR* increasingly focused on inaugurating infrastructure and buildings (Etchegaray, 2002).

b. New features: more populism and an increased neoliberal accent on technical matters

From 1997 onwards, populism progressed within the discourse by resignifying the new features that were emerging in programme content and implementation because of the changes in the approach to poverty. These new features were municipalisation, employment strategies, the importance of leaders, and the concept of social capital.

All of them were only loosely articulated within the neoliberal project and thus emerged as floating signifiers available for other discursive articulations.

The inclusion of municipalities attempted to complement the neoliberal institutional reform of the post-Washington consensus years. Yet, in practice, it challenged the neoliberal aim of drawing a clear divide between the private and public spheres that had led to the exclusion of political organisations. While in the first years of the implementation of the *Plan Social* 1995 provincial and municipal levels were bypassed, from 1997 onwards the programmes analysed here started to incorporate municipalities into their implementation model (table 3). Initially, all the programmes avoided including the provincial and local levels of government in their implementation. *CENOC, PROAME* I and *PFSC* did not sign agreements with the provincial or local governments to operate in their jurisdictions. *FOPAR* signed agreements with the provinces where it operated, but only because the WB required it. *FOPAR*'s coordinator explained that *"... we wanted the money to reach the people directly, we didn't want local governments to get involved… it didn't even go through the provincial government..."* (Etchegaray, 2002). An exception was *PROMEBA*, in which the provinces and the national government applied for the IBD loan jointly (Tau, 2002). However, starting in 1997, all the programmes included municipalities in their implementation. *PFSC* started with the *"mesas de gestión asociada"* (associated management committees), and *PROAME* II included a component of project funding for social organisations and another budget line for strengthening provincial and municipal child and adolescent services (IDB, 1998: 2). At the end of the decade, *FOPAR* and *PAGV* transferred money to both social organisations and municipalities to execute projects (Calamante, 2002; Díaz Muñoz, 2002). While between 1995 and 1997 municipalities could select projects and organisations for programmes approval, from 1997 they were also entitled to administer programme funds, which only NGOs had done up to then, and to present projects and implement them, which only community organisations had done before 1997.

Including municipalities was in accordance with the post-Washington consensus focus on institutional reform and was aimed to improve decentralisation processes. In Argentina, however, strengthening links with local leaders and mayors was guided by the aim of building political support for the President by eroding Duhalde's power. It

entailed bypassing the party structure, because local mayors and party leaders were mainly Duhaldists (La Nación, 2-04-1998), and bypassing provincial governors, whose power had increased, particularly because their provinces' participation in national revenues had grown since Menem did not reformulate the 1992 and 1993 Fiscal Pacts (Eaton and Dickovick, 2004: 109, 110).

Tackling unemployment became a central objective of involving social organisations in poverty reduction programmes, leading to the use of funds earmarked for social organisations as a form of wage, which in turn, eroded the previous emphasis on unpaid work. Therefore, the departure of the discourse on civil society from the neoliberal reluctance to intervene in the economy implied in the incorporation of employment strategies, was evident in changes in the programmes' work with civil society. Although *FOPAR*'s Project Appraisal Document (PAD)[144] established that "employment generation is not part of the objectives of [FOPAR II]" (World Bank, 1998c), some paid work was included in the projects it funded and it was framed in the work of the programme with civil society.

> *"We managed to include a covert form of … unemployment insurance, even though the Banks were not totally in agreement… in a fund in the South [of Argentina] in the building sites they were paid... Also we paid wages to many of the [voluntary] groups…" (Etchegaray, 2002).*

In IDB programmes, state actors could introduce strategies for coping with unemployment in the implementation stage sooner and more openly. In *PROAME* I, wages could be paid with funds transferred for projects under the programme's objective of strengthening social organisations (IDB, 1995: 3-5), and in *PROMEBA* the funds sent to private companies that managed the construction were also used for wages. The IDB refused to include a requirement in *PROMEBA* for companies to employ people from the community in order to deal with unemployment issues in the targeted community, but in the field the programme negotiated separately with the companies to persuade them to contract local staff (Pisoni, 2002b; Pucci, 2002). National programmes continued to stress voluntary work, but transfers for NGO training courses were used to pay tutors' wages, in *CENOC*, and *PFSC* developed a

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[144] PADs are WB documents describing the project loans they approve for programme funding.

scholarship system to compensate for the productive hours attendees spent at the training sessions (Candiano, 2002).

During programme implementation, leaders became increasingly more important than NGOs. While this somewhat resembled the early neoliberal focus on individuals rather than on social organisation, it actually revived key distinctive features of the populist discourse, the importance of strong leadership and a conception of an intertwined relationship between state and civil society. The *"Animadores Comunitarios"* (Community Organisers) component of the *PFSC* focused on strengthening social leaders right from the start of the programme, and the IDB-funded *PROMEBA* also included local leaders as a target group in its "social intervention action" component (IDB, 1996c: 2). The centrality of leaders also grew in programmes in which, on paper, individual leaders were not central. Most programme staff acknowledged that although they encountered many difficulties in generating social organisation, after some years the programmes had become very successful in training social leaders and strengthening the ability and resources of these individuals. In *FOPAR*, for instance, "the role of the NGO was watered down... in most cases they ended up being individual technicians" (Flood, 2002). *PROAME* evaluation documents highlighted the centrality of leaders and suggested that this was linked to the importance given to strong leadership by the organisations' members and the community (PROAME, 2000: 22; PROAME, 2000b: 12, 21, 26). While the selection of leaders was based on their technical skills and their educational background or training, the importance they acquired in programme implementation reaffirmed the importance of strong leadership in civil society, key in the populist discourse. Furthermore, in many cases, especially with community organisations, the social leaders were local political leaders known as *"punteros"*, ie local political brokers who exchanged "favours" for the population for "votes" for a given political force (Auyero, 2001; 105, 106). For instance, in PROME these leaders usually occupied the role of technical supervisor and their connections with the political sphere was a valued capacity. As a *PROAME* coordinator explained, "... if an NGO community kitchen doesn't help pupils with their schoolwork, the government can provide that help and the intermediary who connects them is the technical supervisor" (Morales, 2002). Praising these leaders' ability to negotiate things for the community, another *PROAME* member remarked that "… it is good that they have additional resources.

The programme itself provides training in the generation of resources for sustainability, in a way that is an established technical capacity [for community organisations] (Richards, 2002).

The notion of social capital started to emerge in some programme documents. While this suggested a realignment of the discourse with the neoliberal discourse of the post-Washington consensus, the introduction of the notion of social capital was not reflected in concrete policy changes at the time. Therefore, the notion was not significantly redefined to make it attune to populism but, nevertheless, in the few documents where it was incorporated, the notion was de-linked from neoliberalism. In line with the MDBs, a *PROAME* evaluation document stated that "... the generation of social capital and institutional capacity will result in efficient management and in a greater chance of the processes implemented being sustainable" (PROAME, 2000: 39). Yet, the *Fondo de Capital Social* (*FONCAP* – Social Capital Fund), for example, took social capital to mean "social microenterprise". Also, a 1998 document reflected an attempt to reorganise the work of the *SDS* and create a social capital area that grouped together the programmes with civil society involvement. Although this reorganisation was never implemented, the document tried to adapt the MDBs' definition of social capital to the neopopulist approach to poverty. By associating social capital with the notion of human capital and linking the latter with solidarity and self-esteem, the document argued that the

> *"attributes of human capital, as manifest in identity, self-esteem and solidarity, and the ability to commit and participate, produce a combination of relationships, interconnections and synergies that enables a higher level of social productivity than human beings could produce on their own" (SDS, 1998).*

The resignifications of the notion were possible because social capital was still under considerable debate in the MDBs. The introduction of the notion of social capital did not lead to effective programme changes, principally because when the notion started to be debated in the *SDS* Ortega was appointed Secretary and under his direction the *SDS* did not prioritise work with social organisations (Candiano, 2002).

Despite the advances of populism from 1997 onwards, neoliberalism retained hegemony by stressing technical and methodological issues. Neoliberalism had taken root in the *SDS* in the first two years of the implementation of the *Plan Social* and thus the advances of populism were framed within neoliberal methodologies and technical language, which were expected to keep populism at bay. Therefore, while the discourse was becoming more populist, neoliberalism remained hegemonic and the non-conflictive co-existence of the two projects was maintained. Nevertheless, the neoliberal hegemony was weakened as the normative and contingent levels of the discourse were colonised by populism.

As neoliberalism took root in the *SDS* in its first years of operation, policy makers identified themselves as technically minded functionaries and defended the neopopulist approach to poverty and its focus on efficiency and methods. Policy makers and implementers believed that the programme's delivery model, evaluation methodologies and good administration were going to keep at bay attempts to construct direct links between political leaders and the people. In turn, this focus on methodologies and techniques reflected the neoliberal discourse, not only because they embodied the logic of difference but because they were tied to the MDB loans designed on the basis of the Banks' neoliberal views. The continuation of these loans after populism started to advance in the government and the *SDS,* was crucial in helping state actors to stress the importance of methodological and technical requirements. If put under political pressure to use programme funds to construct political support, state actors fell back on the argument that as a programme funded by the MDBs they had to comply with all those technical requirements (Díaz Muñoz, 2002). Faced with pressures to include politically oriented organisations or individual leaders, some state actors acknowledged that "… some mechanisms could help to generate more transparency … but techniques did not necessarily break with cultural habits" (Díaz Muñoz, 2002). However, many were confident that "[i]f there was a political decision, an arbitrary decision, it didn't matter; what mattered was that the requirements were met" (Etchegaray, 2002) and others explained "we accepted the 'punteros' or 'recommended' groups, but we incorporated them into the programme, we incorporated them into our methodology" (Denis, 2002).

As such, the advances of populism were framed within the priority of obtaining an efficient implementation of policies via the use of techniques and methods associated with the neoliberal discourse. State actors, attached to the neopopulist approach to poverty and its focus on efficiency and methods as well as the continuation of MDB programmes, were behind the framing of populist advances. Thus, while the transfer of funds from national government to the municipalities had political aims, in most cases municipalities were incorporated into programmes designed within the framework of the neoliberal-dominated approach to poverty and its emphasis on methodologies and techniques. Similarly, the attempt to introduce the notion of social capital was an attempt to redirect the state's work with social organisations in poverty reduction action into the new developments in the MDBs' neoliberal discourse, in which social capital was tied to objectives of efficiency. In the case of employment strategies, these were channelled through the same model of policy delivery which, in order to reduce state expenditure and involvement in the social sphere, suggested transfering programme funds to social organisations for them to administer them.

6. 4. Analytical summary and conclusions

This chapter has shown how the discourse on civil society in poverty reduction policies became a technopopulist version of neopopulism during Menem's second government. It has detailed how populism gained ground and how neoliberalism strengthened its focus on technical matters and thus could remain hegemony. Table 4 shows the map of events and actors involved in the formation of the technopopulist discourse.

In this period, the President's second re-election plans were crucial in defining the direction of change in the poverty reduction policy area and its discourse on civil society. As the government focused on a second re-election, it gave more spaces to populist objectives (b2). The pursuit of a second re-election in the context of dislocations (a) comprising increasing unemployment, decreasing political support, and a reorganised opposition led the government to opt to reconstruct its links with the popular sectors. This option paved the way for institutional changes affecting the *SDS* (c1) and changes in the approach to poverty reduction policy (c2 and c3). The

most salient institutional modification was the sidelining of the technical and neoliberal sectors of the *SDS* in favour of sectors sympathetic with addressing social demands in accordance to aims of political support construction (c1.1). In line with the government, poverty reduction policies emphasised highly visible actions in order to regain popular support for Peronism (c2). The resulting programmatic changes (c3)

TABLE 4: Actors and Factors Shaping the Neopopulist Discourse on Civil Society (1995-1999)

Underlying Dislocations (a) - Unemployment - Reorganised opposition - Debt-based growth		**Technopopulist**		
		Approach to Poverty (c3) reflected in programmes changes	**Discourse on Civil Society**	
Government's neoliberal veneer (b1)		*SDS* Approach changes (c2) Focus on technical aspects of neopopulist approaches and discourse		State Actors: (d2) - technical profile - path-shaping effect MDBs: (e2) neoliberal accent on techniques and efficiency
Government's growing populism (b2): - second re-election - search for reconnection with popular sectors - bypassing institutions	*SDS* institutional changes: (c1) Relegation of neoliberal sectors within the government (c1.1) Emergence of Cabinet Chief coordination Head of *SDS* with populist objectives	Visibility of actions leading to direct contact leader/people		State Actors: (d1) - own experiences of participation - contact with the field MDBs: (e1) - weak discourse on participation - differences between IDB and WB - MDB staff differences with MDB policies

reflected the emergence of challenges to the three key features of the neopopulist approach to poverty outlined in the *Plan Social* 1995. First, the emergence of universalistic approaches challenged the priority of coordinating existing policies and the focus on targeting. Second, employment strategies questioned the integral and

self-esteem-based view of poverty and the neoliberal reluctance to interfere with markets. Third, programmes' increasing links with municipalities implied a correction of the focus of the neoliberal discourse on civil society on technical organisations.

However, mainly to keep the IFIs' support despite macroeconomic problems, the government maintained a neoliberal veneer (b1), which resulted in an increased focus on formal and technical aspects of neoliberalism that limited the expansion of populism. In the poverty reduction area, while populism was becoming more visible in order to establish direct contact between political leaders and the people, technical issues stemming from the neopopulist discourse were retained and emphasised.

Within the general direction of change set by the government and the changes in the poverty reduction policy area, state actors – policy makers and implementers – and MDBs defined the specific features of the technopopulist discourse on civil society. They facilitated the expansion of Argentinean populism but, at the same time, were key in retaining and emphasising the technical aspects of the neopopulist discourse and thus in keeping neoliberalism hegemonic. Programme coordinators and implementers deepened populist views (d1) that were part of the neopopulist discourse of the *Plan Social* 1995 by incorporating into their actions their experiences of social and political participation, and of the context in which the programmes were implemented and in which Argentinean populism was still deeply rooted. The MDBs allowed the advance of populism (e1) because their focus on efficiency and technical matters resulted in them paying lip service to civil society participation, which was then left in the hands of state policy makers and implementers – ie programme and programme area coordinators. Moreover, the differences between the IDB and WB strategies and in the views of MDB staff involved in policy design and implementation, as well as the changes in the MDBs' approaches to poverty reduction and civil society from the mid-1990s, facilitated further the expansion of populist views.

While the MDBs' neglect of civil society participation matters sometimes led to "*dibujar las evaluaciones del programa*" (painting a false picture in the evaluations) (Anigstein, 2002), it also constituted an opportunity for discursive re-creations during implementation if programme coordinators were committed to including civil society

organisations. According to the *PROMEBA* community participation coordinator, "... you can change things according to what the fieldworkers see. They analyse what they see and then decide how best to work" (Pucci, 2002). The Banks accepted the changes suggested by the programmes, not only because of the technical language the policy makers used to justify these changes (Etchegaray, 2002; Vinocur, 2002; Barral, 2002) but because of the attention paid by the IDB to country-specific demands and the emerging WB discourse on ownership. For instance, while the WB made *FOPAR* sign agreements with the provinces, the IDB was more flexible and accepted the domestic preference to avoid signing agreements with provincial governors. Yet, framing it in the ownership paradigm, the WB, tolerated the introduction of actions to tackle unemployment in poverty reduction actions. Another possibility for the introduction of populist views lay in the fragmented character of the negotiations with the Banks. Interviewees regarded the Banks as "'schizophrenic' because those involved in project formulation are from the technical area of the Bank, but those who, once the loan has been approved, monitor execution, belong to the operations area" (Vinocur, 2002), and pointed out that during negotiations, while some Bank sectors could block domestic proposals, others might help to get them approved. This was the case with the inclusion of informal organisations in *FOPAR*, which the WB legal department disliked but which the technical sectors approved of (Etchegaray, 2002).

As the government reduced neoliberalism to a veneer, the predominance of neoliberalism was maintained in the discourse on civil society mainly through an increased focus on technical issues. State actors became the guardians of the neoliberal hegemony (d2), stressing further the *Plan Social* mission of rationalising the poverty reduction policy area and the emphasis on technical issues. This reflected policy makers' and implementers' own technical backgrounds and was the result of the path-shaping effect of the first years of *SDS* work, which focused on the rationalisation of poverty reduction action. The presence of MDB funds (e2) in programmes contributed to maintaining the predominance of the neoliberal project and limiting the populist colonisation, even after the transition from Amadeo to Ortega when civil society involvement in policies became more dependent on programme coordinators, and the weight of the neoliberal sectors of the *SDS* had decreased.

The discourse on civil society that emerged from these political struggles embedded in institutions and in actors' decisions – which drew on their identities shaped by their technical profile, political allegiances and personal experiences – resulted in a discourse that first, reflected the consolidation of a neoliberal predominance although populism managed to remain within the discourse. Technical organisations were the main civil society actors involved in policies, state promotion of social organisation was aimed at making them a permanent supplement of the state in policy delivery, and solidarity was mainly interpreted as voluntary work ("trabajo solidario"). Populism's resilience was seen in the fact that political organisations were sometimes included in programme implementation, social promotion was insufficient to make organisations permanent supplements of state policy implementation, instead making them more dependent on its funds and guidance, and objectives of political identity construction were behind the emphasis on solidarity as "voluntary work".

Second, Argentinean populism gained ground within the discourse by re-articulating the new features that were emerging in the implementation and new design of policies as floating signifiers – municipalisation, employment strategies, the importance of leaders, and the concept of social capital. However, as neoliberalism had taken root in the *SDS* in the first two years of the implementation of the *Plan Social 1995*, the advances of neoliberalism were framed within a marked stress on neoliberal methodologies and technical language, which were expected to keep the advance of populism at bay. Therefore, while the discourse was becoming more populist, neoliberalism remained hegemonic and the non-conflictive co-existence of the two projects was maintained.

Nevertheless, the neoliberal hegemony was weakening. Neoliberalism's core normative elements became less important while the discourse remained strongly attached to the logic of institutions and to technical approaches to social demands. Instead, the logical component of populism led this project's expansion within the neopopulist discourse, since this expansion was guided by the President's objective of regaining popular support for his second re-election plans, and also paved the way for the introduction of normative and contingent components of populism.

Chapter 7

Challenging neopopulism (2000-2001)

This chapter focuses on the *Alianza* government. It analyses its attempts to challenge the neopopulist discourse on civil society in the poverty reduction area, and the political struggles that hindered those attempts. In the previous two chapters the focus was on deconstructing the discourse to unveil the political struggles beneath, but in the *Alianza* years the discourse could not be fixed and thus this chapter concentrates on detailing the views of the different actors, which were the subject of constant debate.

The *Alianza* attempted to challenge the neopopulist discourse by moving the focus from technical NGOs to government agencies and other types of social organisations, such as cooperatives and universities. They also abandoned the objective of supplementing the state with social organisations in programme implementation and preferred to strengthen the state to make to the core body delivering policy and to include organisations as advisers to the state. They sought to establish state-individual citizen relationships and thus shelved the notion of solidarity. They focused on criticising the aspects of that notion related to the generation of political identities rather than on considering those aspects related to the generation of social synergies that could lead to community improvements.

The *Alianza* failed to articulate a new discourse on civil society. The difficulties in generating a new discourse on civil society were a reflection of the government's failure to construct a new hegemonic discourse and to articulate a distinctive approach to poverty. State actors in the poverty reduction area were therefore highly fragmented. Those state actors seeking to fixate new elements in the discourse on civil society were unable to articulate a common discourse and were unable to overcome internal opposition of other policy makers and implementers, social organisations linked to poverty reduction policies in previous years, and the MDBs, who all joined

together to oppose the attempts to change the neopopulist discourse. Crucially, the lack of policy execution precluded any implementation of the innovations reflected in programmes.

However, the *Alianza* unintentionally contributed to the re-emergence of the Argentinean populist discourse on civil society. Its efforts to change the discourse broke the chains of equivalences and differences that kept the neopopulist discourse together and paved the way for the deepening of the ongoing colonisation of the neoliberal hegemony within that discourse by populism. The alianza contributed to this re-emergence not so much by bringing into the state discourse on civil society elements of the Argentinean populist discourse on civil society that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s and elements that the neopopulist discourse had left out – social economy and human rights issues – but by failing to address social demands as a government. The isolation of the government was key in making civil society show the survival of their preferences for non-institutionalised forms of advancing their demands, revealing that the core of populism was still there despite the neoliberal predominance in the discourse on civil society throughout the1990s.

The first section considers the *Alianza*'s failure to construct a new hegemonic discourse. The second section describes the main debates on approaches to poverty that could not be settled and articulated as a discourse during this government. The third section focuses on the efforts to redefine the neopopulist discourse on civil society in poverty reduction action and how these efforts appeared in the redefinitions of programmes. The concluding section summarises the chapter and shows the main political struggles that hampered the *Alianza*'s attempts to redefine the discourse on civil society.

7.1. The *Alianza*'s failure to articulate a new hegemony

In October 1999 the *Alianza* candidates for President and Vice-President, Fernando de la Rúa from the UCR, and Carlos Álvarez from *FREPASO*, won the elections with 48.5% of the votes. Their campaign was based on the continuation of the key tenets of

neoliberalism, but they differentiated themselves from the outgoing government by their focus on helping the poorest sectors, fighting corruption and strengthening democratic institutions (Novaro, 2002a: 2; 1998: 3; Vilas, 1998: 1).

Once in government, the *Alianza* failed to articulate a new hegemonic discourse (Portantiero, 2002). They tried to revive neoliberalism, which Menem's second government had reduced to a veneer, and rejected populism to frame neoliberalism in a more liberal-democratic context. Yet, the *Alianza*, which was a young coalition formed in 1997, bringing together *FREPASO*, made up of dissident Peronists and left-wing political forces, and the *UCR*, which comprised both left-wing, led by Alfonsín, and conservative sectors, aligned with De la Rúa, remained in the construction of a constitutive outsider without generating chains of equivalence and difference within the discourse. They stayed focused on emphasising the difference between themselves and the outgoing government by using a rhetoric of institutional strengthening, and refused to develop an unmediated relationship between a leader from the coalition and the people.

The fact that the *Alianza* was a newly emerged coalition, which lacked a clear leadership capable of dissolving the difference of the parties that constituted it, and the President's rejection of focusing on the construction of political identities, was at the core of the *Alianza*'s failure to internally articulate its discourse. These same factors made the *Alianza*'s adoption of neoliberalism inconsistent, since this inconsistencies reflected not only internal dissidence but also a preference for pleasing international actors rather than addressing the population's demands. Also internal dissidence combined with institutionalism and avoidance of unmediated relationships with the people led to the use of centralised decision-making that ignored established institutions in key decisions. This added up to the reluctance to liaise with the population and created an increasing distance between the President and social and political actors[145] that further difficulted the possibilites of the Alianza to address the dislocations its discourse had to address.

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[145] Novaro, 2002: 13 considers the *Alianza*'s isolation from society and Corrales, 2002a: 30 indicates the key role that the President's isolation from the leading members of the official party – which he calls the state-without-a-party condition – played in the Argentinean crisis of 2001.

The *Alianza* adopted neoliberalism in the economic field, but inconsistently. The government started aspiring to a model of social capitalism that aimed to combine "more market and more state" (Novaro, 2002b: 97). However, the first measures, far from leading to "more state", focused on reducing fiscal deficit, which in 1999 was US$7,100m exceeding the US$6,500m limit set in the law of fiscal responsibility.[146] Neoliberalism was also reflected in the deepening of second-generation reforms. For instance, in 2000, the Congress approved a labour reform law. But, since reducing fiscal deficit curtailed productive investment and consumption, and thus the recession that had begun in late 1998 continued (Annex I, figure 13), and the $6,600m fiscal deficit of 2000 exceeded the $4,700m[147] target set with the IMF (La Nación, 11-01-2001), the Economy Minister, José Luis Machinea, tried the original "more market and more state" solutions. A $7,000m budget was approved for 2001, including funds for intervening in the economy with infrastructure plans, more social programmes, and the creation of a Ministry of Production to promote employment and reactivate the economy (Bonvecchi, 2002: 140-2). However, as fears of devaluation increased and the macroeconomy showed no improvement, Ricardo López Murphy replaced Machinea in March 2001 and resumed a neoliberal orientation. His adjustment measures annoyed the population and most political sectors, and Cavallo soon replaced him. The new Minister tried again to expand the role of the state in reactivating the economy although it tried to restore fiscal solvency (Bonvecchi, 2002: 148-9). But he failed to regain the markets' trust (La Nación, 20-03-2001) and hence he refocused on fiscal balance priorities. He launched a debt swap (*"megacanje"*) to defer 2001 debt interest repayments (Broda, 2001; Bonvecchi, 2002: 153) and, in July, adopted a "zero deficit" package of adjustment measures (Bonvecchi: 2002: 156). Nevertheless, the scepticism of financial analysts, the growth of social protest, and persistent fears of devaluation led to a dramatic flight of capital amounting to US$8,546m between July and August (Bonvecchi, 2002: 157) which made Cavallo limited bank withdrawals with a measure known as the *"corralito"*[148]. The measure triggered protests by savers that joined ongoing protests by other actors excluded from the government's decisions. The protests grew and led to the resignation of De la Rúa, the end of the *Alianza* and the default in December 2001 on a US$155 billion debt (Tedesco, 2003: 166).

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[146] This law, passed in 1999 under Menem's presidency, tied fiscal deficit to GDP growth (Bonvecchi, 2002: 140).
[147] $1=US$1.
[148] In Spanish *corralito* means both small animal's pen and child's playpen.

Despite its campaign promises to strengthen institutions, the *Alianza* made extended use of centralised and extra-institutional means of political decision-making to deal with internal political differences and a fragmented but strong opposition. The Senate bribery scandal and budget negotiations with the provinces illustrate this. Suspicions of bribery in the Senate in order to get the labour law passed triggered confrontations between different sectors of the *Alianza*. The Vice-President felt that his project of state and political reform was under threat and decided to investigate the claims (Makón, 2002).[149] But the President protected his party and gave the suspects of corruption his full support by keeping them in the cabinet after a re-shuffle, carried out without consulting with the Vice-President or the coalition parties. The Vice-President resigned and the *Alianza* began to split (Morales Solá, 2001: 85-8, 148-51; Novaro, 2002b: 86-96).[150] Regarding the budget negotiations with the provinces, since the provinces generated most of the fiscal deficit, the *Alianza* needed the provinces to reduce expenditure to restore fiscal solvency. Yet governors, mostly from the *PJ*, were reluctant to retrench (Ollier, 2003: 197). The government made the provinces reduce their share in the co-participation of tax revenues, as required by the IMF for the approval of a large loan known as *blindaje* (financial armour), by negotiations centred on the President which included threats of approving the new co-participation pact by executive decree.

The *Alianza*'s by-passing of institutions, however, did not involve a direct contact with people to address their demands trying to construct political support. The *Alianza* neglected a key popular demand – to tackle unemployment and reactivate the economy. Instead they persistently chose to please creditors and avoid devaluation and default (Bonvecchi, 2002: 123). In the first year of this government the divergence from neoliberalism received IMF approval. The IMF approved the US$39.7m (La Nación, 19-12-2000) *blindaje* loan*,* accepting Machinea's attempt at "more market and more state" solutions (Bonvecchi, 2002: 142). Yet, in 2001 the US Treasury and the new IMF management were harsher and less tolerant of deviations from their recommendations (Corrales, 2002b; 2002a: 36). International creditors were especially concerned about the *Alianza*'s inability to generate broad popular

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[149] For other interpretations see Novaro, 2002b: 86-96
[150] Only after the popular rejection of the government in the October 2001 legislative elections (Escolar et al. 2002: 40) did *FREPASO* legislators separate from the official block of deputies, but they did not officially leave the *Alianza*.

support for its neoliberal reform plans and increasingly believed that a debt default was inevitable (La Nación, 26-10-2000). Thus the government chose to avoid default rather than to respond to the social conflicts stemming from recession and unemployment. While unemployment increased from 14.5% in 1999 to 15.4% in 2000 and 16.4% in 2001 (Annex I, figure 12) and by 2001 income poverty levels had become close to what they were in the years of hyperinflation (Annex I, figure 11), the government focused on complying with fiscal balance objectives and tried to eliminate state employment subsidies such as *Trabajar*.

The isolation of the government from the population was growing. The attempt to cancel employment subsidies led to popular protests in February 2001, which eroded the relationship the *Alianza* had established with groups such as teachers and the *CTA* during the electoral campaign. In these protests the dissident *CGT* and other worker and social organisations, especially the *Corriente Clasista and Combativa* (*CCC* – Classist and Combatant Stream) and the *Federación Tierra y Vivienda* (*FTV* – Land and Housing Federation) gained visibility and popular support. Cavallo's "zero deficit" measures encountered widespread rejection by public workers, pensioners, human rights organisations, leftist forces and unions, including those grouped together in the *CTA* and both the dissident and the official *CGT*. By July 2001 there were almost 10,000 protesters at 37 roadblocks across the country (La Nación 1-08-2001). After the *Alianza´s* defeat in the October elections, those affected by the *corralito* joined the protests.

In short, the *Alianza* was a weak coalition that did not prioritise the construction of political identities by processing, either in a mediated or an unmediated way, social demands. This further weakened an already weak coalition and jeopardised the possibility of the government deciding on measures that were unpopular or differed from the IMF and other creditors' positions such as devaluation, in opposition to both external and domestic actors, or adjustment, which negatively affected the population. Having to choose between pleasing external or internal actors, the government chose to please international lenders, implementing neoliberal measures that distanced them further from the population's demands. Moreover, neoliberal reforms were decided using centralised decision-making strategies, which added extra distance between the

President, including his closest advisers, and the political forces and society in general.

7.2. Poverty: unsettled debates

The *Alianza* aspired to build a welfare state regime (Esping Andersen, 1991 [2004]: 2), which, like neoliberalism, preferred the logic of difference to address social demands. Yet, unlike neoliberalism, it emphasised the centrality of the state over individuals and the private sphere. They aimed to develop a form of social capitalism around that welfare state regime, based on the idea of the social right to a minimum living standard independent of market forces (Esping Andersen, 1990[2004]; 3).

Therefore, the arrival of the *Alianza* paved the way for the increase of challenges to the core pillars of the neopopulist approach to poverty where neoliberalism had remained hegemonic in both Menem's government – the focus on policy coordination and targeting using *NBI* indicators, the integral definition of poverty, and the focus on social organisations. The challenges consisted of deepening features that had emerged in the neopopulist discourse in the mid 1990s and which had implied a challenge to the neoliberal predominance in the approach to poverty, but which neoliberalism had domesticated through focusing on technical matters and transforming the discourse into a technopopulist version of neopopulism. Hence, with the arrival of the *Alianza* the objective of establishing a universal system of social assistance, addressing unemployment by focusing on income poverty and attempting minimum income schemes, and the inclusion of different government levels in policies, all gained new impetus.

However, the government's choice of neoliberalism, provincial pressures and the increasing social uprisings limited the possibilities of redefining the approach to poverty. Every time the government focused on achieving fiscal balance, initiatives to improve the coordination of existing policies prevailed over the objective of developing a universal minimum income system. The difficult relationship between the government and the provinces jeopardised attempts to change the approach to

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poverty since the national government managed only 30% of social expenditure (La Nación, 27-4-2001). Also, dealing with social uprisings required a speed in decision-making that prevented the emergence of new thinking. One of the Secretaries of the period explained that "you weren't able to respond, you spent all your time dealing with conflicts ... the Ministers... spent their days dodging bullets..." (Isuani, 2002)

Additionally, as the *Alianza* failed to articulate a new hegemonic discourse at the broad governmental level, neopopulist and new views in the field of poverty reduction remained in a permanent struggle for hegemony. Intra-government and intra-ministry divisions impeded the dissolution of differences in state actors' views on poverty reduction and the MDBs played an important role in supporting the actors resisting change. Therefore, instead of the emergence of a new approach to poverty, the attempts to re-articulate the approach to poverty remained as unsettled debates.

A combination of these factors led to a practical impediment to the implementation of the changes introduced to the programmes in an attempt to redefine the approach to poverty - the lack of policy execution.

a. The debates and their reflection in programmes

The challenges to the neopopulist approach to poverty were underpinned by the *Alianza*'s search for the construction of a form of social capitalism that was accompanied by an accent on implementing infrastructure plans to tackle employment. While these plans did not prosper, their introduction contributed to opening up the possibility of challenging the neopopulist approach to poverty.

The debates that emerged from the attempts to redefine the approach to poverty were organised around a central struggle between the prioritisation of policy coordination and proposals for a system of universal social assistance, usually concerned with setting up minimum income schemes. Those focused on coordination were usually reluctant to redefine the neopopulist approach while proposing universal minimum income systems went against the neopopulist approach's focus on targeting and its reluctance to interfere in the labour market.

A second struggle concerned the conflict between the neopopulist view of poverty as an integral phenomenon and the reinforcement of the idea that unemployment and income poverty were at the core of poverty, from where the proposal of minimum income systems derived. The resolution in practice of a third debate related to this conflict between integral and income poverty – how to transfer goods or funds to tackle unemployment-related problems – showed the resilience of an integral view of poverty. While those defending the neopopulist approach continued to prefer the transfer of funds through projects managed by social organisations, those more attuned to social capitalism held that the state should provide goods and services, such as public works or food, whereas money transfers should take the form of universal benefits. In practice, cash was transferred through targeted programmes and delivered against counter-provisions, which consisted of activities that helped the recipients' integration in their communities. Therefore, targeting continued and traces of the integral definition of poverty remained.

Finally, and in relation to the third pillar of the neopopulist approach to poverty, a focus on social organisation, the *Alianza*'s institutionalist stance implied that direct state contact with the people – of the type they argued occurred in the model of implementation of targeted programmes through social organisations – was discouraged. Instead, they sought to establish mediated contact with individual citizens via institutionalised systems of benefits.

The main *Alianza* poverty reduction initiatives and the modifications made to existing programmes echoed these debates. They showed that the closest the *Alianza* came to developing a universal minimum income system was the development of programmes the benefits of which, while not always cash income, were made available to the whole "universe" of targeted populations. Table 5 shows the main debates that emerged regarding the redefinition of the approach to poverty during the years of the Alianza government and how the position of the poverty reduction programmes of those years in those debates.

TABLE 5: Main Debates during the *Alianza* Government on the Approach to Poverty and their Reflection in Programmes

Debates	Poverty Reduction				Investment in Infrastructure
Coordination vs Redefinition	Coordination Purists *Plan Terragno* *Social Agency* *Solida*	Minimum Income System Within targets (most *NBI based*) *ridad* *Jefas de Hogar* *Existing Programmes* *Seguro*		Universal minimum income system *Infantil (SI)*	Questioning neoliberalism
Integral Poverty vs Income Poverty	Integral	Poverty		Income Poverty	
Cash vs Goods and Services	Cash Transfers	Cash within Projects	Cash against Counter-provision	Cash as Universal Benefits	Goods and Services
State/People vs State/Citizens	Direct contact with People or Social Organisations		Indirect Contact with Individuals or Families		
NEOPOPULIST APPROACH			SOCIAL CAPITALIST APPROACH		

References: �粉 Programmes

The *Alianza*'s first social plan*, Plan Solidaridad* (Solidarity Plan), focused on coordinating existing poverty reduction policies and, to this purpose, the development of a registry of beneficiaries. The nutrition pillar of the plan, the programme *Unidos* (United) was the only pillar actually implemented. It distributed food boxes, cash subsidies and payments for programme promoters in the form of contributions to their expenses (MDSyM, et al. 2001: 8). While these provisions sought to complement labour market and social security system deficiencies (MDSyM, et al. 2000: 10), they were not presented as income substitutes and were not the central element of the programme according to its first design (MDSyM, et al., 2001: 1). Targeting continued and was refined in a form of "targeting within targets". *NBI* and income

poverty indicators were used to select geographical areas, and, within these areas, the programme delivered its provisions to selected families using an income proxy called *Índice de Calidad de Vida* (*ICV* – Quality of Life Index) (MDSyM, et.al. 2001: 6; MDSyM et.al. 2000: 23).

In contrast, the last poverty reduction initiative launched by the *Alianza*, the *Pacto por la Niñez* (Childhood Pact), which included the *Seguro Infantil* (*SI*) programme, aimed to plant the seeds of a new social security system. Like *Solidaridad, SI* included money transfers, focused on families and the informally employed sectors, used a census to compile a list of beneficiaries, and combined *NBI* and income poverty indicators to select its target groups. Unlike *Solidaridad*, *SI* was formulated as a minimum income programme to be delivered to all those falling within the target groups, and monetary subsidies were central. Moreover, *SI* was not limited to coordinating existing programmes and included new actions that required significant investment (Cafiero, 2002). The programme introduced a focus on children and it regarded the requirements for accessing the benefit – returning to education, participation in community activities, and health checks – not as counter-provisions but as beneficiaries' rights (Seguro de Inclusión Infantil, 2001: 1, 2, 9, 10).

The programme *Jefas de Hogar* (Female Heads of Household) was another attempt to develop a minimum income system. It proposed a system of income support for children and female heads of household below the poverty line, and unemployed young people (STEyAS, 2001: 31). Similarly to *SI*, while the programme designer – Aldo Isuani – aspired to the universalisation of social security, the programme could only provide income to everyone within a target population, and ask for the same requirements as SI to access to programme's benefits. (STEyAS, 2001: 30-1). Yet, unlike *SI*, these counter-provisions were considered obligations rather than rights and the focus was on the unemployed rather than on the informally employed sectors (STEyAS, 2001: 5). Both *Jefas* and *SI* differed with *Solidaridad* in that cash transfers were not provided for a specified use such as purchasing food, nor as compensation for voluntary work, but were considered as income support.

Of the programmes launched during Menem's governments, the IDB-funded ones most reflected concerns with minimum income objectives. WB-funded *PROMIN* and

FOPAR retained their *NBI* targeting criteria. Moreover, *PROMIN* focused on coordination as its integration with the National Directorate of Mother and Child Health at the Ministry of Health began, and the coordination of action with other national programmes and similar ones at the provincial level was prioritised (UCEPMIN, 2000: 27-29). *FOPAR* continued to see poverty as integral and its implementation model remained unchanged (FOPAR, 2000: 3). IDB-funded *PROMEBA* did not challenge the targeted approach to poverty and prioritised coordination objectives (Pisoni, 2002b). Yet, IDB-funded *PAGV* and *PROAME* were redefined as *Alianza* initiatives. *Jefas* absorbed the "women" component of the *PAGV* and adopted this programme's inclusion of unemployment as a targeting criterion (chapter 6), but both *NBI* and poverty line were eliminated from the definition of the poor and the programme conceived of the latter in terms of employment/unemployment (Isuani, 2002). This reformulation of *PAGV* aligned the IDB in favour of the establishment of an initial form of minimum income system. The *Alianza* also attempted to incorporate *PROAME* into *Solidaridad* and, later, to merge it with *SI*, because of *PROAME*'s focus on children. In both cases the aim was to absorbe *PROAME*'s funds (Richards, 2002; Morales, 2002) and since the programmes were not fully implemented, the changes attempted had no significant effects. Nationally-funded programmes were radically redefined. The *PFSC* was cancelled *CENOC* reflected all the changes the *Alianza* tried to introduce into the discourse on civil society.

c. Actors' positions in the debates

i.   *Intra-government disputes*

The main advocate of the infrastructure development approach to poverty reduction was the President. As soon as he took office, the government created the Ministry of Infrastructure and the President appointed one of his most loyal collaborators, Ezequiel Gallo, as its head. After the Senate scandal, he put the area under the responsibility of the Ministry of Economy, in order to insert infrastructure planning into the key area of economic decision-making. These proposals did not prosper however, mainly because of insufficient funds and because the government made the

SDS a Ministry (*MDSyM, Ministerio de Desarrollo Social y Medioambiente* – Social Development and Environment Ministry), upgrading the institutional status of the area in which the neopopulist approach prevailed.

For as long as the *Alianza* prioritised neoliberal fiscal balance objectives, coordinating existing policies was the focus in poverty reduction policy. Yet, intra-government disputes, mirroring intra-*Alianza* struggles, hindered the full implementation of coordination initiatives. The *MDSyM*, whose first head was *FREPASO*'s Graciela Fernandez Meijide, developed the *Plan Solidaridad*, the focus of which was the coordination of poverty reduction policies that the *MDSyM* would take responsibility for. The Health Minister, Héctor Lombardo, from the *UCR* and close to De la Rúa, remained sceptical about *Solidaridad* and his support was critical because *Solidaridad* coordination responsibilities included that Ministry's programme *PROMIN*. (Rovere, 2002). Moreover, *PROMIN* was even expected to become part of *Solidaridad* and its new coordinator, Pablo Vinocur, disagreed with *Solidaridad,* making that incorporation more difficult (Vinocur, 2002). Additionally, soon after the launch of *Solidaridad*, the President commissioned his Cabinet Chief – Rodolfo Terragno, from the *UCR* – to carry out a study that led to the *Plan Terragno*. Although the plan was never implemented its proposals - reducing programmes, redefining the use of national and international funds and genering a single register of beneficiaries - implied a lack of support Presidential support for *Solidaridad* since it covered the same coordinating responsibilities Solidaridad covered.

Meijide's difficulties in implementing *Solidaridad* also stemmed from the loss of support from her own party, *FREPASO*, which proposed a different plan for programme coordination. Meijide established a good relationship with the Economy Minister, Machinea, from the *UCR,* in order to gain political leverage within the government, but that cost her the support of her own political party. Álvarez, *FREPASO's* leader, developed the *Agencia Social* (Social Agency) (La Nación, 8-03-2001), which focused on coordinating and monitoring poverty reduction action (Makón, 2002) and thus implied his lack of support for Meijide's *Solidaridad*. Meijide left the government because accusations of corruption and inability to implement policy found her without supports in her party or the government after Machinea left the Economy Ministry. *FREPASO*'s Marcos Makón then became head

of the *MDSyM* and the creation of the Social Agency was his main objective (La Nación, 9-03-2001). However, *FREPASO* government members' resignation in opposition to López Murphy's adjustment measures precipitated the end of this force's leadership over the Agency. The idea of the Agency returned to the agenda when *FREPASO*'s Juan Pablo Cafiero was Minister of Social Development but, since his main objective was the minimum income progremma *SI*, the President's closest circle took the lead in promoting the Agency plans, especially the Labour Minister, Patricia Bullrich (Isuani, 2002; Cafiero, 2002).

Minister Cafiero's *SI* brought the objective of developing a system of minimum income support into the limelight. Yet, the programme's openly stated aim of generating an income redistribution system defied the government's neoliberalism –its rejection of intervention in the functioning of the economy and its focus on state retrenchment. "A starting point here is the understanding of social policy as a strategy for transferring resources to families … creating a scheme for wealth redistribution in favour of the most neglected sectors" (Seguro de Inclusión Infantil, 2001). When Cavallo announced his "zero deficit" measures the clash became more visible. Cafiero's confrontation with the government also connected with intra- *Alianza* issues – when Cavallo entered the cabinet Álvarez expected to be called back to the government, but that did not happen. Cafiero also challenged the government's lack of responses to social protests and travelled without the President's consent to the most conflictive areas.[151] Budget cuts planned for 2002, in addition to the 90% cut for the *MDSyM* in the last trimester of 2001, triggered Cafiero's resignation in October, after the *Alianza*'s defeat in the legislative elections (Cafiero, 2002; La Nación, 12 and 21-10-2001). A radical replaced him, and coordination objectives using the idea of the Agency were once again prioritised.

ii.   *Intra-ministerial divisions*

Inside the *MDSyM*, divisions based on previous institutional allegiances, as well as on partisan and bureaucratic lines, informed the debates about the approach to poverty reduction.

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[151] Cafiero travelled to Gral. Mosconi and Tartagal to hold talks with the protesters, after two men died in the conflict. (La Nación, 23 and 30- 6-2001)

The key Secretariats of the *MDSyM* were distributed among prominent social scientists whose views were united, despite their partisan differences, by the fact that they had all been members of UNICEF teams in Argentina during Menem's governments, and as such had strongly opposed the 1990s approach to poverty (chapter 5). Aldo Isuani (*UCR*) was Secretary for the Elderly and Social Action for the whole of this government, and Eduardo Basualdo (*FREPASO*), was Secretary of Social Policy for the first few months and then Mario Rovere (*FREPASO*) and later Pablo Vinocur (*FREPASO*) replaced him. Only Rovere had no links to UNICEF, but he had been on the staff of UN PAHO (Pan American Health Organisation). Gerardo Morales from the *UCR*, was Secretary for Social Development and was the only non-UN related Secretary. Once in government, these functionaries' UNICEF allegiance became apparent as the ultimate aim of their policies was to "…stop the intergenerational reproduction of poverty ... 'we have to save the kids'" (Rovere, 2002). *Jefas* and *SI* target groups echoed this view. Isuani explained that *Jefas* was a programme that focused, "among the unemployed, ... [on] the most vulnerable...[:] heads of households with children, especially women" (Isuani, 2002).

This UNICEF-related group excluded those who did not share their views, including Minister Meijide. As a result, in addition to the inter-ministerial disputes, *Solidaridad* was rejected by UNICEF-related sectors within the *MDSyM* (Rovere, 2002). As Secretary of Social Policy, Vinocur criticised *Solidaridad* because "it was all about funds for social promoters rather than subsidies for the families." (Vinocur, 2002) and because he favoured universalisation within target populations rather than *Solidaridad'*s "targeting within targets". He explained that "in the field, it was very difficult to explain why one family was receiving the subsidy and another wasn't" (Vinocur, 2002).

While lack of funds impeded the full implementation of universal minimum income systems, intra-*Alianza* disputes within the Ministry hindered the implementation of even small minimum income system initiatives and of programmes in general. Critically, areas in the hands of one *Alianza* party did not release funds for policies in areas that were in the hands of the other. "There was a mosaic of political interests, it was just like the Montagues and the Capulets" (Siede, 2002) and "… anything of a

different political colour was shelved" (Richards, 2002). Isuani's *Jefas* programme was particularly affected by partisan divisions. Although he advocated minimum income policies and was linked to UNICEF, he was from the *UCR*. He was excluded from the design of programmes with minimum income components, such as *Unidos* and *SI*. Hence, he designed his own programme, *Jefas*, but never obtained support within the Ministry, except for the brief periods when the *UCR* controlled the Ministry. Isuani explained that *Jefas* was implemented in only one province because of disagreements with Minister Meijide but when she left and Lombardo, Health Minister from UCR, and again when Bullrich, Labour Minister and close to De la Rúa, took control of the *MDSyM* the programme had more opportunities to expand (Isuani, 2002).

Programme coordinators and programme area coordinators within the *MDSyM* were a source of multiple forms of resistance to change. First, there was resistance to coordination initiatives since they could lead to redundancies and budget reallocations. *Solidaridad* and *SI*, which intended to merge and redirect funds of existing programmes, were particularly resisted. *SI*, in turn, was resisted by *Solidaridad* staff, because *SI* absorbed *Solidaridad* funds (Pucciarelli, 2002; Cafiero, 2002). Second, the state actors that resisted the advances of populism through an emphasis on techniques and methodologies in the technopopulist years remained in the *MDSyM* and continued to advocate the neopopulist approach. UNICEF-related staff, known for having long criticised that approach to poverty reduction, had difficulties in reaching agreements with those state actors. A good example of this difficult co-existence was in the attempts to transform *PAGV* into *Jefas*. The first *PAGV* coordinator criticised Isuani's attempts to reformulate the programme, saying that [Isuani's] ideas were "far from [*PAGV*] and… the programme was on stand-by for four months without funds" (Díaz Muñoz, 2002).

iii.   The MDBs

The MDBs and the *MDSyM* did not establish a good relationship. While in the 1990s the Banks were open to accepting domestic policy makers' proposals if they were technically sound, the space for negotiation was limited for the *Alianza*. This reflected

the IFIs' doubts about the *Alianza*'s political authority and the general re-orientation of the IMF, and specific conflicts between the MDBs and the Ministry.

The MDBs grew increasingly dissatisfied with the *MDSyM*'s low level of execution of loans. Intra-ministerial partisan divisions that impeded the release of funds from one area to another and the government's attempts to comply with the IMF fiscal balance targets, wich led to the suspension of the national counterpart funds that the MDB loans required to be released, hindered the implementation of MDB programmes. Further damaging the relationship, in order to reorganise public accounts the government decided to stop borrowing from the MDBs (Makón, 2002). Since the *MDSyM* was established, Meijide, and her Secretaries had rejected everything coming from the WB because "they regarded it as synonymous with Menem" (Siede, 2002). Nevertheless, MDB programmes approved earlier in the 1990s stayed and, as one head of the *UFI* during the *Alianza* government explained, they were needed not only because of their budgetary importance but also because of the technical abilities of the personnel tied to them (Siede, 2002).

The MDBs took a stance in the struggles over the redefinition of the approach to poverty. Both MDBs favoured a focus on coordination and the continuation of targeting. The IDB was more open to the *Alianza*'s minimum income initiatives. State actors involved in the negotiations with the MDBs in these years highlighted the IDB interest in "getting involved, collaborating in the redefinition of programmes" (Rovere, 2002). The WB, in contrast, insisted on the need to focus on coordination and saving state resources. Significantly, while the WB Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) for 2001-2004 for Argentina allocated an extra $500 million to the "consolidation and simplification of social programmes" (World Bank, 2000f: vi), the only minimum income system model it supported was the expansion of existing family benefits *(asignaciones familiares)*, which entailed only a redistribution of funds already allocated for social benefits.

As a corollary of this relationship, in the last months of 2001 the WB announced its withdrawal from the country because GDP per capita was higher than its selection criteria (La Nación, 11-8-2001). It also implicitly supported the sectors of the Ministry that were in favour of the continuation of the neopopulist approach to

poverty reduction and, especially the WB, the social organisations that had been involved in programme implementation during the hegemony of the neopopulist approach, which is dealt with in more detail in the next section.

7. 3. Challenging the neopopulist discourse on civil society

The *Alianza* tried to redefine the third pillar of the neopopulist approach to poverty – the focus on social organisation – and thus tried to redefine the discourse on civil society in poverty reduction policy. These attempts encountered resistance from the Ministry's staff, the social organisations that had benefited from the policies of the 1990s, and the MDBs, particularly the WB, which continued to support the neopopulist discourse. Both the attempts to redefine the discourse and the resistance of the neopopulist discourse were reflected in the programmes for poverty reduction implemented by the *Alianza.*

a. The changes attempted

The *Alianza* tried to build a discourse on civil society based on the rejection of the discourse that was hegemonic in the 1990s – neopopulism, including its technopopulist version. The *Alianza* stressed that during the 1990s this discourse was based on a project of state reduction and had led to the artificial creation of organisations supportive of Menem. The *CENOC* coordinator during the *Alianza* government explained that while the 1990s discourse "…emphasised social organisations over a failed welfare state... [w]e thought that the state had a very strong regulatory role..." (Nosiglia, 2002). The *Jefas* coordinator held that in the 1990s social policy delivery was aimed at constructing political loyalties:

> *"It was all mediated…by the need to…have face-to-face contact with the beneficiaries…it was useful from the political point of view, to give something to someone and try to gain their political support through that…We saw a world of created NGOs, 'rubber stamps'" (Isuani, 2002).*

Therefore, "… the *Alianza* assumed that all organisations were Menemist by default." (Siede, 2002). Moreover, they pointed out that organisations had "... an infrastructure developed on the basis of their relationship with the state..." (Rovere, 2002). The *Alianza* focused on ending this dependency and on dismantling the network of organisations loyal to Menemism. They sought to do this by:

1. focusing on other types of organisations rather than on NGOs

2. preferring the state to deliver policies without organisations' intermediation

3. neglecting the notion of solidarity and trying to establishing state- individual citizens relations.

Moving away from the neopopulist focus on technical organisations, the *Alianza* prioritised the inclusion in poverty reduction policies of church, human rights and social economy organisations, and universities, rather than NGOs. While there was a rationale behind the focus on these organisations, for instance, "… we thought that the social economy was the only way out of aid-dependence" (Rovere, 2002), the *Alianza* also chose these organisations because they had longstanding relationships with them. For instance, the first *MDSyM* Minister, Meijide, had built her political career as a human rights activist and *CENOC* coordinator, Catalina Nosiglia, came from academia and promoted the focus on universities. Part of this redefinition of who was part of civil society was the incorporation of the *Instituto Nacional de Asociativismo y Economía Social (INCAES* – National Institute of Associationism and Social Economy) into the *MDSyM* (Gamallo, 2002: 83).

At the same time, the *Alianza* deviated from the neopopulist focus on state promotion of social organisation and tried to deliver poverty reduction policies through the state. This meant that provincial and municipal bodies were given a greater role in the implementation of poverty reduction policy, deepening a feature of the discourse on civil society that emerged in the technopopulist years. Therefore, efforts to strengthen

government agencies were reinforced and in the programmes created by the *Alianza –*
Jefas, *SI*, *Unidos* – provincial and municipal actors had more responsibilities than
social organisations. But this move also meant that the model of programme
implementation typical of the 1990s, in which organisations were intermediaries
between communities and the national state, was under question and the government
tried to emphasise social organisations' role as advisers to the Ministry rather than as
programme implementers.

The Alianza view of social organisations neglected the concept of solidarity because it
tried to focus on the development of state-individual citizens relationships but also
because it sought to disarticulate the identities that had emerged around the policies
with social organisations involvement which had been based on that notion. This
reflected in the Alianza attempts to involve new organistions in poverty reduction
policy and in the attempt to channel the state relationship with these social
organisation beyind programme implementation. However, the Alianza also sought to
build political support. As the new organisations included in programmes were
somehow related to the Alianza, the spaces beyond programmes from where
organisations related to the state were revitalised but adapted to the *Alianza. T*he
Advisory Council of social organisations (*Consejo Consultivo*) that had been in
operation since the mid-1990s acquired central importance but its members –
admittedly made up of people from organisations selected for their "similar" views
(Peña, 2002) – were replaced by organisations or people who shared views with and
was linked to the *Alianza.*

b. How the attempts to redefine civil society were reflected in programmes

Although all the MDB programmes continued, they became less prominent in the
Ministry's portfolio because they were continued because of a need for funds rather
than because there was agreement with the programmes' objectives. Among these
programmes, the greatest modifications were attempted in the *PAGV*. The rest of the
MDB programme reflected attempts to redefine the approach to poverty and the
discourse on civil society, but the changes were limited and the programmes remained
fundamentally as they were in the 1990s. However, as they lost political support

within the *MDSyM*, these programmes became more open to incorporating different views that could emerge from discursive struggles within the Ministry or in the field where they were implemented. Nationally-funded programmes were more deeply affected. The *PFSC* was cancelled and *CENOC* was the programme that best reflected the *Alianza's* views on civil society. The programmes created during the *Alianza* years also contained these views, but they were never fully implemented.

Regarding the programmes created in the 1990s, the changes made to *PROMIN* reflected the intentions to redefine who constituted civil society and to strengthen state institutions. The types of organisations encouraged to participate continued to be grass-roots ones but universities and scientific associations were involved in consultations such as the *Encuesta Nacional de Nutrición y Salud* (*ENNyS* – National Survey on Nutrition and Health)(UCEPMIN, 2001: 24). The main change in *PROMIN* was the attempt to integrate the programme to the Ministry of Health structure, meaning that the strengthening of the state was prioritised over attempts to redefine social participation in the programme, which remained limited to surveys (Barral, 2002) and was still an unimportant indicator of programme success (Moreno, et al., 2000: 12, 26). Because the changes did not produce significant programme redefinitions and because the high level of execution of the programme during the 1990s granted it the status of model programme for the WB, the Bank did not object to the changes. The main obstacle was the staff, who resisted the attempts to incorporate *PROMIN* into the Ministry's structure: "there was an …organisational culture that had existed already for ten years…they were poking each other's eyes out before I arrived, and that got worse when I put them all together." (Vinocur, 2002)

FOPAR incorporated social economy organisations and higher education institutions into its activities. The inclusion of organisations such as cooperatives and small businesses at community level in programme implementation was stated in a *FOPAR* brochure, which said that, together with improving community organisations and infrastructure, the programme's projects had to aim to "improve the productive, marketing and management capacity of grass-roots organisations involved in economic activities" (FOPAR, 2000: 4). Additionally, *FOPAR,* together with universities and tertiary education institutions, started to provide training and internships for students (FOPAR, 2001: 2). Nevertheless, the central role of *NuBs* in

programme implementation remained unchanged. Although the WB did not really complain about these reformulations, the *FOPAR* coordinator in the 1990s resisted the changes until she finally resigned.

PROMEBA deepened the late 1990s' trend of prioritising work with provincial and local government professionals and with individual technicians (Pisoni, 2002b), in accordance with the *Alianza*'s preference for strengthening the state rather than focusing on the promotion of social organisations. The programme also redefined who constituted civil society. It continued to work with community-based organisations but tried to avoid working with intermediary and professional NGOs (Pisoni, 2002b). Additionally, the programme developed links with several universities:

> *"…with the General Sarmiento University, the UBA [University of Buenos Aires], the Faculty of Architecture. (…) We have done workshops with people ... [from] industrial design [courses], we have made rubbish bins, bus stops…"* (Pisoni, 2002)

These changes did not affect the programme's broad aims and therefore neither state actors nor MDBs or social organisations involved in policy implementation particularly objected to them.

Jefas absorbed *PAGV* and the role of social organisations became minimal. Although *Jefas* required participation in social projects as one of the counter-provisions for receipt of the benefit, that participation did not have to be framed in social organisations (STEyAS, 2000: 41, 42, 43). Universities were included among the civil society actors with which *Jefas* liaised. For instance, "there was a group of university volunteers, medical students, doing gynaecology, who saw women with gynaecological problems" (Isuani, 2002). Government institutions became more important in *Jefas*. The selection and registration of beneficiaries was in the hands of the municipalities, and the public education system played a central role.

> *"I proposed that it be a tripartite programme, involving the municipalities and the provinces. ... the [national] state would give technical assistance and provide an income for the women. The provinces provided the adult education*

system and the municipalities provided the nurseries for the under-fives..."
(Isuani, 2002)

The 1990s coordinator of *PAGV* resigned because she disagreed with the new proposals (Díaz Muñoz, 2002). The remaining *PAGV* staff also disagreed and tried to resist the changes from within the Ministry, supported by organisations that had worked with the programmes in the 1990s (Rovere, 2002). The discontented PAGV staff did not find much support in the IDB, despite the fact that the IDB was not totally satisfied with *Jefas*. "[The IDB] wanted the focus to be more on a connection with civil society ... [whereas] '[t]his [programme, *Jefas*] entails the state giving out cash through salaries' [the IDB said]..." (Isuani, 2002)

In *PROAME,* social organisations lost importance as emphasis was placed on the institutional strengthening component, which was first implemented in 1999. Moreover, when Cafiero became head of the *MDSyM*, this component focused on training provincial and local government staff in children's rights, rather than on managerial issues (PROAME, 2001: 5, 6). *PROAME* staff from the 1990s who remained during the *Alianza* years disagreed with the new programme direction. They considered that the work done up to then to improve the technical skills of provincial and municipal government areas working with children was sidelined in favour of the construction of political alliances between those levels of government and the national government (Richards, 2002).

As for the nationally-funded programmes dealing with social organisations, because the *PFSC* was regarded as the embodiement of the discourse on civil society of the 1990s and those in control of the *MDSyM* considered the programme as the core of a network of organisations that supported Menemism (Candiano, 2002), the programme was cancelled. *CENOC* changes reflected an emphasis on redefining the programme's conceptual framework rather than on managerial aspects. *CENOC* kept its database and training activities but made changes to their implementation and created new lines of action. Universities and government organisations played a larger role in both existing and new actions. Organisations' registration in the *CENOC* database was no longer a requirement for accessing state funds, which reflected a departure from what the *Alianza* regarded as a way of creating corporatist links, but also de-emphasised the

focus on the state's role as promoter of social organisation. Instead, *CENOC* tried to create a network of provincial and local government bodies that promoted social organisation at the local level.[152] Trainings for social organisations focused on the same content as during Menem's years – for example organisational development, fundraising and budget administration – but universities rather than social organisations provided them in 2000 and 2001. Universities were central in *CENOC*'s new activities. A competition of new forms of associations funded project proposal presented by universities in association with either with civil society organisations or municipalities and a new online service for volunteers was directed to the entities involved in these competitions. Also a budget line was made available to research centres and universities for studies on social organisations. The CENOC coordinator argued that working with universities helped to save state resources, but she highlighted her own personal connections with academia: "I am a university lecturer (…) My background is not only in politics." (Nosiglia, 2002). The emphasis on universities and provincial and local governments reflected a reluctance to establish a direct contact between the state and social organisations:

> *"I worked very little with organisations directly, because that is not the state's role... The role of the state is ... to analyse what strategic questions need to be addressed and [for that purpose] sign agreements with universities … What the state has to do is to provide information, links, democratic access to information about services ... analyses of civil society..." (Nosiglia, 2002)*

Plan Solidaridad reflected a redefinition of the focus on social organisations. While, as in the neopopulist discourse, *Solidaridad* documents highlighted the importance of social organisation in overcoming exclusion and regarded it as key to guaranteeing transparency and sustainability (MDSyM, et al., 2000: 1, 6, 11), families and social promoters rather than community or intermediary organisations were the key civil society actors in this Plan. These departures from neopopulism, however, built on the maintenance of features developed within the technopopulist version of neopopulism – the importance of individual leaders over social organisations and the integrated work of government and social organisations in the *Consejos Sociales Locales* (Local

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[152] Most of the information on *CENOC* presented here from interviews with the programme coordinators during the *Alianza* years (Nosiglia, 2002) and during the 1990s (Orlowsky, 2002).

Social Councils). These Councils were the institutional space through which social organisations could take part in the programme by helping, together with local governments, to carry out censuses and programme promotion and supervision, but not so much by implementing the programme (MDSyM, et al. 2000: 26-28). Families were the *unidades receptoras* (receiving units) of programme funds and it was held that that was where the strengthening of communities should start. The promoters were responsible for helping families to reintegrate into their social environment and mediated in conflicts. Although promoters could work within the framework of social organisations, that was not compulsory and while social organisations could get involved in community projects, in which families were expected to participate as part of their reintegration, their involvement was not a requirement (MDSyM, et al., 2000: 14, 22).

After the pilots had been carried out, complaints emerged about the lack of participation by intermediary organisations (MDSyM, 2001a) and within the *MDSyM* the mechanisms for the selection of promoters and the payments they received gave those opposed to the Plan more reason to oppose it (Vinocur, 2002). As an advocate of the Plan put it:

> *"The Alianza's greatest fear was that* [Solidaridad] *would be managed by Peronist punteros, and so the programme was boycotted by the Ministry and the government. But in fact, the programme involved a different way of selecting promoters to that used by (…) other programmes."* (Pucciarelli, 2002)

The MDBs agreed with the *Solidaridad* aim of carrying out a census and of coordinating programmes. But they objected to the payments for social promoters and to the cash transfers for families, which they viewed as overlapping with employment programmes and as an intervention in the functioning of markets. The *Alianza* sought the Banks' approval of the programme so they could redirect existing loans to cover part of its cost. The IDB was more open to the proposal than the WB (Rovere, 2002; Pucciarelli, 2002). Nevertheless, for the reasons explained in the second section, the Plan was never fully implemented.

In *SI*, as in *Solidaridad*, social organisations' role was the same as that of the provincial and local governments: to help create a list of beneficiaries and to supervise delivery of the programme's services (Seguro de Inclusión Infantil, 2001: 11). Yet, the mechanisms by which, and the programme's aspects in which the organisations should get involved, were not specified. The government sought the organisations' advice and support for the launch of the *SI* but did not propose that they get involved in the implementation of the programme (Cafiero, 2002). As for the types of organisations that were included in the programme, universities and research centres were emphasised in official communications (Seguro de Inclusión Infantil, 2001: 11). In practice, the organisations that publicly manifested their support for the two most important actions of *SI* - the "Pact for Childhood" and the approval of the law whereby all newborns had the right to a free identity card - were those working on children's and human rights, development organisations specialising in childhood and religious organisations. These included, the mothers of *Plaza de Mayo* and the *Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales* (*CELS* – Legal and Social Studies Centre), popular soup kitchens (*comedores*) and members of the Catholic Church and the Jewish Mutual.

In addition to the lack of support for *SI* within the government, the type of organisations chosen to give advice and support to the programme did not include many organisations that had been involved in poverty reduction policy during the 1990s, which, therefore, disapproved of the initiative objecting to the programme's lack of a social participation component (Cafiero, 2002). The MDBs' main objection was based on their preference for a model of minimum income support system based on the extension of the the *asignaciones familiares* that were granted to low-income earners (Cafiero, 2002). The *SI*, in contrast, tried to tackle poverty by vindicating a right to inclusion and thus sought to guarantee a minimum income for the population whether or not they were employed.

7.4. Analytical summary and conclusions

This chapter has shown how the *Alianza* tried to challenge the neopopulist discourse on civil society in the poverty reduction area. First, they tried to move away from a focus on technical intermediary social organisations and to include other types of organisations in poverty reduction policy. Second, they rejected the idea of the state as promoter of social organisation and instead sought to strengthen the state as the main institution for the delivery of policies. In relation to that, the government granted provincial and local governments the same roles as social organisations in programme implementation, which was preferably as advisers, promoters or supporters rather than as implementers. Third, the notion of solidarity was ignored as the *Alianza* tried to focus on the construction of a relationship between the state and individual citizens.

However, the government disarticulated the neopopulist discourse by introducing new elements and breaking constituted chains of equivalence and differences, but failed to articulate a different discourse on civil society. This failure was directly linked to the *Alianza*'s inability to generate a new hegemony (b) and to articulate a consistent approach to poverty (c), which, in turn, were linked to the numerous and deep dislocations (a) the government had to deal with but fundamentally originated in their failure to rise above internal disputes (d). This combination of failures was behind the factors and actors resisting the *Alianza*'s attempts to articulate a new discourse on civil society. Table 6 shows the political factors and the actors resisting change in this discourse.

The *Alianza* encountered several obstacles in redefining the discourse on civil society. First, as the approach to poverty reduction (c) remained under debate, it was difficult to hegemonise a discourse on civil society within this area. For instance, universal systems of minimum income preferred a direct relationship between the state and beneficiaries and to reduce interaction between them to the transference of cash. Conversely, while the proposal of a Social Agency also focused on making cash transfers, most of the implementation of social policies would have been in the hands of private and social organisations (Makón, 2002). Second, the government did not cancel MDB programmes under implementation and these programmes continued to reproduce the neopopulist discourse on civil society (d1). Even if the *MDSyM* tried to introduce significant changes to these programmes through negotiations, the difficult relationship between the government and the MDBs (d), especially the WB, hampered

TABLE 6: Actors and Factors Limiting Attempts to Change the Neopopulist Discourse on Civil Society (2000-2001)

Dislocations (a) - Provincial Pressures - Social Uprisings - Macro-economic difficulties	Alianza's inability to rais above internal differences (d)	**Challenges to Neopopulism**	
		Approach to Poverty (c) -universal coverage vs coordination and targeting - minimum income systems vs integral definition of poverty - strengthening state structures vs focus on social organisations	**Discourse on Civil Society** - new types of organisations - state delivery of policies = more government involvement, organisations in advisory roles - neglect of solidarity
Neoliberalism, but inconsistent: Alternated with a Social Capitalist political project	Creation of Infrastructure Ministry **Intra-government disputes** (g1)	Lack of funds for new initiatives	**MDBs difficult relationship with the government** (d) - Low execution of loans made them negatively predisposed - Toughening of IMF position - Doubts about *Alianza*'s political authority
UN-ARTICULATED HEGEMONIC PROJECT (b)	*across party lines*	Continuation of MDB-funded programmes (d1)	- Increasing direct links with social organisations (d2)
Incomplete Populism: Centralised decision-making and bypassing of institutions, but intuitionalism rather than direct contact with people	*SDS upgraded to MDSyM* **Intra-ministerial disputes** (g2) *Across* - *party lines* - *institutional allegiances (UNICEF)* - *attachment to SDS approach*	Programme staff aligned with neopopulist approach and discourse (f)	Social organisations linked to programmes in the 1990s (e)

them. The government tried to escape from the influence of the MDBs' views by refusing to take more loans from them but this only worsened their relationship. Third, social organisations involved in policy implementation in the 1990s (f)

"…were very angry because [the government was] not supporting them in the way they were used to" (Nosiglia, 2002). This was coupled with, fourth, an increasing social discontent (a) and the gradual isolation of the government from society (b1 and b2) showed in "civil society organisations [that] were starting to have tougher demands" (Cafiero, 2002). Fifth, social organisations found support among the *MDSyM* staff who had been part of the *SDS* and who defended the neopopulist discourse on civil society from the *Alianza* attempts to redefine it and encouraged the organisations to demand that programmes continue in their original form (Van Loc, 2002) (e and f). These state actors remained strong because of the division of the *MDSyM* positions across party and past institutional allegiances lines (g2). Finally, these social organisations and staff had the MDBs' prudent, but crucial, support.

During the 1990s the MDBs had been indirectly linked to civil society organisations via the national government programmes, and in the late 1990s they introduced new forms of liaising with them that did not involve national governments (d2). The IDB was more open to new proposals and and after its representation in the country changed, the Bank, in line with the *Alianza*, became less interested in state-civil society collaboration in poverty reduction programmes (Díaz Muñoz, 2002).[153] The WB, however, shared the international actors' misgivings about the *Alianza*'s economic plans and governance capabilities explained in section 1. The difficult relationship the WB established with the government facilitated the creation of direct links between the WB and social organisations that had been key in policy implementation in the 1990s in order to counter the *Alianza*'s attempts to change the discourse on civil society.

The development of links between the WB and civil society organisations involved in poverty reduction policy implementation in the 1990s concurred with the WB's attempts at that time to establish direct contact with its borrowing countries' civil societies (chapter 4). At that time the WB emphasised the "Small Grants" programme in Argentina. It consisted of direct grants from the Bank to social organisations' projects and although the programme was decentralised from Washington to the regional office for Chile, Uruguay and Argentina in 1998, it was significantly more

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[153] Jorge Elena became the IDB country representative in Argentina in 2000.

active in Argentina than in the other two countries. In 1999 and 2000, 90% of the projects approved were in Argentina and in 2000 (Larrecochea, 2000: 7). The WB *Grupo de Trabajo de ONG* (*GTONG* – NGO Working Group)[154] (Bosoer, 2002), which had been formed after the training courses organised by *CENOC* in the mid 1990s and consisted mainly of the stable group of intermediary organisations involved in programme delivery during that period, promoted the programme (Martina, 2002; Orlowski, 2002; Van Loc, 2002). Additionally, when in 2000 the WB organised the first participatory debate in Argentina, on the design of the CAS, again *GTONG* members, rather than state institutions, were key. As the former *CENOC* coordinator put it, on the occasion "...Sandra [Cesilini, WB NGO liaison officer for the WB in Argentina] called her friends!" (Orlowsky, 2002).

The WB NGO liaison officer in the country held that the participatory CAS was not an attempt to defy the government. However, she acknowledged that there were differences between the WB and government approaches to working with civil society organisations. She criticised the changes that had been made to *CENOC* and to the Advisory Council (Cesilini, 2002). The government interpreted this participatory CAS as a direct challenge, because it was not called to help to organise it (Rovere, 2002). The size and scope of the meetings – 4,000 participants, including people from a wide range of social organisations, bank staff, business sector representatives and actors from provincial and local levels of government (Senderowitsch and Cesilini, 2000: 9) – was a demonstration of the mobilisation power of the WB and the NGOs supportive of the neopopulistr approach to poverty.[155]

For all these reasons, the *Alianza* failed to articulate a new discourse on civil society in poverty reduction policy in which its own particular views could aspire to become universalised. However, the challenges to neopopulism weakened neoliberalism's predominance within that discourse, paving the way for the continuation of the populist project's colonisation of that discourse, especially as no alternative discourse was being successfully organised. Furthermore, the *Alianza* administration re-inserted

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[154] The GTONG was formed in 1998.
[155] This was so despite the fact that the NGOs were later unhappy with the version finally approved by the WB Board of Directors because it had left out several of the key suggestions from the consultation (Rovere, 2002; Martina, 2002). The results of the CAS consultation can be found in Bergel, 2000, which main conclusion was that the population demanded action focused on the redistribution of income. The WB ignored this conclusion (Bombarolo, 2002). The version of the CAS submitted to the Board of Directors is in World Bank 2000f.

in the discourse of civil society aspects that had been excluded from the neopopulist and technopopulist discourse by including social economy and human rights organisations, which had been crucial in the discourse on civil society during the hegemony of populism. The neopopulist discourse on civil society had produced an interest in social organisation but that interest, combined with the tradition of contentious forms of participation in the country, the difficult economic situation, and the increasing separation of the government from the population's demands, empowered a wide range of actors. In December 2001 civil society felt it was time raise their voices and different forms of civil society organisations flourished, from savers' interest groups to increasingly ideological unemployed "*piqueteros*" (Iñigo Carrera and Cotarelo, 2003) as well as organisations demanding institutional reform and practising forms of direct democracy in neighbourhood assemblies (Dinerstein 2003), together with workers who took over factories (Saavedra, 2005: 177-180).

The contention that the conclusion of the thesis further explores is that these civil society demonstrations showed not only that populism managed to survive and to gradually colonise the neoliberal hegemony over the neopopulist discourse on civil society. It also suggested that when that discourse was challenged and no alternative discourse emerged, civil society fell back on its characteristics that had been shaped under the hegemony of populism. However, this return showed the resilience not so much of Argentinean populism, but of populism as the political alternative par excellence to articulate the demands of those oppressed by the established system.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

The thesis has examined how the longstanding battle between liberalism and populism in Argentina manifested in the 1990s' struggles between neoliberalism and Argentinean populism to hegemonise the discourse on civil society in national poverty reduction policy.

The thesis has shown that the discourse on civil society in the poverty reduction policy area in the Argentina of the 1990s was neopopulist, understood here as the articulation of neoliberal and Argentinean populist discourses on civil society. The neopopulist discourse, however, was not fixed throughout the decade. It emerged between 1990 and 1994 and became hegemonic in the poverty reduction area. In this first period, neoliberalism and populism co-existed in a non-conflictive manner within the discourse. Between 1995 and 1999 the discourse turned into what this thesis characterises as technopopulism, when neoliberalism became hegemonic within the discourse but populism increasingly gained importance and made neoliberalism retreat to technical and methodological issues in order to retain hegemony. At the end of the decade, the *Alianza* government (2000-2001) challenged the neopopulist discourse as a whole by disarticulating the meanings that kept the discourse together. However, the *Alianza* was unable to re-articulate a new discourse and thus paved the way for the continuation of an ongoing process of expansion of populism, which was further driven by the lack of response from the *Alianza* to the population's demands.

Therefore, while neoliberalism predominated within the neopopulist discourse during the decade, the mutations of this discourse reflected how it was being gradually colonised by populism and how neoliberalism attempted to retain its predominance. When the neopopulist discourse as a whole was challenged, and the internal relations of equivalence and difference that gave shape to the discourse were disarticulated, populism found further opportunities to continue its expansion.

This conclusion summarises, in the first section, the main characteristics that the neopopulist discourse acquired during the 1990s and specifies how they exposed the hegemonic struggle between neoliberalism and populism. The second section highlights the main political struggles underpinning the articulation and re-articulations of this discourse. The third section looks at the contributions of this thesis to the study of political phenomena as well as to addressing global governance and policy-making issues. The final section discusses the survival of Argentinean populism after a decade of neoliberal hegemony and explores the possibility that populism could lead to the realisation of an emancipatory political project.

8.1. The Neopopulist Discourse in the 1990s

The analyses of the characteristics of the discourse on civil society presented in this thesis were based on a comparison of the features that the discourse acquired at different points during the 1990s, with both the characteristics of the neoliberal political project and discourse on civil society, as articulated by the MDBs, and with the characteristics of the Argentinean populist political project and its discourse on civil society, as articulated first by Peronism and re-articulated up until the 1980s in different historical circumstances. The characteristics of these discourses on civil society were significantly opposed at the beginning of the 1990s, as summarised in table 7.

However, as chapter 2 explained, the antagonism between neoliberalism and Argentinean populism is intrinsic, in that they were constructed as antagonistic political projects throughout the history of the country and their normative components and predominant logics of discursive construction are opposed. But they are not incompatible. Neoliberalism, despite its claims of apoliticism, is after all a political project and, although its recommendations are presented as the derivation of objective analysis of a knowable reality, as a political project it seeks to universalise its views. For that purpose it needs to resort, at least to some degree, to the logic of equivalence to dissolve existing political identities and construct political identities

TABLE 7: Comparing the Neoliberal and Argentinean Populist Discourses on Civil Society in Poverty Reduction Policy

Political Projects' Components		CONTINGENT	
		Neoliberalism	Argentinean populism
NORMATIVE	Public/Private Sphere Relation	Search for organisations to permanently supplement the state	State supplementation seen as provisional
		Location of organisations in the private realm, next to the market and separated from the state	Strong links with state – funding and guidance accepted and sought
	Individuals vs Community	View of organisations as emerging voluntarily following individual free will and interests	Organisations' formation affected by political preferences or broader worldviews
		Presupposition that internal democratic mechanisms would prevail, preserving individual members' freedom, but more importance given to the voluntary character of organisations in terms of their non-profit character	Despite increasing endorsement of democracy organisations, preference for participatory mechanisms and non-hierarchical forms of organisation to preserve direct contact between members and leader, who, nevertheless, is usually relatively autonomous from the bases
		Participation is tied to particular poverty reduction sub-projects	Participation in social organisation involves participation in the political sphere – including both political forces and the state
LOGICAL		Centrality of technical organisations	Despite technification processes, political views (and Catholicism) are central in defining organisations' orientation
		Organisations should address social demands through standardised technical methods	Organisations can address social demands in accordance with the organisation's political position, in a discretionary way and without following established institutionalised patterns
		EFFICIENCY justifications are presented as underpinning all of these features, masking their normative content	CONSTITUTION of POLITICAL IDENTITIES is the objective that cross-cuts all of these features

that relate to the neoliberal project. Populism, for which use of the logic of equivalence is so characteristic that it acquires a quasi-normative status, together with the vindication of the sovereignty of the people and the rejection of established institutions, finds an interstice through which to permeate neoliberalism. In turn, populism, due to its anti-institutionalist nature, is highly flexible in adapting to the concrete circumstances in which it exists, and therefore can adopt a variety of contingent elements and institutional forms.

In exploring how the elements of the neoliberal and Argentinean populist discourses were reflected in the articulation of the discourse on civil society, it could be seen that the two discourses were mixed together in a neopopulist discourse, which was hegemonic throughout the 1990s, but within which the state of the discursive struggle between neoliberalism and populism varied. First, when neopopulism took shape (1990-1994), as reflected in the *Plan Social* 1995, the discourses co-existed in harmony. Neoliberalism set the boundaries of the discourse, but populism figured more in the discourse on civil society than in the approach to poverty into which it was inserted. Second, when the neopopulist discourse outlined in the *Plan Social* 1995 was put into practice in concrete poverty reduction policies (1995-1999), neoliberalism consolidated its hegemony within the neopopulist discourse but was soon challenged by the advances of populism and thus forced to retreat to an emphasis on formal and technical issues that reflected the neoliberal discourse. Thus, a technopopulist discourse on civil society emerged as a version of the neopopulist one and neoliberalism could retain hegemony over the discourse on civil society. However, that hegemony was weakened because neoliberalism had retreated to formal issues and populism thus had the chance to further advance its normative views. Finally, the neopopulist discourse was challenged, and with that the neoliberal predominance over the discourse was further weakened and populism continued to expand. Table 8 compares the main features of the discourse in each of these periods.

In the early 1990s, during Menem's first presidency (1990-1994), the main pillars of the neopopulist discourse on civil society emerged – a focus on social organisation, on state promotion of social organisation, and on the notion of solidarity. The approach to poverty reduction, into which the discourse on civil society was inserted, had three distinctive features: a focus on coordination and targeting, an understanding of

TABLE 8: Key Features of the Neopopulist Discourse on Civil Society during the 1990s

1990-1994 Formation of Neopopulism	1995-1999 Technopopulism		2000-2001 Challenges to Neopopulism
Focus on Social Organisation	Focus on Technical Organisations	Incorporation of Municipalities	New types of organisations incorporated to downplay importance of intermediary organisations
State promotion of social organisation	State promotion geared towards organisations' permanent supplementation of the state	State promotion generates organisations' dependence on the state	State to deliver social policies. Focus on strengthening of provincial and municipal bodies, redefinition of the role of organisations in policies
Solidarity	Solidarity as "voluntary work"	Solidarity as voluntary work de-emphasises interpretation of individual will to form organisations independently from the state (further enabling above feature) and solidarity is stressed as motivation to undertake "voluntary work"	Solidarity issues neglected as the establishment of a relationship between state and individual citizens is sought

poverty as an integral phenomenon, and an emphasis on social organisation. Within these three features, elements of neoliberalism and Argentinean populism were mixed. Coordination and targeting appeared to be in line only with neoliberal aims, yet the choice of *NBI* indicators introduced a key element associated with the period of populist hegemony (from 1943 to the late 1980s). Defining poverty as integral called for a neoliberal focus on managerial matters such as coordination, but also required intervention beyond pure administrative reform. Social organisation was presented as being at the service of the neoliberal aim of rationalisation and therefore as limiting state intervention in the private sphere. However, this element had more affinity with populism, as the characteristics of the discourse on civil society of those years indicated.

The *Plan Social* 1995 articulated the neopopulist discourse on civil society around the nodal point of social organisation and included two other central features – state promotion of social organisation and solidarity. The focus on social organisation contributed to the neoliberal focus on saving state resources and aligned the Plan with the MDBs' understanding of who the key civil society actors were. Yet, the Plan did not refer to any particular form of social organisation, which implied a broader definition of civil society than that of the MDBs and a view of social organisation as a process and not just as an entity. The latter opened up the possibilities of interpreting social organisation, in a populist fashion, as an alternative to individualist forms of political representation. State promotion was geared towards the objective of redrawing the dividing line between the private and the public and of helping to save state resources by making social organisation a permanent supplement to the state in poverty reduction policy, as in the MDBs' neoliberal discourse. However, the Plan's emphasis on the role of the state in promoting social organisation involved the possibility that organisation could become dependent on state funds and guidance, which was a characteristic of the Argentinean populist discourse on civil society. The meanings given to social organisation and state promotion suggested that the government's discourse agreed with both the neoliberal and the Argentinean populist discourses on civil society. But the importance given to the notion of solidarity in the Plan showed a preference for views that prioritised the community over the individual, which in Argentina had been historically embedded in populism. As such, the focus on solidarity implied that populism figured more in the discourse on civil society than in the approach to poverty of that period.

Therefore, in this period there was a non-conflictive articulation of neoliberalism and Argentinean populism, but neoliberalism set the boundaries for the possibilities of discursive articulation. Populism was absorbed by, and framed within, a predominantly neoliberal approach to poverty and discourse on civil society. However, populism permeated the overall neoliberal orientation of the *Plan Social* and its presence was greater in the discourse on civil society than in the approach to poverty in which it was inserted.

When the neopopulist discourse was put into practice in concrete poverty reduction programmes during Menem's second presidency (1995-1999), it acquired more

specific characteristics. In the first half of this period, these tipped the balance towards neoliberalism and consolidated this political project's hegemony within the discourse. The three distinctive features of the discourse on civil society in those years were: a focus on technical organisations; the aim of making state promotion of social organisation work contribute to the creation of organisations that could permanently supplement the state in implementing poverty reduction policy; and an interpretation of solidarity more in terms of voluntary (unpaid) work than in terms of links that foster a community identity. However, populism managed to remain part of the pillars of the neopopulist discourse. Some political organisations, and organisations moulded during the years of populist hegemony, were included alongside mainly technical organisations in programme implementation. State promotion of social organisation did not strengthen organisations sufficiently for them to become a permanent supplement to the state in policy implementation and made them dependent on state funds and guidance. Also, as solidarity contributed to interpreting voluntary organisations in terms of "voluntary (unpaid) work", the neoliberal focus on the role of individuals' will and interests in creating organisations independently from the state was downplayed, further allowing the development of a blurred dividing line between civil society and the political sphere, including the state.

In the second half of this period, however, populism advanced within the discourse and neoliberalism retreated to an emphasis on formal and technical requirements, which allowed it to retain hegemony over the discourse on civil society, despite the fact that this hegemony was significantly weakened. Following the changes in the approach to poverty – proposals to implement universal, rather than targeted, poverty reduction policies, attempts to introduce employment strategies into these policies, and the increasing work with municipalities – new elements were incorporated into the discourse on civil society in this policy area. These new elements of the discourse were municipalisation, employment strategies, the importance of leaders, and the concept of social capital. All of these were only loosely articulated within the neoliberal project and thus emerged as floating signifiers available for other discursive articulations. Populism progressed within the neopopulist discourse by contributing to the resignification of these new features. The inclusion of municipalities was an attempt to complement the neoliberal institutional reform of the post-Washington consensus years. However, in practice, it constituted a challenge to the neoliberal aim

of drawing a clear dividing line between the private and public spheres which had led to the exclusion of political organisations. Tackling unemployment became a central objective of involving social organisations in poverty reduction programmes, leading to the use of funds earmarked for social organisations as a form of wage. This eroded the emphasis on unpaid work and revealed a departure of the neopopulist discourse on civil society from the neoliberal reluctance to intervene in the economy. The emergence of leaders as increasingly more important than NGOs somewhat resembled the early neoliberal focus on the individual rather than social organisation. In practice, however, it actually revived key distinctive features of the populist discourse – the importance of strong leadership and a conception of an intertwined relationship between state and civil society. The introduction of the notion of social capital suggested a realignment with the neoliberal discourse of the post-Washington consensus. However, the notion of social capital was not reflected in concrete policy changes at the time and, in the few documents that incorporated it, the notion was used in ways that differed from how the MDBs understood it.

Therefore, the emergence of the technopopulist version of neopopulism demonstrated that neoliberalism had preserved its hegemony over that discourse by a hegemonic operation of transformism, since it aimed to neutralise the antagonistic populism through co-opting it and granting it minor concessions (Torfing, 1999a: 111). The Argentinean populist discourse, in contrast, utilised an offensive hegemonic strategy – expansionism. Populism re-articulated internal discursive elements by constructing chains of equivalences and differences through displacement – making the features of the neopopulist discourse lose part of their previous meaning but highlighting the commonalities between those features the Argentinean populist discourse (chapter 1; Torfing, 2003; Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: 141).

The *Alianza* government's challenge to the neopopulist discourse targeted its first two pillars – the focus on social organisations, especially technical organisations, and the focus on the role of the state as a promoter of social organisation. The former was challenged by introducing new types of organisations in poverty reduction policy, and the latter by placing the role of policy delivery within the state. These two challenges together meant the deepening of an element of the technopopulist discourse that had already been articulated in line with the populist discourse – the incorporation of

municipalities in policy implementation. They also entailed a redefinition of the role of social organisations in poverty reduction policy, which were now expected to become advisers and supporters of these policies rather than policy implementers. The importance of solidarity – the third pillar in the neopopulist discourse – was not directly challenged, but, as the *Alianza* preferred to avoid working with social organisations it was by default dismissed as an objective. Rather, the *Alianza*'s proposed to favour contact between the state and individual citizens in the framework of an approach to poverty that was trying to be redefined in terms of the objective of constructing a social capitalist system.

However, the *Alianza,* as a young and eclectic political coalition, failed to rise above its internal disputes and thus failed to generate a new hegemonic discourse and an articulated approach to poverty. In this context, the *Alianza*'s challenges to the neopopulist discourse on civil society were not followed by a new articulation of the discourse despite the changes to the poverty reduction programmes. As such, the *Alianza* only disarticulated the neopopulist discourse and facilitated the continued expansion of populism that had already gained pace in the years of technopopulism. The ongoing economic difficulties and the lack of government attempts to address the population's main demands were a further drive for the return of populism.

8.2. Institutions and actors in the re-articulations of the neopopulist discourse

The thesis has argued that the main avenue that allowed the colonisation of the predominant neoliberalism by the neopopulist discourse was the centrality of technical and institutional aspects in the neoliberal logic of hegemonic construction. Although de-emphasising the political objectives behind the neoliberal recommendations was paradoxically neoliberalism's main tool in universalising its views and gaining support from a variety of political positions, neoliberalism's disregard for the articulation of political identities left a space through which the intrinsically political populist discourse could permeate the neoliberal hegemony.

Dislocations were crucial, however, in enabling the redefinitions of the situation of hegemony within the approach to poverty and the discourse on civil society, and the government positions towards neoliberalism and populism set the general framework of possibilities for these redefinitions. As dislocations in the hegemonic discourse emerged, domestic factors and actors, both within and outside the government agency dealing with poverty reduction, enabled the Argentinean populist discourse on civil society to grow within the neopopulist discourse, partially colonise it, and eventually challenge it.

At the beginning of the 1990s the most crucial dislocation that enabled the government to decisively implement neoliberal reform was the hyperinflation crises of 1989 and 1990. The way in which the adoption of neoliberalism impacted on the discourse on civil society in poverty reduction was also affected by the way in which the government incorporated the demands of non-partisan groups (UNICEF, the Catholic Church and social protesters) to address poverty and by the President's intention to run for re-election. In the mid 1990s, dislocations embodied in the persistence of a high unemployment rate, a reorganised opposition, and debt-based growth triggered the transformation of neopopulism into technopopulism. More markedly than in the previous period, these dislocations were addressed in accordance with the government's priorities, number one of which was the President's plan to run for a second re-election. During the *Alianza* years, the pressures from the increasingly frequent and harsh social uprisings and from provincial governments that were mainly in the hands of the opposition, together with the worsening macro-economic indicators, were the dislocations that tested the *Alianza*'s ability to close the discourse by addressing them. The *Alianza* failed to generate a political project that could "suture" those dislocations, and that was this government's main problem in its endeavours to articulate an approach to poverty and a discourse on civil society.

Policy makers and implementers, whose profiles combined technical skills with deeply embedded populist views, were crucial in the process of articulating and re-articulating the discourse on civil society. These were the actors providing the discourse with its specific features, either by negotiating programme designs with the MDBs or by incorporating into the programmes experiences gained in the field where they were implemented. During Menem's first government, policy makers were the

more important of these two state actors and were particularly significant in the definitions of the discourse since the government maintained a non-interventionist stance towards dealing with poverty. This government stance meant that the creation of an agency to deal with poverty, the *SDS*, lacked sufficient political support, but it also meant a large degree of freedom for policy makers involved in the *SDS* to define the characteristics of this agency, including its discourse on civil society. In the second period of the 1990s, the time of Menem's second government, both policy makers and implementers were important in redefining the discourse on civil society. The functioning of the *SDS* and the way in which the approach to poverty and the corresponding discourse on civil society were redefined were more affected by the President's determination to run for a second re-election than in the previous period. While policy makers incorporated views from the Argentinean populist discourse, drawing on their own backgrounds and the experiences observed during policy implementation, they also emerged as important advocates of the neoliberal discourse and contributed to its retreat to a focus on technical requirements in order to remain hegemonic. During the *Alianza* government, it was state actors within the *MDSyM* who attempted to advance their particular views on civil society. Their failure to hegemonise the discourse on civil society was due to the *Alianza*'s unarticulated hegemony, but that same lack of articulation could have served as fertile ground for any particular view gaining hegemony. To this extent, it was the *MDSyM* actors' own failure to come up with an articulated discourse on civil society that impeded the fundamental re-articulation and appropriation of the neopopulist discourse, which most of the *Alianza MDSyM* functionaries appeared to desire.

The MDBs set the conditions of possibilities of the discourse on civil society. Yet, it must be borne in mind that the important role that the MDBs played originated in the government's adoption of a non-interventionist stance towards poverty, which led policy makers in the *SDS* to resort to MDB funds. Moreover, the MDBs' discourse on civil society was not fixed during the 1990s and the Banks grew more interested in listening to countries' proposals in order to guarantee sustainability and the efficient use of their resources. This listening on the part of the MDBs, however, may have been no more than a sophisticated tool for the expansion of their own views, in that the countries' views were heard and then adapted to the MDBs' own perspectives. In fact, the MDBs' fundamental perspectives remained unchanged. For example, it

remained difficult to introduce income redistribution measures, demonstrated by the difficulties the author of the WDR2000 had in including this proposal, the reluctance of the MDBs to incorporate minimum income systems – as some programmes attempted to do during the *Alianza* years – and the neglect of similar demands following a consultation regarding the 2000 WB CAS in Argentina.

Although civil society participation appeared as a central MDB objective, the MDBs ended up paying lip service to this issue, providing an important opportunity to policy makers and implementers to decide on the direction of programmes in this respect. For instance, participation was not so central in the evaluation of loans. Additionally, the WB and the IDB presented different opportunities to advance non-neoliberal perspectives on civil society, despite the former being more rigidly neoliberal and the latter more open to the incorporation of countries' proposals. Also, in the negotiations with the MDBs, there were differences between MDB staff in their interpretations of the MDBs' positions on civil society participation, especially since participation was only a recommendation and was not compulsory. All these factors that enabled the combination of other views with those of the MDBs contributed to the MDBs' neoliberal discourse mixing together with the Argentinean populist one, and even enabled the latter to colonise the former. Nevertheless, the most important of these factors was the fundamental neoliberal focus on technical and efficiency issues, outlined at the beginning of this section and explained in detail in this thesis.

8.3. Relational discursive institutionalism, global governance and populism

Both the relational ontology that guided this thesis and the research findings provide new insights into the analysis of political phenomena, contributing to the enrichment of new institutionalism, and lead to a number of recommendations for global governance policy making and, in particular, for civil society promotion in the field of poverty reduction. These policy recommendations regard the processes that lie between policy design and policy outcomes and which may lead to unintended consequences, as well as to the thesis' underlying concern with seeking interstices for

the possibility of policy ownership on the part of borrowing countries and their populations. In particular, the thesis' view and findings regarding populism suggest taking into account, in future research and policy design, populism's emancipatory potential.

The first point worth making is that the thesis findings highlight the importance of everyday discursive articulations in shaping policy, which indicates the critical weight of gradual change in specific policy fields. Adopting a relational ontology meant stressing the intrinsic openness of discourses, in particular institutions and policies, and led to a focus on mapping processes of discursive articulations rather than on seeking causal links. This focus contributed to pinpointing processes of fundamental change beyond crises, and it emerged that everyday political struggles that articulate and re-articulate policies and the multiple factors and actors involved in these struggles are crucial in defining the direction and content of change. The thesis findings highlight that, while crises may expose the dislocations or inherent openness of discourses, change in particular policy fields, such as that of poverty reduction, occurs gradually.

Moreover, state actors emerged as central in defining the characteristics of the changes that follow the emergence of dislocations and in the everyday shaping and re-articulation of institutions and policies. However, the research showed that state actors were not mere translators of MDB or central government recommendations, as non-relational discursive institutionalism holds, nor did they merely reproduce established or available approaches to poverty and discourse on civil society. Thus, the changes they produced did not lead to a gradual "punctuated evolution" nor did they imply resorting to "interpretation" or a "garbage can" of values or rules linked to their institutions or the broader paradigms in which the latter were inserted. Since actors are seen here as subjects/agents of "open" social structures, they are constantly re-articulating their relationship with the multiple discourses that constitute their identities. Therefore, state actors deal with discursive struggles that lead to the re-articulation of institutions and policies in accordance with a multiplicity of partially closed discourses, including their technical background and political allegiances as well as their experiences of social participation and even their private lives. In the framework of this constant process of identification, state actors articulate, in a wide

variety of forms, external agencies' recommendations, domestic political disputes, and views from the field where policies are implemented.

Second, the thesis has shown that policy ownership on the part of borrowing countries is possible despite the MDBs' refinement of their strategies in order to hegemonise their views. Rather than looking at how MDBs managed to impose their agendas, which may respond to the structure and interests of international powers, as critical political economists would put it, the thesis traced how state actors re-articulated the MDBs' views and sought out interstices through which domestic (and potentially emancipatory) views persisted within external agencies' agendas. The research highlighted that dislocations and state actors' everyday discursive re-articulations are crucial not only for those seeking to expand and consolidate a hegemonic project but also for those trying to advance a counter-hegemonic project. At the same time, considering institutions as highly sedimented but still only partially closed discourses enabled the MDBs and state agencies dealing with poverty reduction to be seen as far from monolithic and static, and therefore vulnerable to the colonisation of counter-hegemonic projects.

Crucially, the thesis highlighted that neglecting the impossibility of insulating policies from the political was a double-edged sword in the MDBs' strategies for hegemonisation. The thesis findings showed that the most critical avenue for the Argentinean populist project's colonisation of the MDBs' neoliberal project was that the latter's focus on its technical aspects and efficiency objectives masked and neglected the project's political character. As a political project, neoliberalism constructed political identities through policy recommendations, but, by neglecting its political character, this project could not articulate those political identities to its policy objectives. Populism, political *par excellence*, conquered the space available for the discursive articulation of those identities. Therefore, the neoliberal project could improve its hegemonic strategies if it appeared more openly political and that could, at the same time, contribute to opening up the debate to counter-hegemonic political projects. A more democratic system, rather than an assets-based one, of global representation could help to make the MDBs appear more openly political. In policy making processes, keeping in mind that political struggles are inextricable from them would pave the way for the inclusion in those struggles of political projects that

articulate the demands of the poor and the oppressed. That would make it clear that policy making processes are not merely technical and therefore not exclusively in the hands of experts.

Third, the thesis suggests that the survival of populism could contribute to the emergence of a counter-hegemonic project that is emancipatory for the poor in countries where populism is deeply historically rooted and where the existing institutions fail to respond to the poorest sectors' demands. Global governance agencies' awareness of the strategic importance of state actors in the everyday re-articulation of policies for the hegemonisation of their views is evident in their focus on policy diffusion activities such as network building and seminars. Yet, they are also concerned with these actors' reproduction of the vices of populism. Indeed, the thesis showed that while state actors have helped to introduce neoliberal approaches to poverty reduction policy and to construct a civil society favourable to the success of the neoliberal project's struggles for hegemony, they have also contributed to the survival and eventual expansion of the populist project within the hegemony of neoliberalism. This thesis, however, regarded populism as a project with emancipatory potential because of both the priority it grants to articulating people's demands and its anti-status quo character. While the persistence of inequality and inherited practices linked to the contingent elements of populism may enable the continuation of the political manipulation of the poor by governors and leaders, populism's essentially anti-status quo character makes it the most feasible political project for challenging an established social order that crystallises the oppression of the poor. Because of populism's accent on non-institutional forms of channelling demands, the survival of populism opens up the possibility of emancipation in the sense of subverting those institutions that are unfavourable to the poor. Moreover, if, as in the case of Argentina's Peronism, a populist project is deeply rooted, especially in the popular sectors, and thus constitutes a central "relational system of signification" (or discourse) when the people engage in political action, these projects' main elements should be taken into account in any attempt to take on board the subordinate sectors' views.

Fourth, civil society and poverty reduction policy areas are crucial fields from which states and external agencies, usually regarded as the oppressive actors, can contribute to the emergence of a populist emancipatory project.

Poverty reduction policies connect state actors with the most subordinated sectors of society, thus making the discourses of these sectors part of the discourses that traverse and constitute the identity of these actors. While challenging inequality may be at the basis of subversive political projects, this structural condition needs to be articulated as a political identity for the project to emerge. The MDBs' interest in fostering civil society participation in their programmes and key strategic documents as well as the WB's interest in hearing the "voices of the poor" (World Bank, 2002) appeared to reflect an interest in incorporating the poors' demands into MDB policy recommendations. However, these MDBs' actions did not contribute to the emergence of the emancipatory political project that would be necessary to trigger a structural change favourable to the poor. The MDBs' lack of openness regarding the political character of their policy recommendations limits both debate and the articulation of content for the political identities their policies could trigger. As a result, the MDBs' policy recommendations do not contribute to the articulation of chains of equivalence between discrete demands and merge them in a political project aimed at changing the structure of society and the position of the poor in it. Moreover, the MDBs' normative preference for institutionalised responses curtails the possibilities of direct contact between the people and those leaders who may challenge the established institutions that reflect the oppression of the poor. Populism's anti-institutionalism is usually accused of leading to the predominance of contingent elements of historically shaped populisms, such as centralised decision making or clientelism, which may jeopardise the emergence of a democratic system that responds to the poor's demands. Yet, a populist political project developed with a focus on the essentially anti-status quo core logic of populism could favour the development of new forms of relationship between the people and institutions, which would challenge established institutions that are unfavourable to the poor, including those less formal institutions that constitute the contingent features of populism. State actors' contact with the people and their experiences within populist political projects can help in the articulation of a populist emancipatory project. The research showed that state actors in the poverty reduction policy field were crucial in keeping the political within policy making and retaining

non-institutionalised contact between the people and their leaders. The significance of everyday policy re-articulations and the central role of policy makers in them stresses how critical their role can be in shaping a political project. For this project to be emancipatory, state actors should focus on keeping in touch with the grassroots and on enabling the emergence of chains of equivalences between different demands from the poor.

Measures to strengthen civil society are crucial for the articulation and success of emancipatory projects. The thesis has emphasised the politically constructed character of civil society and its critical importance as the arena where hegemonic struggles take place. It stressed, therefore, that defining civil society is defining the conditions of possibilities for political struggles. Throughout the 1990s the MDBs increasingly focused their agendas on strengthening civil society, including the development of direct contacts with social organisations. Yet, in line with their neglect of the political aspects of their proposals and their antagonism with the populist project, the neoliberal project's policy recommendations in this respect were guided by avoiding state and civil society sectors regarded as contaminated by politics. This implied, in turn, an a-priori and idealised view of civil society as a locus governed by the rules of the market rather than those of the political sphere. Scholars have argued that the obstacles to the emergence of this ideal civil society were structural inequalities and inherited political habits (chapter 1), which required a significant degree of state reform because even the state actors that promoted the neoliberal discourse on civil society were influenced by the populist discourse. But the thesis emphasised that it was thanks to this influence that the Argentinean populist political project could colonise the neoliberal one and pave the way for the inclusion of the views of the poor in the measures aimed at strengthening civil society. Therefore, policies to strengthen civil society should not be aimed at constructing an a-priori model of civil society. Instead, these policies should focus on guaranteeing that discursive struggles for the definition of that arena leave spaces open for the emergence of new and excluded political projects, such as the articulation of a political project that addresses the demands of the poor and the oppressed.

However, and as a final note, in order to unleash their emancipatory potential, populist projects may need to be re-articulated. This re-articulation needs to consider

that populist projects are one political project among others and that their logic may be used by other political projects with similar normative but different contingent elements. State actors in the poverty reduction policy area can be crucial in articulating an emancipatory political project for the poor and can therefore be crucial in the re-articulation of populism and the fostering of its emancipatory potential. But those leading this re-articulation should keep in mind that a political project needs to struggle constantly for hegemony and accept the existence of other particularities. Seeing populism as a discursive logic that exists in concrete social contexts as political projects that operationalise that logic can help in this re-articulation. Populism can only exist as a political project in which the populist logic and normative core – the focus on the sovereignty of the people and its non-institutionalist preferences – prevail and the contingent elements – its operationalisation in policy proposals during hegemonic struggles, and institutionalisation, if it succeeds – vary. This view highlights populism's ubiquity and the fact that it traverses all political projects to different degrees. It also helps to avoid dismissing it as a general malaise of politics and, more importantly, contributes to the understanding that to re-articulate populism it is necessary to identify its specific tempo-spatial particularities and to focus on its core logical component. On this basis, a populist project can lead to improved democracy in countries where populism is deeply embedded and where the poor's demands are neglected.

8.4. Populism's survival and its emancipatory potential in the case of Argentina

The civil society demonstrations in December 2001 showed that populism had survived a decade of neoliberal reform and proved that it had colonised the neoliberal hegemony over the neopopulist discourse on civil society. The neopopulist discourse on civil society was indeed accompanied by a flourishing of social organisations, but this was framed in a discourse in which elements of the Argentinean populist discourse still survived and actually gained importance through the whole of the 1990s. Therefore, the difficult economic situation at the end of the decade and the increasing separation of the *Alianza* government from the population's demands

easily triggered the return of populist forms of social organisations. But this was not a sudden revival, it was rather a corollary of the increasing presence of populism within the neopopulist discourse on civil society that had been hegemonic in poverty reduction action in the 1990s.

However, the return of populism did not show so much the resilience of Argentinean populism but rather emphasised the viability of populism as a political alternative for articulating the demands of those oppressed by the established system. In fact, civil society showed its preference for channelling demands to the state through non-institutionalised mechanisms but it did not do so by resorting to what had been the most prominent institutions of the populist project until the 1980s, such as trade unions. Therefore, the Argentinean populist discourse on civil society emerged as changed at the end of the 1990s, but its normative and logical components retained validity. It was in that particularity that the realisation of the emancipatory promise of populism appeared to have been given a chance in December 2001.

Civil society in early 21st century Argentina preferred non-institutionalised forms of channelling demands to the state rather than the strengthening of liberal democratic forms of representations, as many expected would have been the result of including civil society organisations in poverty reduction policies (chapter 1). Acknowledging that the expectations that working with civil society in poverty reduction policy had not led to improvements in liberal democracy in the developing world, in 2002 the IDB talked about democracies under stress in Latin America and, in 2003, the WB noted that the poor were still unable to channel demands for change (Pearce, 2004: 483-4). Some observers have evaluated negatively the re-emergence and resilience of non-institutionalised forms of channelling social demands. Levitsky and Murillo, for instance, regarded the period that followed the crisis as being on the brink of anarchy and feared the collapse of the party system. They noted with relief that democracy managed to survive that chaos (Levitsky and Murillo, 2003: 152).

However, as Pearce notes, people's participation in politics was never deficitarian in Latin America, although it has usually been of the contentious rather than the institutionalised type (Pearce, 2004: 485). Therefore, if democracy is about people's participation in the definition of the policies that govern them democracy should not

have been seen as under threat in Argentina following the civil society demonstrations of December 2001. The return of populist forms of organisations should be seen as the opening up of possibilities for democratisation more attuned to the country's reality. As some theorists of populism have argued, "populism and democracy are equally based on the principle of popular sovereignty and ... by giving a voice to ordinary people who feel excluded from the political order populism has a strong democratising logic" (Panizza, 2008: 87). Populism, moreover, has the added value of a potential for becoming a democracy highly responsive to the population since it focuses on addressing the demands of those in subordinated positions.

Indeed, December 2001 presented an aggregation of dislocations and a situation of unaddressed social demands that constituted an opportunity for populism to emerge as a form of democracy focused on responding to the subordinates' demands. A question that stems from this observation but which goes beyond the scope of this thesis and should be left for further research is whether the survival and re-emergence of populism led to the realisation of populism's transformative democratic power of radical populism (Panizza, 2008: 89). As a tentative answer, it is suggested here that there was a populist rupture with the established neoliberalism and leaders who claimed to be more responsive to the popular demands gained support. Yet, while Levitsky and Murillo argue that Peronism "saved" Argentina from the collapse of its democratic and political party systems (2003: 123), the contention here is that the absence of a new political actor may have actually jeopardised the realisation of populism's transformative potential. Peronism's continued hegemonisation of the populist appeal involved the continued association of populism with what has here been characterised as Argentinean populism. Nevertheless, the possibility of unleashing the democratisation potential of populism in Argentina may still depend on Peronism. Peronism has historically embodied populism in the country and it would be difficult for non-Peronist political actors to appropriate the special association that the Peronism project has with the people. Thus, Peronist political actors may need to focus on the normative and logical components of populism and then develop new contingent elements to unleash the radical democratic potential of populism.

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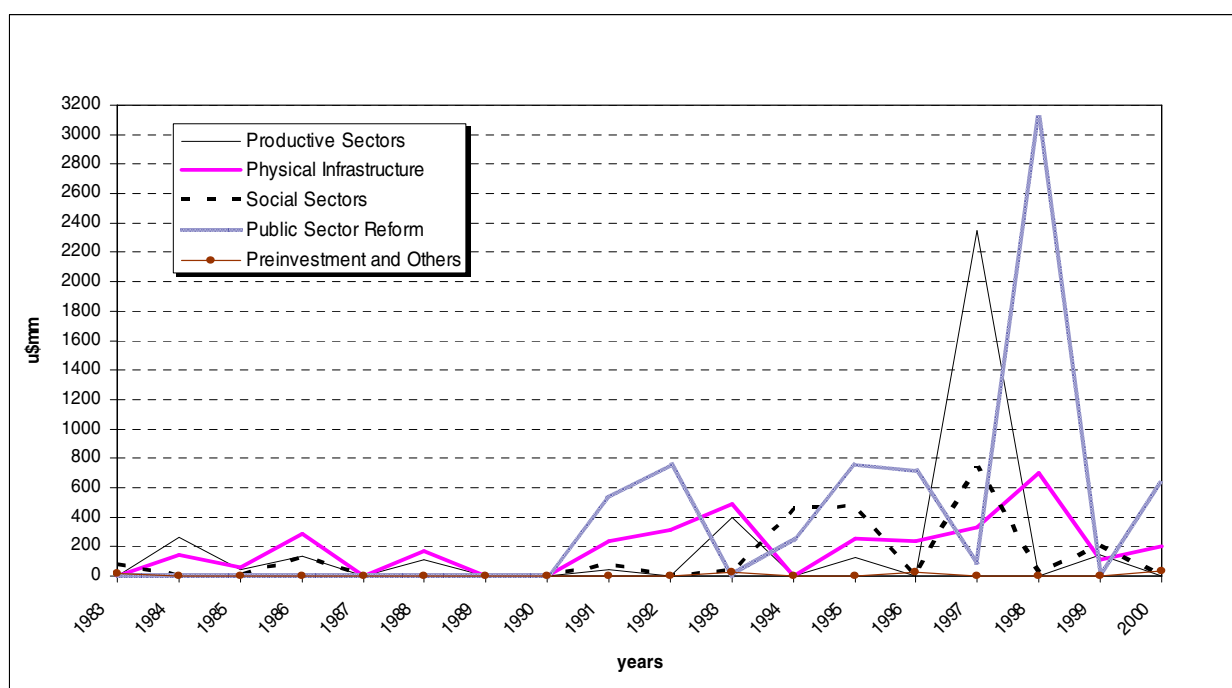
Annex I: Tables and Charts

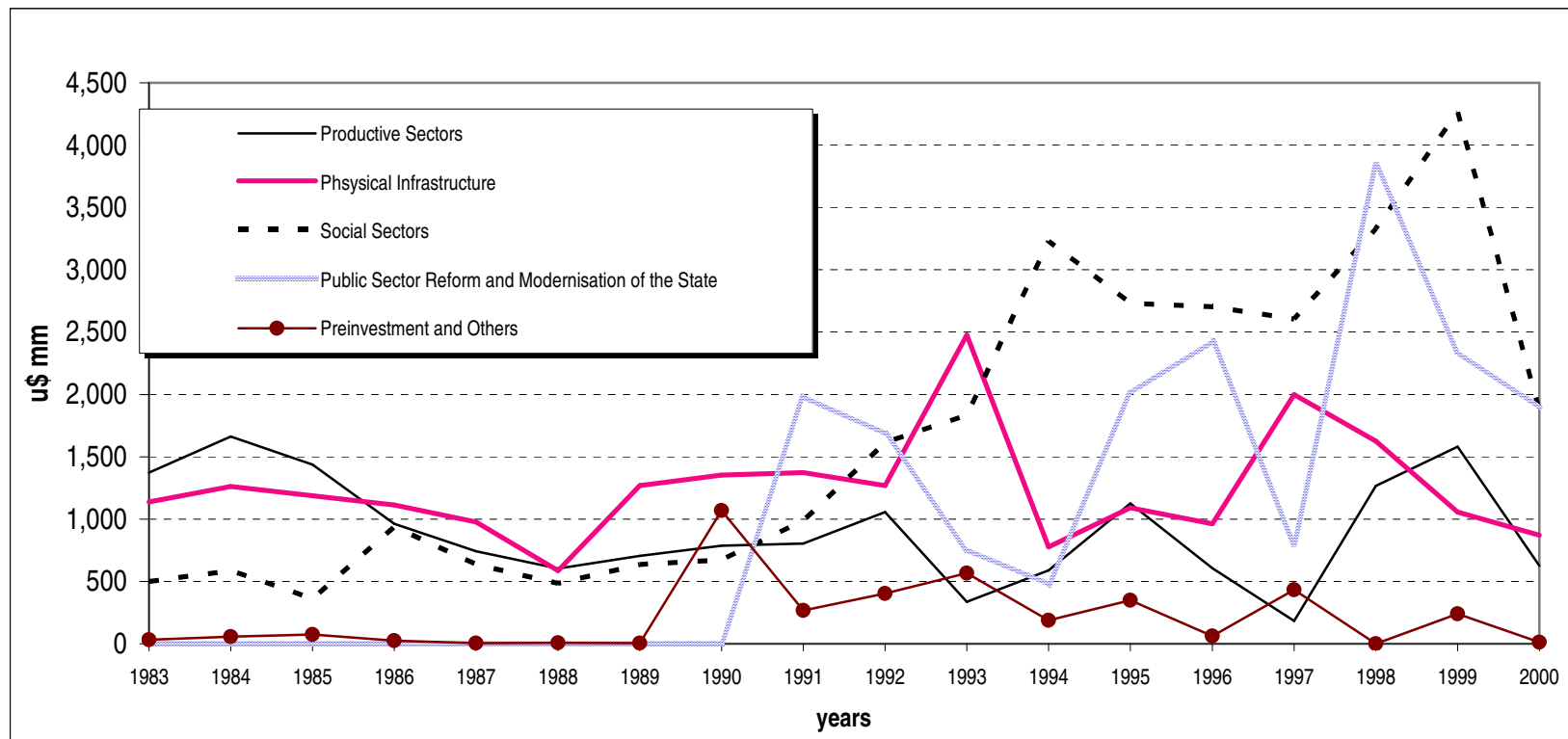**Figure 0 - World Bank Lending for Argentina by Sector (1983 – 2001)**
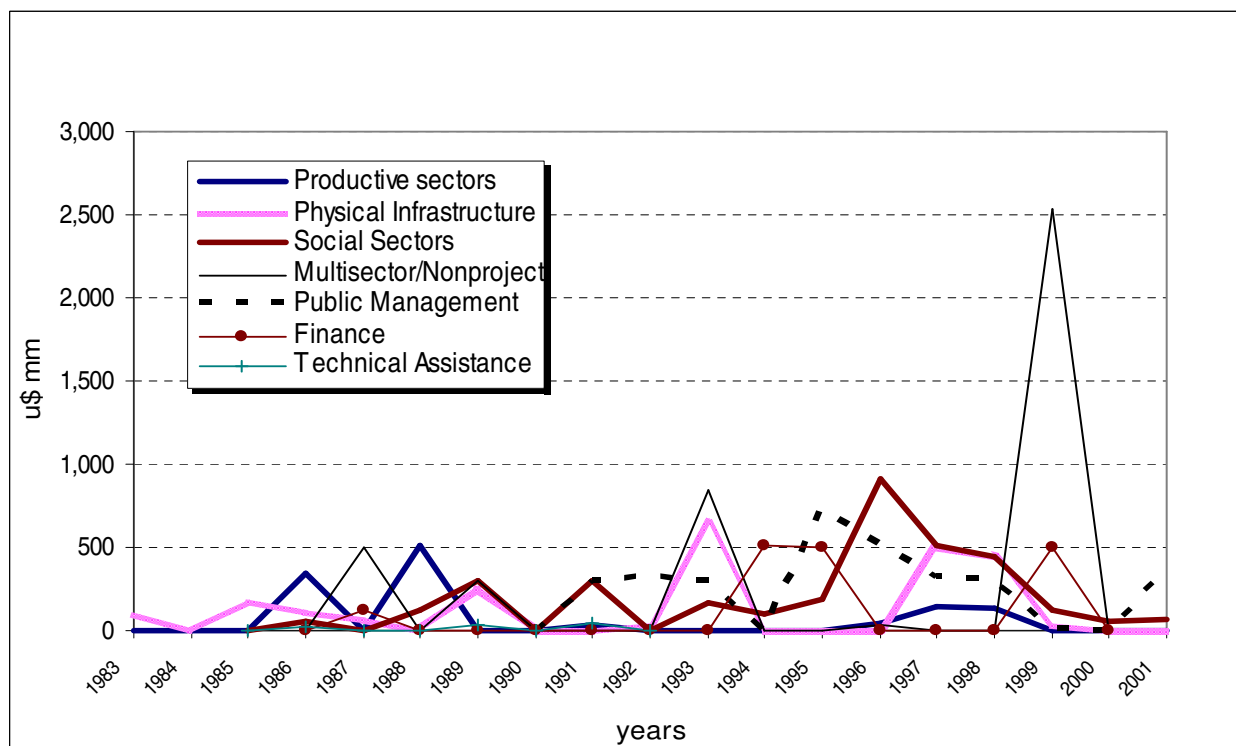
Source: author's own, based on WB Annual Reports.
See notes in figure 2 on the classification of sectors.

Figure 00 – IDB Lending for Argentina by sector (1983 – 2001)

Source: author's own, based on IDB Annual Reports.
See notes in figure 1 on the classification of sectors.

Figure 1 – IDB Lending by Sector (1983-2000)

Source: author's own, based on IADB Annual Reports.
Note 1: The classification of projects follows the criteria used in the IADB Annual Reports.
Note 2: Productive Sectors includes Agriculture and Fisheries; Industry, Mining and Tourism; Export Financing; and Science and Technology. Physical Infrastructure includes: Energy; and Transport and Communications. Social Sectors includes Water and Sanitation; Urban Development; Education; Social Investment; Health; Micro-enterprise; and Environment.

Figure 2 – WB Lending in Latin America by Sector (1982-2001)
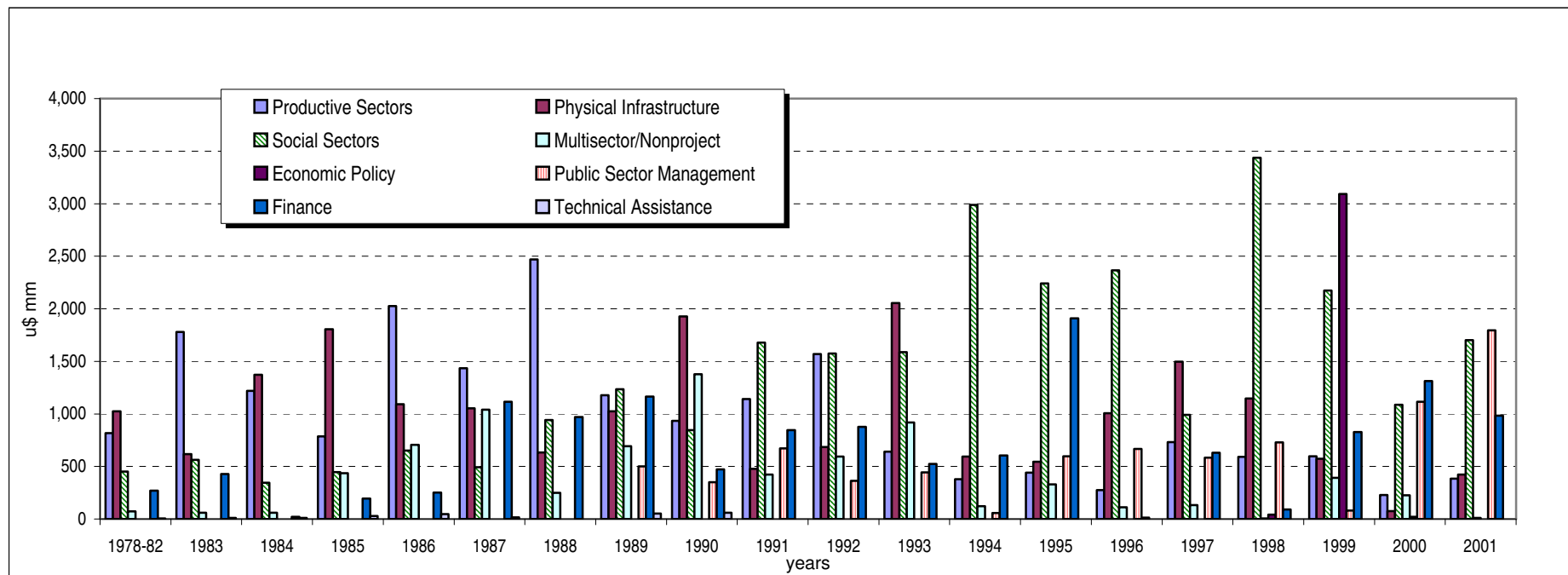
Source: author's own, based on WB Annual Reports.

Note 1: The criteria for classifying projects have varied from year to year in the WB Annual Reports, particularly in the last decade. As far as possible the latest criteria were used.

Note 2: The projects are classified in accordance with their main objective, but in many cases (eg urban development projects) they have large components that relate to other sectors.

Note 3: Productive Sectors includes Agricultural and Rural Development; Industry; Small-Scale Enterprise; and Private Sector Development. Physical Infrastructure includes: Energy; Telecommunications; and Transportation. To homogenise the data, Social Sectors is a broad category based on IADB criteria including: Urban Development; Water Supply and Sewerage; Education; Health, Nutrition and Population; Social Sector or Social Protection; and Environment.

Note 4: Industry includes mining and other extractives, and tourism.

Note 5: Energy includes oil, gas and power.

Note 6: The subcategory Social Sectors was introduced in 1994, and its name was changed to Social Protection in 1999, when there was a reclassification of loans.

Note 7: Environment was only introduced in 1993 and, in line with the IADB classification criteria, is presented here as a subcategory of Social Sectors.

Note 8: Public Sector Management was introduced in 1990.

Note 9: Economic Policy and Private Sector Development first appeared in the 2000 Annual Report.

Note 10: Multisector replaced Non-Project in 1994 and Technical Assistance ceased to exist in the same year.

Figure 3 – Social Expenditure (total for social welfare at all levels of government)

Public Expenditure in the Social Welfare Sector for all levels of government (national, provincial and municipal) - (%) of GDP
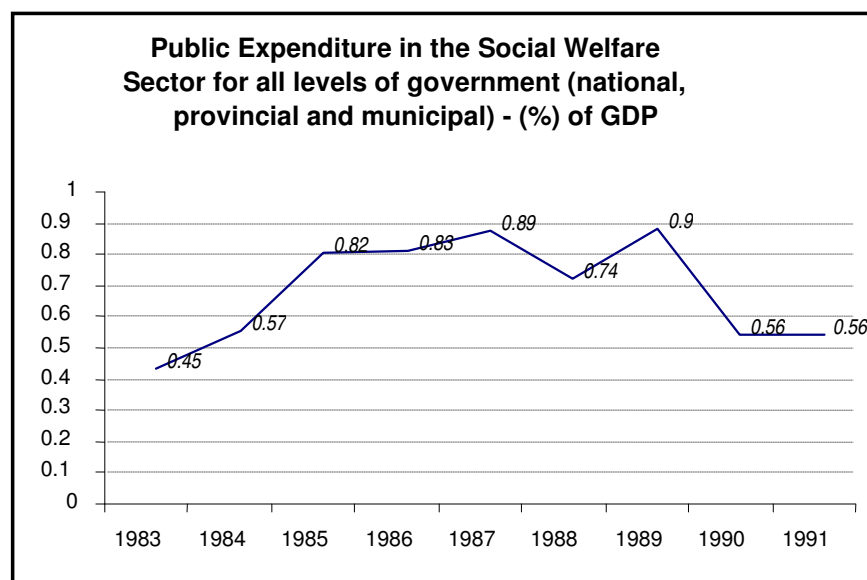
Source: Beccaria, L. and Carciofi R. (1996) "Políticas Públicas en la Provisión y Financiamiento de los Servicios Sociales. Aportes para una agenda de los años noventa" in Minuijin A. (ed.) (1996), from Vargas de Flood, M. and M. Harriague (1993) El Gasto Público Consolidado. Documento de Trabajo GP/01. (corrected edition with updated GDP data) Buenos Aires: Secretaría de Programación Económica (junio).

Figure 4 – Structural Poverty

Households and population living with NBI

1980			1991		
Total of households (1)	Households with NBI	%	Total of households (1)	Households with NBI	%
7,103,853	1,586,697	22.3	8,562,875	1,410,876	16.5
Total of population	Population in households with NBI	%	Total of population	Population in households with NBI	%
27,432,998	7,603,332	27.7	32,245,467	6,427,257	19.9

Source: INDEC, based on census data.
Note 1: In 1980, households = houses; in 1991, households = total of houses + households in tenements, hotels or hostels.

Figure 5: Income Poverty

Population under the poverty line in Great Buenos Aires

% of total population

47.3, 33.7, 21.5, 17.8, 16.8, 19, 24.8, 27.9, 26, 25.9, 26.7, 28.9, 35.4
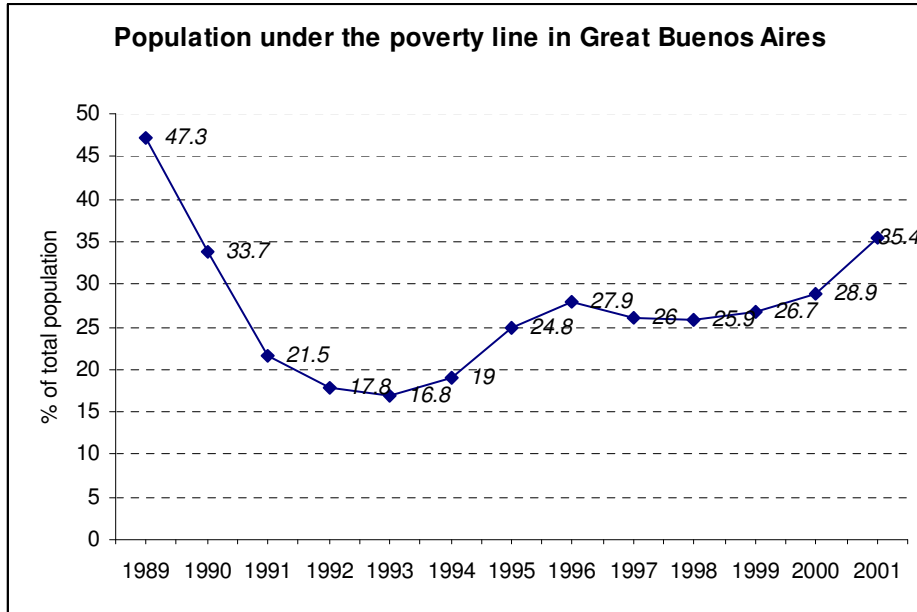
Source: INDEC, based on October EPHs.

Figure 6 – Urban Unemployment Rate in Argentina (1985-1995)

Urban Unemployment Rate in Argentina

5.9, 6.3, 6.9, 6.9, 9.9, 10.7, 18.6
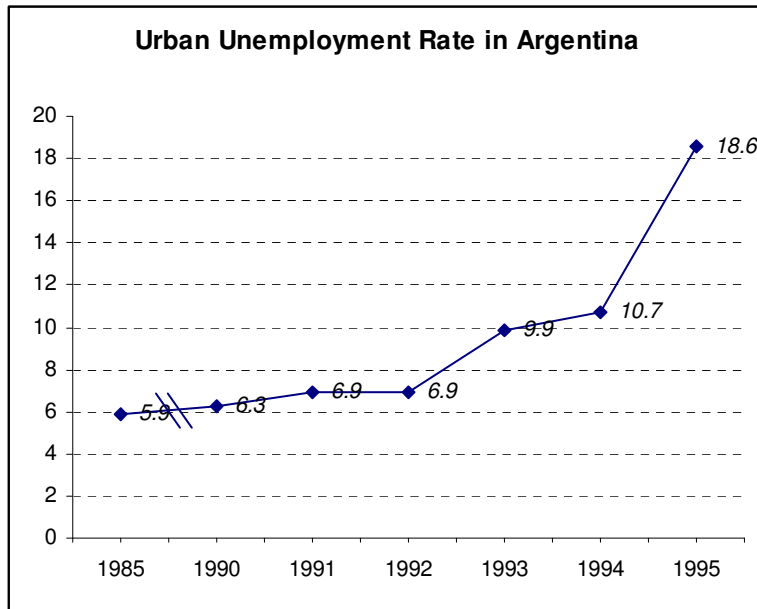
Source: Beccaria, L. and N. Lopez (1996) "Notas sobre el comportamiento del mercado de trabajo urbano" in Beccaria L. and N. Lopez (eds.) pp. 26-27. Based on EPHs-INDEC.
Note: 1985, data from November; 1990, data from October; 1991, data from June; 1992-1995, data from May.

Figure 7 - Urban Unemployment Rates (1995-1999) – Selected Conglomerates

| Conglomerates	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Great Buenos Aires (excluding City of Buenos Aires)	22.6	20.4	18.6	15.8	17.5
Gran Rosario	20.9	19.7	16.1	13.8	14.9
Gran Santa Fe	20.9	21.2	18.4	15.5	16.9
Tucuman-Tafi Viejo	19.9	18.6	16.1	14.8	19.2
Jujuy-Palpala	12.7	12.7	18.0	16.1	16.3
Mar del Plata	--	20.1	19.3	15.4	18.2
Bahía Blanca	20.2	20.5	19.5	14.0	8.8
Gran La Plata	15.4	19.1	17.2	15.4	12.3
Concordia	--	20.6	13.6	13.6	13.8
Gran Córdoba	15.2	17.2	18.6	12.5	14.2
Total	**18.4**	**17.1**	**16.1**	**13.2**	**14.5**

Source: INDEC, based on May EPHs. http://www.indec.mecon.ar/nuevaweb/cuadros/4/shempleo4.xls, downloaded: September 2005.
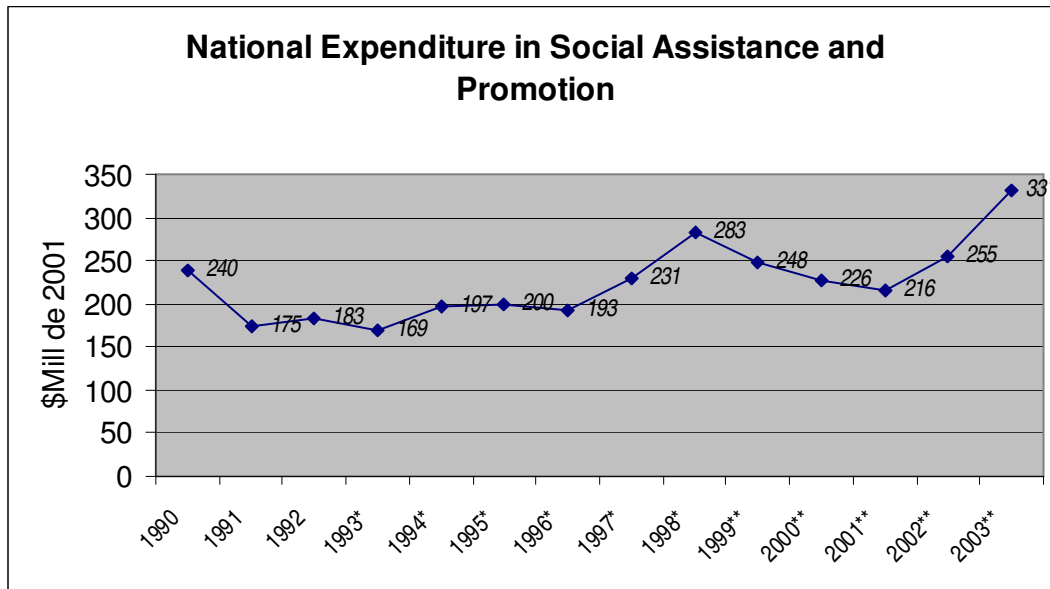
Figure 8 – Social Expenditure (only on social assistance, and at all levels of government)

Consolidated Public Expenditure in Social Assistance and Promotion
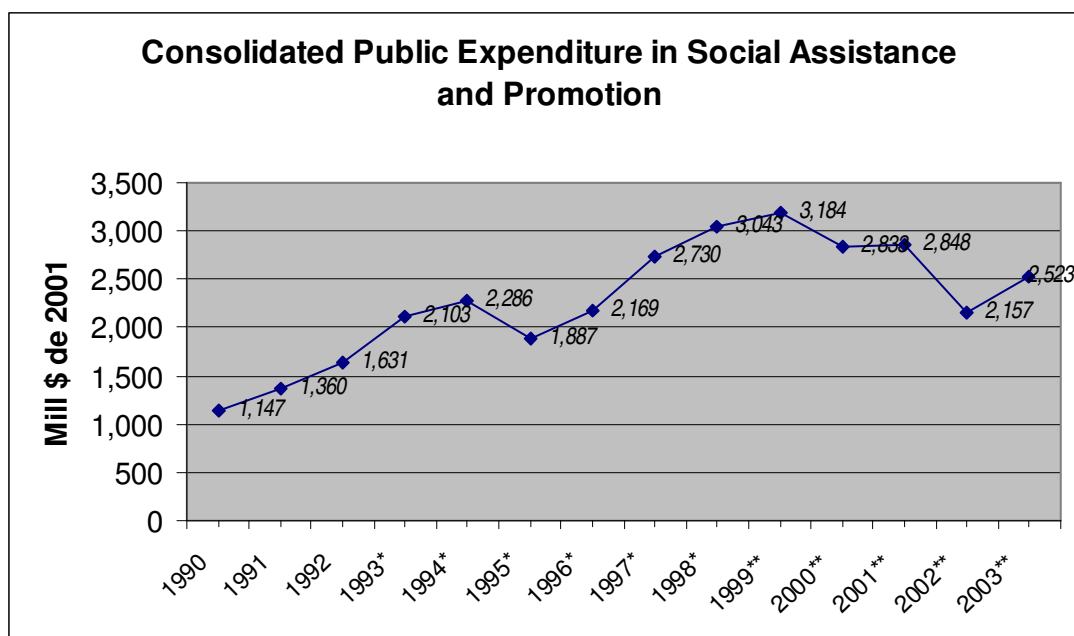
See figure 9 for notes and source.

Figure 9 – Social Expenditure (social assistance at the national level only)

National Expenditure in Social Assistance and Promotion

(Y-axis: $Mill de 2001, values 0 to 350)

Data points: 1990: 240, 1991: 175, 1992: 183, 1993*: 169, 1994*: 197, 1995*: 200, 1996*: 193, 1997*: 231, 1998*: 283, 1999**: 248, 2000**: 226, 2001**: 216, 2002**: 255, 2003**: 331

Source: Dirección de Análisis de Gasto Público y Programas Sociales – Secretaría de Política Económica, Ministerio de Economía, Argentina http://www.mecon.gov.ar/peconomica/docs/gp_nac.xls, downloaded: September 2005.
Note: this expenditure excludes public expenditure managed by provinces or municipalities; *Fondos Fiduciarios,* expenditure corresponding to the devolution of the discounted 13% in wages and pensions in previous years, and pensions and health services from *obras sociales.*
(*) estimated (**) provisional.

Figure 10 – Social Expenditure (social assistance, proportion of municipal expenditure)

Comparison of Consolidated and Muncipal Social Expenditure in Social Assistance and Promotion

(Y-axis: % of GDP, values 0.00 to 1.80)

Pink line: 1991: 0.21, 1992: 0.25, 1993: 0.29, 1994: 0.28, 1995: 0.24, 1996: 0.32, 1997: 0.34, 1998: 0.37, 1999: 0.42, 2000: 0.39, 2001: 0.40

Blue line: 1991: 0.64, 1992: 0.69, 1993: 0.84, 1994: 0.86, 1995: 0.74, 1996: 0.83, 1997: 0.97, 1998: 1.05, 1999: 1.13, 2000: 1.01, 2001: 1.06
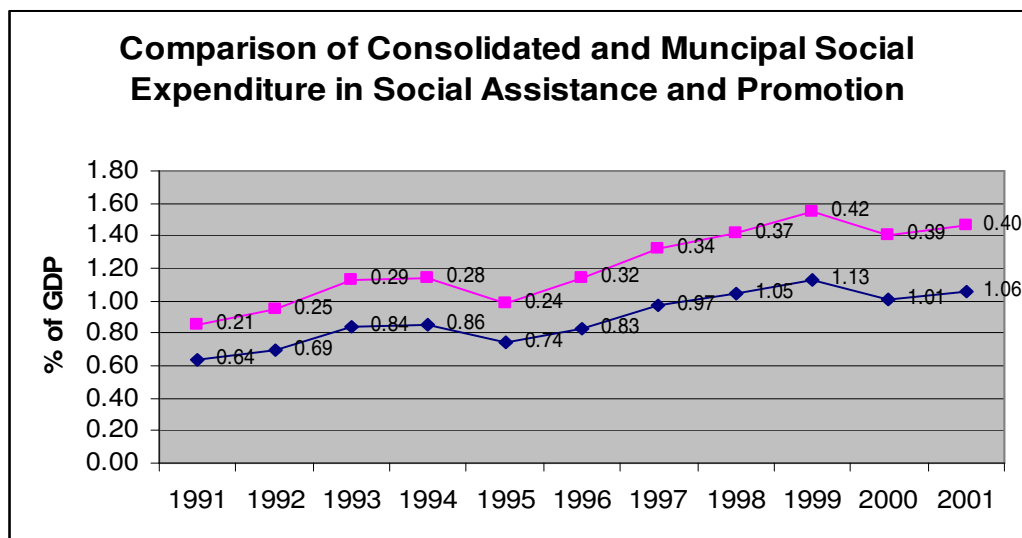
Sources: Gasto Público Consolidado. Dirección de Análisis de Gasto Público y Programas Sociales – Secretaría de Política Económica, Ministerio de Economía, Argentina (http://www.mecon.gov.ar/peconomica/docs/gp_nac.xls, downloaded: September 2005) and Gasto Público de los Gobiernos Municipales. Ibid (http://www.mecon.gov.ar/peconomica/docs/gp_muni.xls, downloaded: November 2005).

Figure 11 – Income and Structural Poverty

Income poverty (Indigency and Poverty line) and structural poverty (NBI) (1988-2002)

	Poverty Line (1)	Indigency (1)	NBI (2)
1988	32.3	10.7	27.7 (3)
1989	47.3	16.5	
1990	33.7	6.6	
1991	21.5	3.0	19.9
1992	17.8	3.2	
1993	16.8	4.4	
1994	19.0	3.5	
1995	24.8	6.3	
1996	27.9	7.5	
1997	26.0	6.4	
1998	25.9	6.9	
1999	26.7	6.7	
2000	28.9	7.2	
2001	35.4	12.2	17.7
2002	54.3	24.7	

Sources: (a) "Porcentaje de hogares y personas por debajo de la línea de pobreza en el aglomerado GBA, desde mayo 1988 en adelante". (b) "Porcentaje de hogares y personas por debajo de la línea de indigencia en el aglomerado GBA, desde mayo 1988 en adelante". (c) "Total de población en hogares particulares y población en hogares con Necesidades Básicas Insatisfechas (NBI), por provincia. Total del país. Años 1980, 1991 y 2001." All at www.indec.gov.ar; link: "condiciones de vida", consulted: July 2005.
Notes: (1) Income poverty data for GBA conglomerates for October each year, based on EPH; (2) NBI data based on census, data are therefore national; (3) data from 1980 census.

Figure 12 – Urban Unemployment Rates (1999-2002) – Selected Conglomerates

Conglomerates	1999	2000	2001	2002
Great Buenos Aires (excluding City of Buenos Aires)	17.5	17.9	18.7	24.2
Gran Rosario	14.9	18.5	20.1	24.3
Gran Santa Fe	16.9	16.1	16.5	
Tucuman-Tafi Viejo	19.2	19.9	18.4	
Jujuy-Palpala	16.3	18.8	18.6	
Mar del Plata	18.2	14.6	19.0	24.6
Bahía Blanca	8.8	16.5	17.7	22.3
Gran La Plata	12.3	14.8	16.8	22.1
Concordia	13.8	22.4	18.5	
Gran Córdoba	14.2	13.4	12.7	25.3
Gran Catamarca		19.6	22.3	25.5
Total	**14.5**	**15.4**	**16.4**	**21.5**

Source: INDEC. Table based on EPH for May each year. http://www.indec.mecon.ar/nuevaweb/cuadros/4/shempleo4.xls, downloaded: September 2005.

Figure 13 – Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Argentina – Totals and Percentage Annual Variations (1990-2001)

Year	Totals (in millions of $)	% variation
1990	185.548	-2.5
1991	202.495	9.1
1992	218.567	7.9
1993	236.505	8.2
1994	250.308	5.8
1995	243.186	-2.8
1996	256.626	5.5
1997	277.441	8.1
1998	288.123	3.9
1999	278.123	-3.4
2000	276.173	-0.08
2001	263.997	-4.4

Source: INDEC. Tables "PRODUCTO INTERNO BRUTO a precios de mercado SERIE EMPALMADA 1980-2005, millones de pesos a precios de 1993, Valores Agregados Brutos Sectoriales a precios básicos" and "PRODUCTO INTERNO BRUTO a precios de mercado SERIE EMPALMADA 1980-2005 a precios de 1993, Variación porcentual respecto a igual período del año anterior". All at www.indec.gov.ar, link: "cuentas nacionales", PBI, Serie Histórica, Serie empalmada 1980-2005, consulted: July 2005.

Annex II: Methodology

The selection of programmes analysed in the thesis is based on crosscutting information from the MDBs' annual reports and project documents, programme monitoring and evaluation information from the SDS area (*SIEMPRO*) and insights gained from interviews.

The interviews were carried out with programme staff of programmes selected as follows:

Forty projects approved by both the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank in Argentina in the 1990s contained some form of civil society involvement, according to either the Banks' Annual reports or the project documents. These comprised: Eighteen (18) IDB programmes: Development of Municipal Institutions and Social Investment Programs, Sector Program in Support of Fiscal Adjustment and Social Reforms, Barrio Improvement (*PROMEBA)*, *PAGV*, Youth Productivity and Employability Support (inc. BECAS), Federal Program for Women, Program to Support Children in Specially Difficult Circumstances in Nine Provinces (*PROAME I*), Program to Assist Children and Adolescents at Risk (*PROAME II*), Strengthening of Banking System Safeguards, Primary Health Care Reform, la Pampa, Córdoba and Salta (*PROAPS*), Support for Fiscal Balance and Social Management, Modernising Córdoba Provincial Government, "Rosario Habitat": Comprehensive Program for the Rehabilitation of Unregulated Settlements, Support to Growth and Fiscal Discipline, AES Parana, Aguas Argentinas, Rosario-Victoria Bridge, Border Crossing and Integration Corridors; and twenty five (25) WB projects: Provincial Reform Projects Tucuman (1), Rio Negro (2), Catamarca (3), Córdoba (4), Santa Fe (5), Provincial Agricultural Development Project (PROSAP), Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition I and II (*PROMIN*), Forestry Development, Small Farmer Development, Pollution Management, Flood Protection, Mining Development Technical Assistance I and II, Social Protection I, II, III, IV (inc. *SIEMPRO, FOPAR* and *TRABAJAR*), Buenos Aires Urban Transport, Native Forests and Protected Areas, AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (*LUSIDA*), Secondary Education Reform II and III, Province of Buenos Aires, Public Health Surveillance and Disease Control (*VIGIA*), Sustainable Fisheries Management, Indigenous Community Development, Special Structural Adjustment Loan, Repurchase Facility Support Loan, Health Insurance for the Poor, Family Strengthening and Social Capital Promotion. Projects approved for the same national programme are considered as one programme. Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition Project I and II is one project, since both loans were used for *PROMIN*. Support for Children in Specially Difficult Circumstances in nine Provinces and Program to Assist Children and Adolescents at Risk were used for *PROAME*; WB Social Protection Projects, four approved during the 1990s, are considered in terms of the components funded: *SIEMPRO*, *FOPAR* and *TRABAJAR*, hence four loans count as three projects. Therefore, the 43 programmes approved by the Banks in the 1990s resulted in 40 national programmes with MDB funds.

A closer look at the programmes that used the loans approved by these Banks shows that many of them did not have the civil society involvement claimed in the Banks' reports or project documents. Therefore, a number of programmes were not covered by the interviews:

1. All the *state reform loans* claimed to include some form of civil society participation, especially through citizenship charters and the signing of "commitment letters". In an interview by the author, Marcos Makón (2002), who led state reform programmes under Menem and the *Alianza*, explained that the inclusion of civil society in decisions regarding state reform was nil. Therefore, two IDB programmes and five MDB programmes with civil society involvement according to the Banks are not considered here (-7).
2. In the projects dealing with infrastructure or environmental issues the Banks recommended some form of civil society involvement. However, this involvement was usually limited to consultations during the design stage, which consisted of surveys that were rarely taken into account in the face of more technically justified reasons for intervention. In the case of two WB environmental projects, WB Annual Reports considered that there was some form of civil society involvement, and five IDB infrastructure development projects with environmental impact show that participation is limited to consultation at the design stage. These seven loans are not considered in this research (-7).

3. The loans aimed at the financial sector or the maintenance of fiscal balance claim to include some form of civil society participation. That reflects the start of the WB's inclusion of social concerns in its structural loans and, in the particular case of Argentina, of some agreements reached with the government about guaranteeing funds for social policies. These loans did not result in new national programmes. Two WB and three IDB programmes fell intro these category and were therefore excluded. (-5)

4. Three further programmes were excluded, despite civil society participation appearing as central in the project documents. Social Protection Loans 2 and 3, corresponding to TRABAJAR programme, were excluded because, on closer inspection of the programme documents and media information, and after interviews with key informants during the exploratory research, it emerged that the programme was channelled through municipalities and civil society organisations had no formal role. The Indigenous Community Development Project, although small in terms of budget, was all about civil society participation. However, at the time of the first interviews (June 2002) the programme had not yet started. The Family Strengthening of Social Capital Promotion Project is a similar case. (-3)

5. Six projects were excluded because of their small budgets - Forestry Development, Mining Development, two projects each; LUSIDA; Sustainable Fisheries Management Development. (-6)

6. Five projects were excluded because of their limited geographical coverage - Flood Protection; Pollution Management; two projects for Secondary Education Reform; Rosario Habitat. (-5)

7. Two projects were excluded because they were cancelled - Youth Productivity and Employability Support and Health Insurance for the Poor. (-2)

As a result, 12 MDB projects were considered for interviews. [1]

Regarding nationally funded programmes, according to *SIEMPRO* data (SIEMPRO, 1998 and 2001) ten of the programmes with civil society involvement that emerged during the 1990s in the social sector were not MDB funded: *PFSC; CENOC; Nosotras; FONCAP; PSA; ProHuerta; Unidos; Solidaridad; Seguro Infantil (SI);* and *Programa para Menores Marginados en el Gran Buenos Aires (PROAMBA).* The latter was the only programme excluded from the fieldwork, because its geographical coverage was only the surrounding areas of Buenos Aires. It is noteworthy that although being mainly nationally funded, PSA and ProHuerta had funds from PROSAP and Small Farmer Development Project respectively, and some *CENOC* special initiatives were funded with MDB monies (Orlowski, 2002).

As a result, the interviews that inform this thesis were carried out with policy-makers and implementers related to the following programmes:

World Bank

1. PROSAP (a component of PSA)
   Interviewee: Gaston Bordelois (Programme Coordinator *PSA*)
2. Maternity and Child Health and Nutrition Programme (*PROMIN*)
   Interviewees: Pablo Vinocur (designer of original project, Programme Coordinator, *Alianza*); Maria Laura Barral (Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator); Carlos Anigstein (Health and Community Participation Coordinator); Juan Reichenbach (Programme Coordinator after 2001)
3. Small Farmer Development Project (funds parts of PSA and ProHuerta). Interviewee: Daniel Díaz refused several times to be interviewed.
4. Social Protection Project 1 (*SIEMPRO* and *FOPAR*)
   Interviewees: Irene Novacovsky (Programme Coordinator *SIEMPRO*, Menem's governments); Ana Etchegaray (Programme Coordinator *FOPAR*, Menem's governments); Carlos Flood (Community Participation Coordinator *FOPAR*); Alberto Calamante (Programme Coordinator *FOPAR* after 2001)
5. Social Protection 4 (*SIEMPRO* and *FOPAR*)
   As above.

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[1] For a list of the interviews done, see Reference section.

6. Public Health Surveillance and Disease Control (*VIGIA*)
   Interviewees: Hugo Fernández (Coordinator Epidemiology Component, *Alianza*); Raul Pitarque (Community Participation Area Coordinator)

   IDB

8. Barrio Improvement Programme (*PROMEBA*)
   Interviewee: Carlos Pisoni (staff member at the beginning of the programme, Programme Coordinator, *Alianza*) Lucia Pucci (Community Participation Coordinator, *Alianza*), Eduardo Tau (Programme Coordinator after 2001)
9. Programme in Support of Vulnerable Groups (*PAGV*)
   Interviewees: Ana Rita Diaz Muñoz (Programme Coordinator, Menem's second presidency and *Alianza*) María del Carmen Tamargo (Monitoring and Evaluation Area Coordinator, Menem's second presidency)
10. Federal Programme for Women (operating as the National Council for Women)
    Interviewee: Gloria Abán (Programme Coordinator)
11. Programme to Assist Children and Adolescents at Risk (*PROAME*)
    Interviewees: Beatriz Harretche (Programme Designer, IDB); Ariana Vacchieri (Communications Coordinator, *Alianza*); Marjorie Richards (Technical Assistant for Community Participation, Menem's governments); Elba Luna (Programme Coordinator, first loan); Stella Maris Morales (Programme Coordinator after 2001)
12. Primary Health Care Reform (*PROAPS*)
    Interviewee: Federico Tobar (Programme Coordinator after 2001)

Nationally-funded programmes

13. *Programa de Fortalecimiento del Desarrollo Juvenil (PFDJ)*
    Interviewee: Lara Manóvil (Community Training Coordinator)
14. *PFSC*
    Interviewees: Roberto Candiano (Programme Coordinator, Menem's governments); Mabel Denis (Director of Community Organisation, Menem's and *Alianza* governments)
15. *CENOC*
    Interviewees: Beatriz Orlowski de Amadeo (Programme Coordinator, Menem's governments) Catalina Nosiglia (Programme Coordinator, *Alianza*) Guillermo Mayer (Area Coordinator, Menem's governments)
16. *FONCAP*
    Interviewee: Juan Peña (Programme Coordinator, Menem's governments)
17. *PSA* (see above)
18. *ProHuerta* (see above)
19. *Solidaridad*
    Interviewee: Pablo Pucciarelli (Programme Coordinator, Alianza)
20. *SI*
    Interviewees: Juan Pablo Cafiero (Ministry of Social Development, *Alianza*); Pablo Vinocur (Programme Designer)
21. *UNIDOS*
    Interviewee: Aldo Isuani (involved in programme design)

Although insights obtained from the interviews with staff of all these programmes are used throughout the thesis, the focus of the analyses of the discourse on civil society in poverty reduction policy excludes:

Among MDB-funded programmes (both fully and partially MDB-funded):

- *PSA* and *ProHuerta*, because they operated autonomously from the agency created to deal with poverty reduction policies – the SDS. The former was under the Agriculture and Fisheries

Secretariat, and the latter under the remit of the *Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria* (*INTA* – National Institute of Farming Technology).

- *VIGIA*, because it was under the remit of the Ministry of Health and, according to the interviewees, civil society participation in the programme was minimal.
- Federal Programme for Women, because it did not directly fall under the remit of the *SDS* and the loan was used to create a state agency – National Council for Women – which implemented initiatives on demand and did not have, at the time of the interviews a fixed set of policies.
- Primary Health Care Reform (*PROAPS*), because it was not under the remit of the *SDS* and it was not implemented until late 2002.
- *SIEMPRO*, because, while it was a key *SDS* programme, civil society participation had no role in this institutional strengthening and monitoring programme.

Among nationally funded programmes:

- *FONCAP*, because according to its Coordinator the programme did not consider any form of civil society participation. It was a programme aimed at promoting and financing micro-enterprises.

Therefore, ten programmes constitute the core focus of the thesis' analysis:

1. *PROMIN*
2. *FOPAR*
3. *PROMEBA*
4. *PAGV*
5. *PROAME*
6. *PFSC*
7. *CENOC*
8. *Solidaridad*
9. *SI*
10. *UNIDOS*

PROMIN is included despite not being under the remit of the SDS – it was formally part of the Ministry of Health – because it maintained close links with the *SDS*. Talks about transferring the programme to the SDS were common during the 1990s (Barral, 2002). Moreover, the literature on civil society participation in social programmes considers it a model programme it this respect (eg Acuña and Tuozzo, 2000a and 2000b) and the WB presents it as an example of civil society involvement in social projects (World Bank, 1996). *Solidaridad*, *SI* and *UNIDOS* were not fully implemented, but they were the only programmes designed by the *Alianza* administration and, along with the changes the *Alianza* made to existing programmes, they are crucial to the analysis of the *Alianza* approach to poverty and the corresponding discourse on civil society.

Annex III: Programmes analysed

a. Summary of Programmes Analysed for 1995-2001

Programme	Period/Budget(*)	Brief Description	Type of Civil Society Involvement
PROMIN	1993-1998: $160m (100m WB/60m local) 1998-2004: $171m (100m WB/71 local - 54 nation/17 prov) (World Bank, 1997: 1)	The objective of the programme was to improve the primary care level of health and nutritional services for children and mothers in deprived areas. It consisted of two components – Health and Childhood Development. Within each component there was a Nutrition subcomponent. Designed originally to strengthen the National Directorate of Child and Maternal Health (Barral, 2002). The programme built community health centres in areas with high NBI.	Community development actions were part of both components of the programme but worked better in Childhood Development. The community organised and managed soup kitchens and nurseries, and aimed to transform them into childhood development centres. Grass-roots organisations promoted the programme. Intermediary NGOs were involved, through receiving funds for publicity (Barral, 2002).
FOPAR	1996-1997: $36.7m (pilot) (a) 1999-2003: $42m per year (b)	The objective was the development of local capacities through the involvement of local organisations in a community infrastructure project funded by the programme (Siempro, 2002). Projects received a maximum of $100,000 (WB, 1995: 28) and targeted municipalities with 30%+ NBI population.	According to programme documents, grass-roots organisations were involved in the design, implementation and administration of the projects. To enable their sustainability the programme supported organisations them through training and technical, administrative and financial assistance. (Siempro, 2001). The programme worked with community organisations and groups that were organised ad hoc – NUBs (*núcleos de beneficiarios*). NGOs were involved in the training and support given to the grass roots and members could be part of a *NUB* (Calamante, 2002). Programme funds were transferred to the NUB after it signed an agreement with *FOPAR* (Etchegaray, 2002).
PROMEBA	1997-2001: $170m ($102m IDB/ 68m local) for 5 years. (IDB, 1996: 1) (c)	The aim was to provide basic infrastructure for deprived urban areas through projects that involved local community organisations. It consisted of three components. First, infrastructure projects, including urban improvement and tenure rights legalisation ($s156m); second, social intervention actions to be executed by NGOs or consultancies ($20m); and third, institutional strengthening for the governmental agencies involved ($12.5m) (IDB, 1996: 1). According to the Project	The sub-projects financed by the programme were "integral" (PEI, *Proyectos de Ejecución Integral*) meaning that the infrastructure work had to include a social project, such as footpaths, communal productive initiatives, etc, which involved training and community organisation and promotion. Civil society organisations did not participate in the infrastructure work directly, which was allocated to private companies (Tau, 2002; Pucci, 2002). Social intervention

		Loan Document the target was "population with unsatisfied basic needs that face severe housing deficiencies" and which are shown to be in the lowest income quintile (IDB, 1996:1; 32). Projects funds were $150,000 per neighbourhood.	actions consisted of trainings for grass-roots in organisational strengthening, negotiation skills for their leaders, and workshops to reach agreement on starting the projects, and also to undertake participatory evaluation. Other actions included the creation of a community social fund (FSC) – which did not succeed – and technical assistance for building-related and administrative skills. NGOs and/or consultancies provided these services (IDB, 1996: 2).
PAGV	1997-2001: $60m ($33m IDB loan, $5m IDB grant, $22 local) (IDB, 1997: 1)	The general objective was to contribute to reducing exposure to social risks for the most vulnerable groups – women heads of household, young and elderly people and the disabled – in the poorest populations in urban conglomerates, and indigenous communities (Siempro, 2001). The programme financed projects designed by neighbourhood organisations (*Barrial* or *Multibarrial* projects) or indigenous communities organisations (CAPI component), which included housing improvements, recreational activities, soup kitchens, job training, community infrastructure and school grants for women (Siempro, 2001) and provided technical assistance for the diagnosis and design of projects. The targeting criteria combined NBI with unemployment and the poverty line (IDB, 1997: 42, 43).	The specific objective of the programme was the institutionalisation of participatory planning processes (PPP) and the strengthening of organisations – governmental or otherwise – involved in the projects (IDB, 1997: 1) through the mobilisation of those actors for the promotion, preparation and implementation of the projects (Alonso, et al., 2003: 112). Grass-roots organisations were the "executing organisations" (*Organizaciones Ejecutoras* – OEs) and the intermediary organisations or NGOs were "support organisations" (*Organizaciones de Apoyo* – ODAs). The latter provided technical support to OEs and evaluated the projects, for which they received financial support (Alonso, et al. 2003: 114). In multi-neighbourhood projects the provincial unit of the PAGV (*Unidad Ejecutora Provincial - UEP*) and the local units (*Unidades Ejecutoras Locales – UELs*) provided support and evaluation. Municipalities could be OEs.
PROAME	1996-1998 – PROAME I: $27.14m ($19.72 BID/1.42m local/ $6m "direct executors" (IDB, 1995: 1) 1999-2003 - PROAME II: $43.3m ($30m BID, $13.3 local) (IDB, 1998: 1,4) (d)	The objectives of PROAME I were to improve the living conditions of minors in particularly difficult circumstances and to consolidate and strengthen social organisations working in the field, including the fostering of networks of organisations that could face eventual crisis in the sector (IDB, 1995: 1). The programme financed projects in nine provinces of the north-west and northeast in areas with high NBI. PROAME II incorporated the objective of strengthening governmental organisations working in the field and expanded its coverage to new provinces ($27m for projects and $12m for institutional strengthening of governments. In addition to NBI, the selection criteria included vulnerable populations in flood-affected areas. In both cases the programme financed projects that included after-school classes, nutritional provision, recreational activities, employment training, health support, and building and infrastructure improvement (Richards, interview; IDB, 1995: 3-5).	PROAME I: One of the objectives of the programme was to strengthen social organisations working in the field of children and adolescents at risk. The budget for the first loan included the contribution to the programme that would come from the inclusion of NGOs and grass-roots organisations, defined as "direct executors" (IDB, 1995: 1, 4). In PROAME II, civil society organisations continued to be "chiefly executors" of projects (IDB, 1998: 2) and provincial or municipal governments areas dealing with children and adolescents' issues presented separate projects for institutional strengthening (PROAME, 1999: 9). They tried to introduce "associated management" (*gestión asociada*) but it did not work (Richards, 2002).
PFSC	94-95: unused	The purpose of the programme was to train human and organisational	The leaders were proposed by civil society organisations, some

	PROSOL funds 1997: highest budget: $12m (Candiano, interview)	resources to be used in other programmes (Candiano, 2002). In addition to the training and educational activities, PFSC financed projects with the purpose of providing opportunities for newly acquired skills to be put into practice. It included several components that developed over time. First, *"Animadores Comunitarios"*, which included Initial Education, Complementary Education (training of trainers), and Internships. Second, *"Madres Cuidadoras",* who were also community leaders. These projects had to be presented by mothers' organisations (Candiano, 2002). The programme allocated $144,800 per province (g): $44,800 for training workshops and $100,000 for projects, with a maximum of $5,000 per project. (Candiano, 2002).	times even by informal "solidarity groups". These organisations each sent two representatives to the training workshops twice a year (20 areas/organisations = 40 *animadores).* The leaders were trained to restore or set up social solidarity networks (PFSC, 1996: 8, 9). Intermediary organisations – NGOs – administered the funds transferred for training or projects (PFSC, 1996: 19). In the first years the focus was on community development. By 1998 the programme had been reformulated to focus on citizenship, and incorporated the notion of social capital (Paiuk and Georges, 1998).
CENOC	$1m a year (e)	The aim of the programme was to improve the relationship between social and community organisations and the national state. To achieve that objective it undertook a number of actions of which the most important were the development of a Database of Community Organisations, a Computerised Network of Community Organisations *(RENOC – Red Nacional de Organizaciones Comunitarias)* and a distance training programme *(PECAD – Programa de Capacitación a Distancia).* There were several other small initiatives taken together with organisations dealing with voluntary work, or social problems such as HIV/AIDs (Orlowsky, 2002).	Civil society organisations were the programme's direct beneficiaries. Inclusion in the database was voluntary, although to access the funds of any *SDS* programmes an organisation had to be registered with *CENOC*. The database included informal groups as well as highly professionalised NGOs. In *PECAD* there were local tutors and "*organizaciones madrinas*" (intermediary NGOs). The training content was defined by *CENOC* and the NGOs promoted the programme, proposed the tutors, administered the funds and carried out the evaluation. They received $5,000 for each module.

(*) $1=US$1 throughout the period

Notes: (a) The loan, approved in November 1995, was Social Protection I. The total was $152m (WB), $14.4m for SIEMPRO a project for the monitoring and evaluation of poverty-reduction policies and the rest for several targeted social programmes (World Bank, 1995: 7, 28, 94). (b) The loan was Social Protection IV, for FOPAR and SIEMPRO. The total was $132.9m for five years (WB: 90.8; local: 40.1) (World Bank, 1998: 1, 5). (c) The funds were not executed until 1999 because of the need to reach an agreement with the province regarding the need to become indebted to access the programme (Pisoni, 2002). (d) Additional funds came from loans approved following floods in the north-east (Richards, 2002) and a part of the original loan was used for the *SISFAM* – a project to construct a database of beneficiaries of targeted policies – managed by *SIEMPRO* (Morales, 2002). (e) They obtained funds from the MDBs on at least one occasion for a training programme for organisations from indigenous communities – a $180,000 grant from the World Bank (Orlowsky, 2002). (f) The *PAGV* loan had three components: a *Componente de Viabilización del Acceso a los Servicios Sociales* (*CVASS* – Component for Facilitating Access to Social Services), a *Componente de Atención a la Población Indígena (CAPI* – Component of Assistance to Indigenous Populations) (Siempro, 2001; Alonso, et al., 2003: 113; Diaz Muñoz, 2002: 19), and a third component destined for the *SISFAM* project. (g) There were exceptions to this PFSC rule: provinces in particularly difficult conditions of poverty received double that amount.

b. Summary of Programmes added in the analysis for 2000-2001

Programme	Period/Budget(*)	Brief Description	Type of Civil Society Involvement
Plan Solidaridad (incorporating Unidos programme)	Announced: July 2000 Pilots: Sept 2000 – March 2001 Budget *Unidos*: $2,158,987 (pilot, excl. admin. expenses) (2)	The objectives were policy coordination and the provision of food boxes and cash subsidies (Plan *Unidos,* Ministry of Social Development), scholarships (Plan *Escuelas Prioritarias*, Ministry of Education) and health assistance (*PROMIN*, Ministry of Health). As counter-provisions the families were to send their children to school and have regular health checks. The money transfers were $120 for the southern provinces, $80 for the northern ones and $100 for the others. (2) Targeting criteria: Areas were selected according to NBI indicators and provincial governments' views. Families were selected based on census within these areas, carried out in the framework of the SinTys (MDB-funded) to identify families below the poverty line. Coverage: The aim was 2,000,000 people. It started with pilots in 24 areas covering 25,000 families (125,000 individuals) and the second stage planned to cover 200,000 families (1,000,000 individuals). (1)	Families, social promoters and *Consejos Sociales Locales* (Local Social Councils), where grass-roots and intermediary social organisations worked together with governmental and other social organisations in publicising and supervising the Plan.
Seguro Infantil (SI)	Initial measures started Sept 01, Oct 01 subsidies $2,000 million (3)	The objective was the provision of a monetary subsidy of $50 to $100 for families with offspring under 18, that were living below the poverty line and with no access to family benefits. The counter provisions required were health checks and children's attendance at school. The programme was part of a Pact for Childhood, which included other actions such as the approval of free-of-charge identity cards for newborns and a plan for street children. Targeting criteria: 1st stage, NBI; 2nd, below $500/month; 3rd, $500-$1,000/month. Required census of beneficiaries. Coverage: 1st stage, 850,000 families; 2nd, +450.000 families; 3rd, +450,000 families (3)	In documents, undefined role. In practice, backed the initiative. Organisations to integrate their work with provincial and municipal actors. Key bodies involved: universities, human rights organisations. Families and not social organisations received funds.

(*) $1=US$1 throughout the period