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The Impact of Social Movements on Austerity Measures: An Analysis of Argentina's Piquetero Movement and Greece's Anti-Austerity Movement

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Greece's Anti-Austerity Movement

submitted to
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Abstract

Social movements have sprung up in countries after their respective economies experience an economic crisis and the International Monetary Fund places restrictions on a country's fiscal policy. Argentina's *piquetero* movement and Greece's anti-austerity movement have both mobilized after economic crises to protest the neoliberal shifts to their economics, yet their success at shifting those policies have not been studied sufficiently. The dominant explanation for social movement success involves analyzing political opportunities or seeing the social movement as an actor with limited resources. These existent methods fail to answer how nuances about internal decisions or forms of protest could influence the outcomes of the movements. I use Argentina's and Greece's social movements as case studies and analyzed them through a new framework: (1) forms of protest, (2) relationship to government, and (3) locus of decision making. In this analysis, I conclude that social movements have not been successful in reversing IMF restrictions, but they are successful in shifting the national political scene or culture. This research demonstrates that social movements are best equipped to influence local communities or national politics, but are limited in their impact on international pressures.

Resumen

Los movimientos sociales han surgido en los países después de que sus respectivas economías tuvieron una crisis económica y el Fondo Monetario Internacional impone restricciones a la política fiscal de un país. El movimiento piquetero de Argentina y el movimiento contra la austeridad de Grecia se han movilizado después de las crisis económicas para protestar por los cambios neoliberales en su economía, pero su éxito en cambiar esas políticas no se ha estudiado suficiente. La explicación dominante del éxito de los movimientos sociales implica analizar las oportunidades políticas o ver al movimiento social como un actor con recursos limitados. Estos métodos existentes no logran responder cómo los matices sobre las decisiones internas o las formas de protesta podrían influir en los resultados de los movimientos. Uso los movimientos sociales de Argentina y Grecia como estudios de caso y los analizo a través de un nuevo marco: (1) formas de protesta, (2) relación con el gobierno y (3) lugar de toma de decisiones. En este análisis, concluyo que los movimientos sociales no han tenido éxito en revertir las restricciones del FMI, pero sí en cambiar la escena política o la cultura nacional. Esta investigación demuestra que los movimientos sociales están mejor equipados para influir en las comunidades locales o en la política nacional, pero tienen un impacto limitado en las presiones internacionales.

Introduction

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank Professor Lisa Koch for her time, dedication, and infinite energy as my thesis advisor and professor. I have been fundamentally shaped by her approach to academia, where it is meant to be a tool to educate everyone and not just the niche political science circles. I am beyond grateful for the opportunity to work as her research assistant, thesis advisee, and student for multiple semesters of classes. Thank you for being fair, communicative, and encouraging always.

Second, I would like to thank Professor Appel for her deep explanations of economic crises during her International Political Economy class. That class is where I originally learned about the 1980s debt crisis, Argentina's 2001-peso crisis, and the 2008 global financial recession. I can directly attribute my interest in the International Monetary Funds' debt structuring to her, and I thank her for making such a complex subject so digestible.

Third, thank you to Brenda Pereyra and Nuria Pena, who both served as advisors to my study abroad program in Argentina in the spring of 2020. I appreciated learning first-hand about the legacy of social movements within the nation. My thesis on *comedores* that was advised by Brenda introduced me to Argentina's social movement system, and I thank them both for their support during that time.

Lastly, I would like to thank my family for supporting me throughout my writing process, attending my senior thesis defense, and sending me the occasional reminder text

in the weeks leading to my thesis that I had a thesis due. Your support truly is always so appreciated, especially when it spans an entire country.

Motivation

Social movements serve a unique position in society because they give individual citizens an opportunity to act and feel like they can contribute to change. When this thesis was investigated, the United States experienced its Black Lives Matter and anti-vaccination movement, Argentina faced multiple rounds of austerity and coronavirus protests, and Bangladesh saw labor and human rights protests.[1] Social movements have a particular force in society that is captivating to me because they seek to challenge some injustice.

As these protests have been occurring globally over the last year, I have been interested in how social movements are formed and discussed. Social movements are often perceived to be on the periphery of society and are comprised of people who traditionally do not participate in institutions. In a democratic society, if an institution is not supporting the needs of the people, then people should have the ability to protest that institution. While protesting to me appears as one of the highest forms of democratic participation, governments and the media often portray social movements as fringe organization seeking violence or outright rejecting any norms. I wanted to explore how social movements are formed in relation to institutions to understand how people who are disgruntled with institutions can try to change them.

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[1] "Global Protest Tracker," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, accessed April 18, 2022, https://carnegieendowment.org/publications/interactive/protest-tracker.

Additionally, I studied abroad in Argentina in spring 2020 and wrote a thesis about Argentine *comedores*, roughly translated to soup kitchens, and how the coronavirus pandemic impacted food policy in Argentina on a provincial and national level. During the interviews I conducted for that research, I found that most of the soup kitchens had been created during the early 1990s and 2000s when Argentina experienced a prolonged economic crisis.[2] This research made me interested in community-level responses to national crises and how individuals can build networks to support each other.

My final motivating factor in this thesis was an International Political Economy class that I took in fall 2020 with Professor Hillary Appel. In this class, we learned about Argentina's 1980s debt default and 2001-peso crisis, and I connected that the *comedores* I had previously studied were erected during these economic crises. Given my interest in the role of the individual to influence institutions and the history of the International Monetary Fund in Argentina, I knew I wanted to focus on how individuals could shape national or international policy.

My analysis hopes to build on previous work I have done on *comedores* and bring together my academic interests in institution forming and citizenship. Social movements are just one avenue I identified of individual action, but I hope to continue to explore the relationship between the individual and the state under a democratic system in the future.

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[2] Katrina Frei-Herrmann, "Los Comedores Populares Argentinos En Tiempos Del COVID-19: El Rol de Los Comedores Durante La Pandemia: El Sistema Alimentario y La Acción Del Gobierno Argentino," *Independent Study Project (ISP) Collection*, April 1, 2020, 9, https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/isp_collection/3297.

Background

The social movements analyzed in this thesis gained their momentum after their economies experienced an economic crisis and the International Monetary Fund imposed austerity measures. In order to understand the impact that social movements can make in reversing these measures, it will be crucial to first explain what the International Monetary Fund is, how neoliberalism influenced international policy, and what these social movements are protesting.

The international system has turned to a growth-centric, market-oriented, globalized, and economic network. Since the rise of Keynesian economics in the 1920s that transformed economics into a field about the exchange of capital goods, Western countries and institutions have focused on how to accumulate capital and increase economic growth.[3] Economic growth, or how much a country's gross domestic product has been increasing year over year, became the central tool in analyzing a country's success. Additionally, the institutions that were formed after World War II clearly divided nations between those who have international power and those who do not.[4] Most of these institutions adopted neoliberalism as their ideological basis, which impacted how countries built their economies.

Neoliberalism dominated most nations' and international institutions' approach to policy, which indebted low income countries with strict austerity measures and oriented

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[3] Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 70, https://www-degruyter-com.ccl.idm.oclc.org/document/doi/10.1515/9781400839926/html.

[4] Jonathan Murphy and Nimruji Jammulamadaka, eds., *Governance, Resistance and the Post-Colonial State: Management and State Building* (London: Routledge, 2017), 4, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315544168.

their economies to focus on exports.[5] In a neoliberal system, specialization of goods meant for exportation is prioritized over domestic self-reliance because the free market regulates prices and it is cheaper for countries to specialize. For example, Argentina's economy is focused mostly on growing soy as it is a resource other nations will buy. As countries attempted to rebuild their economies or grow their power internationally after the war, they needed to adopt the neoliberal norms present at the time.

Growth became the center point for most economic discussions, yet this growth was narrowly defined to a certain increase of population, innovation, and capital accumulation.[6] Countries who won World War II experienced the benefits of the growth-centric economy at the detriment to the nations who lost or did not partake. The divide between the winners and losers widened as neoliberalism disproportionally benefited high-income countries. The effects of this divide impacted people's economic, political, and social outlook. As low-income nations became more indebted into the 1970s and 1980s, citizens of low-income nations found their physical circumstances worsened and grew discontent with the global order.

This discontentment with neoliberalism created social movements across the globe as individuals sought paths to enact change on a broader system they deemed unfair. While social movements have existed since early industrialization, the uptick in their popularity after World War II demonstrates that the populous viewed social movements as an effective means to pressure the national or supranational ideologies. In our analysis of the impact

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[5] Murphy and Jammulamadaka, 4.
[6] Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*, 70.

that social movements can have in influencing a country's economic policy, it will be important to contextualize social movements and existing theory.

In both Greece and Argentina, the social movements mobilized out of a period of political tension after their national governments passed austerity measures. The austerity measures were required by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in exchange for loans that would support the nations' economic development and government. Both social movements were composed of a wide array of actors from union members to middle class mothers to unemployed workers. The ability of both movements to attract such a diverse audience indicates how widespread discontent of the austerity measures were. Before outlining how to measure the impact of social movements were on reversing austerity measures, we must first understand the role of international financial institutions (IFIs) in the domestic economies, the influence of neoliberalism on social movements, and the power dynamics between the loan-provides and receivers.

Neoliberalism and the IMF's engagement in neoliberal policies stand in complete ideological opposition to social movements. Neoliberalism holds that a best economic system is one where the free markets are supported, nations focus on maximizing utility through transnational trade, and individuals can promote their own wealth.[7] The doctrine was created by Western nations during the Washington Consensus and was adopted by IFIs

[7] Kevin Farnsworth, Zoë Irving, and Slyvia Walby, "The Limits of Neoliberalism?: Austerity versus Social Policy in Comparative Perspective," in *Alternatives to Neoliberalism*, ed. Bryn Jones and Mike O'Donnell, 1st ed., Towards Equality and Democracy (Bristol University Press, 2017), 102, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1t89546.16; Murphy and Jammulamadaka, *Governance, Resistance and the Post-Colonial State*, 4.

to deploy internationally, especially in "developing countries" that had lower incomes and were more susceptible to price fluctuations in a commodity economy.[8]

Additionally, loans have been used by IFIs in the world to support neocolonial systems of power. For example, IFIs launched campaigns that pressured Latin American countries into debt to ensure that the governments stayed loyal to the United States and Western interests.[9] Latin American countries even adopted a phrase of "borrow in order to develop" to justify their high levels of debt, which demonstrates how entrenched loans were in a country's plan forward.[10] The original loans were given to dictators in Latin America to keep them friendly with the United States and once those dictators were out of office, the countries remained in alliance with the West because of the debt.[11]

Debt was utilized as a diplomatic tool to keep lower income nations under the influence and in agreeance to high income nations. Low income nations took out debt from the IFIs because they needed to jumpstart their economies, but the division between the countries who gave and needed loans widened as countries took on more and more debt. Repayment plans additionally prioritized capturing interest on the initial debt so that borrower countries needed to pay more of their growing GDPs to pay off their loans, while the IFIs would receive the interest of that debt.

The predatory nature of these loans can be seen through both the loan structure and the austerity measures imposed. Repayment plans of loans packaged with flexible interest

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[8] Murphy and Jammulamadaka, *Governance, Resistance and the Post-Colonial State*, 7.
[9] Ximena de la Barra and Richard Dello Buono, *Latin America After the Neoliberal Debacle: Another Region Is Possible* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009), 162.
[10] de la Barra and Dello Buono, 162.
[11] de la Barra and Dello Buono, 162.

rates, increased interest rates, and debt renegotiations.[12] Over time, the interest compounded and countries needed to allot a higher percentage of their annual gross domestic product (GDP) just to pay off the IMF loans. In 1980, Ecuador only paid 15% of its GDP to debt repayment, but by 2005, 47% of its annual GDP went towards the IFIs.[13] As countries pay a higher percentage of their GDP towards repayment, they are left with less in their fiscal budget for public services like education, healthcare, and welfare.[14] According to neoliberal policies, public spending should be decreased and these loan repayments were one way that IFIs ensured nations could maintain a market-oriented economy.

Austerity measures were also passed onto nations to further pressure countries to adopt neoliberalism. Central in neoliberalism is decreased public spending and a higher prioritization of the free market. The austerity measures that were implemented continued to take away from public expenditures by advocating for privatization, financialization, and shrinkage of welfare spending.[15] Countries were unable to spend their own GDP in a way that they self-determined to be best, and instead invested resources in paying off predatory loans. There was no universal set of austerity measures that the IMF demanded for all nations, and offered conflicting suggestions on a country-by-country basis that delegitimized their standing as a trustworthy global institution by the early 2000s.[16]

When austerity measures were imposed, there was large social and environmental consequences that left the situation so dire that the 1980s became known as the "lost

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[12] de la Barra and Dello Buono, 162.
[13] de la Barra and Dello Buono, 165.
[14] Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*, 82.
[15] Farnsworth, Irving, and Walby, "The Limits of Neoliberalism?," 102.
[16] Farnsworth, Irving, and Walby, 108.

decade" in Latin America.[17] Citizens promptly felt the impact of austerity measures, therefore their imposition led to political conflicts. Austerity measures decrease public spending, so pensions decrease, public wages could be cut, and state-owned businesses because privatized. The contentious state explains why social movements emerged from this period and especially mobilized against their implementation.

As a response to the debt, social movements adopted their own narrative about the debt that aligned with dynamics present in class conflicts. The masses were awakened by the impact of austerity measures, and claimed the debts were illegitimate, especially in Latin America. Numerous social movements including CADTM, Jubilee 2000, and Eurodad organized around calling the debt illegitimate since the loans were given during the dictator eras, interest rates were flexible and high, loans often circumvented local laws, and countries needed to pass austerity measures as conditions for the loans.[18] By determining the IFI loans were not legitimate, social movements were able to rally around that message and reach a broader base of actors.

International financial institutions built from neoliberal policies created rifts within the public that social movements could orient themselves around when seeking change. The predatory nature of the loans and conditions of austerity measures created a strong power dynamic between the loan-giving nations and loan-receiving nations. In both Argentina and Greece, the movements casted the IMF as a villain, which allowed for the movements to garner a wide array of supporters. Both movements opposed neoliberalism and the austerity measures associated with their country's loans. While the loans hurt the

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[17] de la Barra and Dello Buono, *Latin America After the Neoliberal Debacle: Another Region Is Possible*, 163.
[18] de la Barra and Dello Buono, 174.

nations and the citizens, it allowed for the birth of the anti-austerity movement in Greece and *piquetero* movement in Argentina.

Argument

Social movements allow for people to mobilize against a force or change that they believe is negative. Through the shared grievance, people are able to move past their individual desires to reach collective action that aims to challenge the norms. Austerity measures imposed from international financial institutions frequently caused governments to restrict their public expenditures and privatize their economies. These changes caused citizens to lose their jobs, experience economic crises, and lose faith in institutions.

International financial institutions are often composed of wealthier nations and usually lend money to lower income nations. There is a power in these lending mechanisms by which lower income nations need to follow the orders of the IFIs if they want access to the loans. These loans help fuel economic development, but then also have been partnered with austerity measures that countries need to implement. If a country does not implement the austerity measures, then they will not have access to the loans or the IFIs could act to punish nations by restricting them access to further finances.

Most of these decisions regarding loans and debt payment structures stay within the hands of the political elite. Negotiations are typically held between the international financial institutions and political leaders from the borrower-nation. Most countries additionally decide their financial and economic policies through democratically elected representatives, but the public salience regarding these policy matters is often low. Financial policies are passed behind the closed doors of the treasury offices without

democratic input from the citizens. Additionally, most of these austerity measures are being passed around economic crises, which means that nations are already under a significant amount of pressure.

Because of this decision-making process between country leaders and the IFIs, policies can be passed that negatively hurt the individual citizen, as seen with austerity measures. Since citizens see the impact of these measures in their own lives, but have little say in when these policies are passed, it leaves people frustrated with the political machine. Social movements have been one path of action that citizens have taken because of its ability to pressure politicians and demonstrates collective disgruntlement.

Social movements as an avenue for political change has become a rising academic field since the 1950s and 1960s with Tilly, Gramsci, Tarrow, and McAdam. In a world where the influence of government in people's individual lives has been ever-growing and the power of international institutions has increased exponentially, social movements allow people the opportunity to resist change being imposed from the government.

As people experience disgruntlement, they may feel inspired to act and if that action is shared amongst a group over a prolonged period of time, a social movement can form. Social movements occur when a group experiences a shortage of resources and must determine how to allocate those resources to reach their end goal. The end goal can vary from group to group, but often orients around some request from the government. Movements can choose how to act to achieve their goals, but this action often involves some orientation towards or rejection of the state.

In both Greece and Argentina, social movements mobilized to oppose the austerity measures imposed after their respective economic crises. Argentina's *piquetero* movement

began in 1996 and continues today, but rose in popularity after Argentina's 2001 economic crisis until 2003. Greece's anti-austerity movement accelerated in 2010 after the government passed a round of austerity measures, peaked in 2012, and continued until 2015. Both movements had similar timelines of two years for their most popular periods, yet their outcomes varied.

The goals of these movements overlapped to a degree, but also varied based upon the country's previous economic and political standing. For the goals in common, both movements actively opposed the austerity measures and rejected the implementation of neoliberal economic practices onto their countries. The International Monetary Fund had placed several rounds of austerity measures on both nations after the government had asked the IMF for more support after their economic crises. Because of both the further austerity measures and the already present economic crisis, both movements also shared is their discontentment with the standing government.

Most of their goal distinctions involved country-specific contexts. Argentina was a nation where many industries like oil, coal, and manufacturing were state-owned with high levels of labor union support. As Argentina privatized under its austerity initiative, many of its state-owned enterprises were transitioned to being privately-owned and workers lost their jobs in the process. The *piquetero* movement for this reason had a particularly strong focus on unemployed workers and wanted to allocate government subsidies for unemployed workers.

Greece did not share the same degree of state-owned companies, but it did have two-party electoral system since the 1970s that can be compared to the United States' Democrats and Republicans. Once the country spiraled into an economic crisis and the

standing political parties passed austerity measures, citizens immediately rejected the existing parties. Any imagery that was associated with a political party was banned from the Greek protests because of this distrust in the system. These specific nuances of both Greece and Argentina reveal how comparing the two will be difficult because of their country-specific histories. This analysis will still compare the two movements though because of their shared alignment in rejecting austerity measures.

Before proceeding with the tools of analysis from this research, I will first briefly explain why I selected Argentina and Greece to study, given their different geographical and cultural standings. This process began by isolating the broader research question of what impact social movements could have on reversing austerity measures in countries after economic crises. I then conducted initial research on countries who saw a rise in social movements after economic collapse and identified Spain, Greece, Chile, Ireland, Argentina, and Mexico. The countries who had the closest connections to austerity measures were Spain, Greece, and Argentina. Argentina was selected as the first case study because it built on previous research I had conducted on government food policy during the COVID-19 pandemic. For the second case study, I selected Greece as it experienced a similar timeline in popularity as in Argentina. I knew that isolating only two case studies would not be a sufficient enough sample size to draw wide sweeping conclusions, but I thought the cross-movement analysis could at least identify some trends in outcomes.

This analysis sought to analyze how social movement can influence government policy to reverse austerity measures and did so by identifying three independent variables: (1) focus of decision-making, (2) relationship with government, and (3) forms of protest. These variables were selected as they built on previous social movement scholars' theories

of resource mobilization and political opportunity structures. These independent variables were then used to understand the success and outcomes of the movement. Success is how the movement was able or not able to achieve the goals it had set out for itself. Outcomes are the impact that the social movement had on the society, government, or economy in ways that were not directly outlined in the movement, but were a result of the movement's actions.

Neither Greece nor Argentina's social movements were effective at reversing austerity measures. Given that those were the primary goals to the movement, they were not accomplished but both movements did impact the political or social scene through different means. In Greece, one of the sub-movements formed its own political party that went on to gain the most electoral seats in 2015 and break a 60-year cycle of a two-party government. Argentina saw the continued implementation of social projects that provided an alternative to state-sponsored aid and invigorated the community as a decision-making body.

While these outcomes were not the primary objective of the social movements, I would still argue that social movements are a successful means to accomplish certain ends. Social movements cannot successfully oppose the power that international financial institutions have on countries right now, but they can create new institutions within their respective countries to better share resources or inspire new political opinions. International power still controls countries' financial policies more than domestic actors, but social movements offer avenues of societal change.

This thesis contains three chapters all addressing whether or not social movements can impact domestic economic policy.

The first chapter outlines the theory and methodological of social movements. It explains resource mobilization theory and political opportunity structures, which have been some of the largest explanations social movement scholars have been using to explain the development and desires of movements. I then outline the framework I used through the three independent and two dependent variables.

The second and third chapters explores Argentina's *piquetero* movement and Greece's anti-austerity movement respectively through the framework outlined in the previous chapter. I have also provided a brief introduction of each economic crisis and the movement's history to contextualize the variable analysis. At the end, I conclude by explaining both the success and outcomes of both movements.

This thesis will conclude with a summary of my findings and a discussion about future directions for this research. It will be evident through this analysis that more research should be done to identify how people can effectively act against international institutions. Social movements are a strong starting point, but neither Argentina nor Greece were effective in reversing economic policies.

Chapter 1: Theory & Context

This chapter aims to define what a social movement is, how social movements have been theorized historically and today, and identifies dynamics present in social movements that can influence the impact on broader government structures. The field of social movements is an extremely interdisciplinary study, which is why the theoretical framework will draw on political philosophy, history, and organizational theory. It is important to provide this background of social movements before exploring the case study because the lens being applied to Greece and Argentina's movements draws on past scholarship.

The Context of Social Movements

To understand the impact of social movements, it is first important to establish what a social movement is and how social movements have been conceptualized throughout history. Overall, social movements are composed of people within a society who mobilize towards some goal over a prolonged period. While the definition of a social movement has stayed somewhat universal, individual scholars have contributed to the field by contextualizing why social movements mobilize initially, how they utilize their resources, and how identity can shape the outcome of a movement. It will be important to establish a baseline of what a social movement is for analyzing the case studies, as social movements encompass a wide range of interests but can share similar mechanisms of influence.

A social movement is defined when people are brought together with limited resources under a goal and act towards accomplishing that goal over time.[19] Social

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[19] Sidney G. Tarrow, *Power in Movement : Social Movements and Contentious Politics* (New York : Cambridge University Press, 2011), 16.

movements often have limited resources because the people who participate are usually marginalized in society. Social movements can additionally offer an alternative to traditional political institutions politics and can provide an outlet for people who do not feel supported by the government. While the people who comprise social movements have both separate and shared identities, they are held together through the shared goal and can leverage their individual identities to take collective action.[20] Finally, a social movement is considered such when it sustains itself over a period of time, as this time horizon distinguishes a social movement from just a series of protests.[21] The movement distinction is important as it indicates there is some shared ideology between participants that they want to act to see changed.

There has been contention amongst social movement scholars of how to distinguish a social movement from a series of protest.[22] Essentially, at what point is a social movement considered a movement versus protests? It is important to define what the scope of a social movement is for this analysis as it informs what factors will be examined within the Greek and Argentinean theaters.

The first position of contention amongst scholars is whether or not the presence of institutional actors defines a social movement. Wilkinson, Turner, and Killian defined social movements as a set of actions coming from a noninstitutionalized group with a goal of accomplishing or resisted a social change, while the group maintains a minimum level

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[20] Kenneth M. Roberts, *Deepening Democracy?: The Modern Left and Social Movements in Chile and Peru* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1998), 60, http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=6670.

[21] Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, 16.

[22] J. Craig Jenkins, "Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements," *Annual Review of Sociology* 9, no. 1 (1983): 529, https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.09.080183.002523.

of internal organization.[23] Social movements did not need to oppose an institution, but just needed to be a noninstitutional group themselves.

In contrast, McCarthy, Zald, Gamson, Jenkins, Perrow, and Tilly all argued that social movements should only be defined as such if they are produced from grievances around an institution, if they are comprised of individuals who normally would not protest the elites, or they serve the interests of people that the elite do not target.[24] The latter bucket of scholars insisted that institutions need to be present in the conflict for an organization to be deemed a social movement.

The formation of social movements reveals how the citizens react to the broader society at that time period because social movements do not form out of times of unity. Political scientist Sidney Tarrow stated that social movements are born out of periods of contentious politics.[25] Participants of movements perceive threats and then determine they must mobilize to oppose that threat.[26] In Tarrow's analysis, these periods of political contestation have always generated different forms of social movements, even if the scope of those movements has shifted over time. Social movements originate from periods of conflict and seek to either bring attention to or change that conflict.

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[23] Ralph H. Turner and Lewis M. Killian, *Collective Behavior* (Prentice-Hall, 1972), 246; Paul Wilkinson, "Concepts of Social Movement," in *Social Movement*, ed. Paul Wilkinson, Key Concepts in Political Science (London: Macmillan Education UK, 1971), 27, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-01093-6_1.
[24] Jenkins, "Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements," 529; Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution*, vol. 74 (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1978), http://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/american-political-science-review/article/abs/from-mobilization-to-revolution-by-charles-tilly-reading-mass-addisonwesley-1978-pp-xiii-349-no-price-given/34BE8F5F94D5065814D56D086A6E7939; J. Craig Jenkins and Charles Perrow, "Insurgency of the Powerless: Farm Worker Movements (1946-1972)," *American Sociological Review* 42, no. 2 (1977): 249–68, https://doi.org/10.2307/2094604; William A Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest* (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey Press, 1975), 17, http://books.google.com/books?id=4DJHAAAAMAAJ; John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory," *American Journal of Sociology* 82, no. 6 (1977): 1218.
[25] Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, 16.
[26] Tarrow, 16.

Given the large variety in topics that a social movement can oppose, it will be crucial to understand how other scholars have approached analyzing social movements. There are two predominant theories in social movement studies that explain how social movements influence outcomes: resource mobilization theory and political opportunity structures. Both of these theories are used to build this analysis's framework.

Resource Mobilization Theory

When people choose to mobilize for their demands, they are likely in a position of limited resources. People must determine how they will then allocate their own limited resources and for this reason, social movements develop assets and capacities given their specific situation.[27] This dynamic is referred to as resource mobilization theory.[28] Each social movement has the ability to allocate its own time, money, and people power to avenues of action that will not be universal from social movement to social movement.[29] When social movement scholars like McAdam, Tilly, and Tarrow began acknowledging this allocation ability, it was evident that comparing social movements across cultural and social backgrounds would be difficult given the complexities of each individual movement and demand.[30]

The actors who make up a social movement additionally must make individual choices to determine participation. There are different levels of actors that begin with the individual, then the group, and then the broader movement, and each level must contend

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[27] Ronaldo Munck, "Social Movements in Latin America: Paradigms, People, and Politics," *Latin American Perspectives* 47, no. 4 (July 1, 2020): 24, https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X20927007.
[28] Munck, 24.
[29] Munck, 25.
[30] Munck, 25.

with their personal resources and desires when shaping their action.[31] Each level

additionally must choose their capacity and allocation of resources when participating.[32]

Individuals are more likely to participate if they hold a favorable expectation around the

number of participants, the probability of success from their individual contribution, and

the likelihood of success of the group's contribution.[33] Participation is an important

consideration in resource mobilization theory as it defines why actors are willing to work

together towards their desired outcome.

For the state, governments must decide where to allocate their finite resources to

promote the interests of the regime or citizens with strategic imperatives.[34] Governments

can choose whether those resources should be given to a select elite or towards the masses.

If citizens feel like their needs are not being met by a government's resources, they can

mobilize.[35] Additionally, people's demands will inevitably change over time, which results

in the government needing to adapt to those changes.

The limitations of resources in social movements means that individual and group

interests will be contested with. Through collective decision-making, a social movement

will determine how to utilize resources, which can include how to protest, what initiatives

to focus on, and how to invest time into building alliances. Resource mobilization theory

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[31] Bert Klandermans, "Mobilization and Participation: Social-Psychological Expansisons of Resource Mobilization Theory," *American Sociological Review* 49, no. 5 (1984): 584, https://doi.org/10.2307/2095417.
[32] Klandermans, 585.
[33] Klandermans, 585.
[34] Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, 20.
[35] Fernando Calderon, Alejandro Piscitelli, and Jose Luis Reyna, "Social Movement: Actors, Theories, Expectations," in *The Making of Social Movements* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1992), 24, https://archive.org/details/makingofsocialmo00esco/page/18/mode/2up?view=theater.

becomes especially important when understanding how social movements protest and organize community projects.

Political Opportunity

It has been established that social movements occur in periods of contentious politics; therefore, politics is a crucial dynamic to social movements themselves. This linkage between politics and social movements was explored by social movement scholars in the 1970s and 1980s through studying "political opportunity structures."[36] In my analysis of social movements and their ability to influence government policy, it will first be important to define what a political opportunity is and explore how scholars have utilized this lens to explain other social movements. While political opportunity is a strong starting point for understanding social movements, it fails to recognize the impact that cultural or social shifts can have on social movements, which is why my framework pushes beyond just a political viewpoint.

Political opportunity structures presumes that a social movement's success is affected mostly by political opportunities. This theory was originally applied by Peter Eisinger in his analysis of protests of American institutions in the 1960s race riots.[37] In his findings, he tied the success of the movement to their directed protests towards existing government structures and found that protests tend to be shaped by the institutions present in a specific city.[38] By claiming the outcomes of a movement are determined by larger

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[36] Peter K. Eisinger, "The Conditions of Protest Behavior in American Cities," *The American Political Science Review* 67, no. 1 (1973): 11, https://doi.org/10.2307/1958525.
[37] Eisinger, 26.
[38] Eisinger, 25.

political structures, Eisinger laid the precedent for political opportunity structures within social movements that this analysis will rely heavily on.

Before continuing, I must define what a social opportunity structure exactly is, especially given its relevance to measuring the impact of a social movement on altering government policies. McAdam synthesizes Brockett's, Kriesi's, Rucht's, and Tarrow's definitions of political opportunity and concludes that political opportunity occurs with, "1. The relative openness or closure of the institutionalized political system. 2. The stability or instability of that broad set of elite alignments that typically undergird a polity. 3. The presence or absence of elite allies. 4. The state's capacity and propensity for repression."[39]

For the first component of McAdam's political opportunity, there needs to be the presence of an established political system to interact with. For Argentina, this presence was the presidents, provincial governments, and ministries that created social and economic policies. In Greece, this political system to oppose was the Troika, comprised of different international financial institutions, and the established two-party Parliament. By defining these political systems as institutionalized, McAdam is emphasizing how existing government structures often interact with social movements.

The second dynamic of political opportunity is the strength of the elites' belief system. Belief systems can influence norms, and norms can be codified through institutions. Institutions can carry out those norms if the norms are strong enough.[40] The

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[39] Doug McAdam, "Conceptual Origins, Current Problems, Future Direction," in *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*, ed. Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald, Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 27, https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511803987.003.

[40] Gretchen Helmke and Steven Levitsky, "Informal Institutions and Comparative Politics: A Research Agenda," *Perspectives on Politics* 2, no. 4 (2004): 734.

stronger and more unified that belief is amongst the elite, the more likely it is to be actualized into law.[41] In the context of the anti-austerity movements, the governing structures at the time heavily relied on neoliberal ideals to shape their economic and social policy. Social movements were able to weaponize the elites' unification on neoliberalism to oppose the government more broadly.

Elite allyship is important in the political opportunity structure because it positions a social movement in a place of higher visibility within society and the existing institutional structures.[42] Additionally, a close allied relationship allows the social movement to potentially have access to the elite's decision-making and can influence those decisions.[43] If a social movement decides not to form a close relationship with an elite ally, then it often rejects the standing institutions and is denying the political opportunity.

The final component of McAdam's understanding of political opportunity is often overlooked by social movement scholars but is crucial when reflecting on the government uses force against its people. Repression and protests have a linked relationship, although scholars argue whether repression drives protests or protests drive oppression, and this close connection allows for states to influence the future of social movements through silencing, using violence, or actively working to turn public opinion against a social

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[41] Janice Nadler, "Expressive Law, Social Norms, and Social Groups," *Law & Social Inquiry* 42, no. 01 (2017): 70, https://doi.org/10.1111/lsi.12279.
[42] Dieter Rucht, "The Impact of National Contexts on Social Movement Structures: A Cross-Movement and Cross-National Comparison," in *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*, ed. Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald, Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 190, https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511803987.010.
[43] Rucht, 192.

movement.[44] Both the Argentinean and Greek government utilized police force to try to suppress their respective social movements.

Political opportunity theory implies that social movements determine their success and outcomes from the political opportunities present and their utilization of those opportunities. Implicit in this theory is the idea that external factors contribute more to a social movement's success than internal factors.[45] For example, political opportunity theorists would view Greece's two-party Parliament and its decisions as a larger factor in determining the anti-austerity movement's success than the movement's internal organizational structure.

While political opportunity theory has been used to compare social movements across different contexts, it runs the risk of reducing all interactions in a movement to a political lens and excludes the impact that social or cultural factors can have.[46] Gamson and Meyer warn against limiting social movement studies to political opportunity structures because, "The concept of political opportunity structure is... in danger of becoming a sponge that soaks up every aspect of the social movement environment."[47] The complexity of social movements means that just limiting an analysis to political factors will fail to fully capture the success and outcomes of a movement.

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[44] Sabine C. Carey, "The Dynamic Relationship between Protest and Repression," *Political Research Quarterly* 59, no. 1 (2006): 2.
[45] David S. Meyer and Debra C. Minkoff, "Conceptualizing Political Opportunity," *Social Forces* 82, no. 4 (2004): 1459.
[46] Meyer and Minkoff, 1457.
[47] William A. Gamson and David S. Meyer, "Framing Political Opportunity," in *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*, ed. Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald, Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 275, https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511803987.014.

One of the difficulties in studying social movements is the extreme differences found between each movement and the context from which they formed. Because of this diverse set of actors and rationales, political opportunity theory has been used by social movement scholars to compare two social movements together.[48] This lens presumes that the political factors outside of a social movement are going to be more similar than the processes within, therefore political opportunity structures allow scholars to draw conclusions around the influences and successes of social movements.[49]

Comparing Social Movements

If defining how to analyze social movements is difficult with resource mobilization theory and political opportunity structures, then building a framework to compare two social movements will prove even more difficult. Given that this thesis will analyze Argentina and Greece's social movements together, I must first discuss how social movement scholars have compared social movements in the past and how that shapes my theoretical framework. While political opportunity structures have been used frequently in cross-movement studies, this approach forces all analyses to occur through a political lens and fails to capture the cultural nuances that influence a groups trajectory.

Cross social movements studies used to be limited to either international movements with national chapters or social movements that respond to similar political threats.[50] These comparison studies included the women's movement, the peace

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[48] Meyer and Minkoff, "Conceptualizing Political Opportunity," 1458.
[49] Meyer and Minkoff, 1458.
[50] Bert Klandermans, "A Theoretical Framework for Comparisons of Social Movement Participation," *Sociological Forum* 8, no. 3 (1993): 383.

movement, the workers' movement, and the anti-nuclear power movement.[51] Another means of comparing social movements is examining several movements within one country.[52] While both these comparison buckets could work for other types of analyses, they will not be applicable in my analysis of Argentina and Greece. The movements in Argentina and Greece were most aligned in their formation after an economic crisis, but their goals and methods of protest varied.

The final note in this social movement context will be a discussion on Eurocentric versus Latin American approaches to social movements. Just as we cannot compare two social movements given resource mobilization theory, I should caution applying a Eurocentric lens to Argentina's social movement. Most social movements theorists until the 1970s were European-based and focused analyses on political or economic grievances, like labor rights or political revolutions.[53] Latin America experienced a shift in social movements beginning in the 1960s that focused on single issues like environmentalism or indigenous rights.[54] The new wave of social movements in Latin America includes a sociocultural component, meaning society and culture had a large role in the goals of those movements.[55] The differences in social movement histories between the continents influences current research available on both movements and could explain why Greece's movement remained more economically focused than Argentina.

One of the largest distinctions between Latin American and European social movement approaches is the perspective of how society, the economy, polity, culture,

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[51] Klandermans, 383.
[52] Klandermans, 384.
[53] Munck, "Social Movements in Latin America," 25.
[54] Munck, 22.
[55] Calderon, Piscitelli, and Luis Reyna, "Social Movement: Actors, Theories, Expectations," 20.

private life, and identity all intersect. Western social scientists often keep strongly separated spheres for these different aspects of life, but Latin American scholars criticize that segmented approach as it does not reflect the reality of life itself.[56] This viewpoint can be seen in how Argentina organizes its coalition versus Greece. Argentina's movement included more cultural and social components, while Greece focused mostly on shifting economic policy. These differences between Western and Latin American approaches to social movements adds a layer of complexity to our analysis as we must contend with two viewpoints at once.

Many social movement scholars have warned against a cross-movement comparison because of the importance that context can have in the outcomes of these movements.[57] While it is true that the social climate of Argentina and Greece varied significantly, a cross movement analysis could be helpful in revealing mechanisms about what makes movements successful. Klandermans identifies the benefits of cross-movement study as: identifying and defining a framework for comparison, recognizing mechanisms for success with better clarity, and improving theories around why some social movements are successful.[58] Argentina and Greece will be compared in this analysis to understand how different countries responded to International Monetary Fund pressures, but I will restrict drawing conclusions about social movements in general outside of these two contexts because of the nuances of each context.

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[56] Murphy and Jammulamadaka, *Governance, Resistance and the Post-Colonial State*, 10.
[57] Calderon, Piscitelli, and Luis Reyna, "Social Movement: Actors, Theories, Expectations," 32.
[58] Klandermans, "A Theoretical Framework for Comparisons of Social Movement Participation," 384.

Applying the Framework

At this point, I have explored how social movements have been studied historically and how social movements intersected with neoliberal ideals. This context explains why social movements often contain a diverse set of actors, fixate on one core issue, and must occur over a prolonged period.

From this theoretical basis, I have identified through the case studies which aspects of social movements appear to have the largest impact on the eventual success and outcomes. I will be building on resource mobilization theory and political opportunity structures in my own framework but wanted to adopt a different framework for Argentina and Greece because of the limitations of the previous theories. When examining the case studies, I found trying to measure impact just through a political or resource-based lens failed to capture the role that identity or culture can have on the movement.

I identified three independent variables that I determined to affect a movement's success. The three variables are: (1) locus of decision making in the movement, (2) relationship with government, and (3) forms of protest. All these independent variables shape the measured outcome of social movements, which I define as success and outcomes from movement. In the following section, I provide definitions for each independent and dependent variable to contextualize the analysis that will be applied to the case studies.

Locus of Decision Making

First, locus of decision making is defined as how the movement itself organizes and decides on courses of action. Within this broader umbrella of locus of decision making, social movements select how centralized their decision making will be, they reimagine

democratic procedures to improve the outcomes of collective action, and they employ horizontal organizational structures to eliminate hierarchy. The locus of decision-making practices are somewhat similar in Argentina and Greece, but exploring the components first allows the nuances of each case to shine.

Organizational structure has a significant influence on locus of decision making because it identifies how movements will flow ideas and finalize actions. Two important components in Argentina and Greece's decision-making structures are decentralization and horizontalism.

Decentralization is a mechanism employed by social movements to counter the bureaucratic structures found in the traditional government. Instead of working through a large national or regional office, social movements will build local chapters and coordination most frequently occurs between these smaller groupings.[59] By keeping communication between local chapters, social movements prevent erasing the demands of the individuals and it allows for more interests to be fulfilled on a granular level.[60] For example, if one community wanted to build a soup kitchen to mimic the neighboring community's kitchen, it could work directly with the next neighborhood's movement office instead of needing to work within a national office. Decentralization also expands the types and depths of connections that can exist within a movement and promotes small-scale decision-making.

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[59] Jeff Pratt, *Class, Nation and Identity : The Anthropology of Political Movements* (Sterling, Va: Pluto Press, 2003), 8, https://web-p-ebscohost-com.ccl.idm.oclc.org/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook?sid=6b98d4f1-bca1-4ce6-9b74-62faa663a7fc%40redis&vid=0&format=EB.
[60] Pratt, 8.

Horizontal organizational structures work within a group to similarly prevent the erasure of an individual's demands by limiting abuses of power.[61] As described by Juris, horizontalism is "learning to manage conflict without reintroducing formal centers of command."[62] By eliminating the authority force and trying to resolve conflicts internally, there is a higher likelihood of equality in the decision-making process.[63] Hortizontalism does not imply that everyone is equal, but instead recognizes there are going to be inherent power-based differences in a diverse group and creates mechanisms to mitigate the effect of that power divide.[64] In the context of the political unrest in both Argentina and Greece, it is evident how horizontalism would provide an attractive alternative to the governing models of the social movements.

Alongside decentralization and horizontalism, social movements also work to implement new democratic practices that improve people's individual role in decision making. The "re-imagination" of democracy stands central in both movements as they transform democracy from a practice only found in governmental institutions to practices that can be experienced by the participants.[65] People are encouraged to directly participate in democratic procedures by either voicing their opinion, participating in public initiatives, or educating themselves on the issues of the community.[66] This view of democracy

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[61] Marianne Maeckelbergh, *The Will of the Many: How the Alterglobalisation Movement Is Changing the Face of Democracy* (London: Pluto Press, 2009), 108, https://web-p-ebscohost-com.ccl.idm.oclc.org/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook?sid=25602ac8-7670-4a32-baad-c303758f9a86%40redis&vid=0&format=EB.

[62] Juris (2004) in Maeckelbergh, 108.

[63] Maeckelbergh, 108.

[64] Maeckelbergh, 116.

[65] Roberts, *Deepening Democracy?*, 26.

[66] Roberts, 30.

contrasts both the Greek and Argentinean governments because those utilized a representative democracy that disconnected the voter from the decisions.

Social movements additionally sought to expand democracy from just a political realm to a social and economic realm. The individual was encouraged to engage in self-determination and education in the new democratic structures.[67] Individual engagement was supposed to improve the quality of the democracy as well as people would adapt to creating a "felt democracy."[68] People needed to feel as if their involvement in a process was having a direct impact on the outcomes of that work.[69] Ownership and control could be held by the individual, which is a powerful idea to people who had been marginalized historically.[70]

Finally, the individual and the systems of decision making allow for collective action in social movements. Within collective action, people with common interests are encouraged to work together to find collective goods or solutions.[71] While initially collective behavior theorists from the 1960s viewed consensus from a group as a product of strain from the organization's structure, it is seen today as a powerful democratic tool and outcome.[72] The diverse set of actors who formulate the solution can utilize horizontal deliberation practices to promote equality between actors and minimize the impact that power structures could have on the final decision.

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[67] Roberts, 30.
[68] Maeckelbergh, *The Will of the Many: How the Alterglobalisation Movement Is Changing the Face of Democracy*, 111.
[69] Maeckelbergh, 111.
[70] Maeckelbergh, 111.
[71] Roberts, *Deepening Democracy?*, 57.
[72] Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, 21–22.

Both Argentina and Greece utilized a slightly different procedure in their locus of decision making, but this independent variable is an important factor to understand a social movement. Especially with the context of the anti-austerity movements, they sought power structures outside of the ones present in the established government. A social movement's ability to cultivate a strong alternative to institutional democracy will impact the goals and projects it successfully accomplishes.

Relationship to Government

Second, the movement's relationship to the government is considered in the analysis because it reveals how a movement might shape some of its demands. Some movements maintain close ties to the government and seek to enact change through the government, where other movements might aim to pursue action completely outside of government structures in a more anarchical approach. Given the resistance to government present at the heart of both the Greek and Argentinean movement, how those movements decided to interact with the government affects the long-term outlook of the movements themselves.

While it would be helpful in this analysis to have a static relationship between a government and a social movement, the reality is that this relationship is never static.[73] The diversity of the social movements correlate to a diversity in the social movement's approach to the government. Even when social movements reject any form of governmental relationship, the state still has some degree of power over the outcome of the

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[73] Calderon, Piscitelli, and Luis Reyna, "Social Movement: Actors, Theories, Expectations," 25.

movements.[74] The government is an unavoidable force, although social movements respond to this threat in a variety of ways.

Two of the most common approaches that social movements will take towards their governments are either outright rejection or participation on the grounds of a specific cause.[75] In the former approach, the social movement believe that the electoral system is an extension of the corrupt ruling class and any participation would devolve the objectives of the movement.[76] The latter approach holds that participation in electoral politics should only occur if the democratic institution can be used to gain power to support the revolution itself.[77] Both of these approaches sit at two ends of an extreme, and social movements tend to have sub-units that fall within that range.

Participation in the electoral government tends to occur through either forming relationships with standing political parties or creating new political parties.[78] By building relationships with standing political parties, social movements can influence decision-makers to yield their power towards the movement's goal. With creating a new political party, the movement can leverage state-controlled resources and create institutions to enact the revolutionary ideals. These ways to interact with the government directly are generalized, but demonstrate the variety that social movements engage in.

The case studies will reveal that both Argentina and Greece experienced internal divides in how to interact with the government. In both cases, a faction of the movements

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[74] Leandro Vergara-Camus, *Land and Freedom: The MST, the Zapatistas and Peasant Alternatives to Neoliberalism* (London: Zed Books, 2014), 12, http://site.ebrary.com/id/10925645.
[75] Roberts, *Deepening Democracy?*, 18.
[76] Roberts, 18.
[77] Roberts, 18.
[78] Roberts, 38.

decided to engage with the electoral system to some degree with varied success at implementing movement ideals. The relationship to government is important in this analysis as it provides an opportunity for social movements to materialize in the long-term.

Forms of Protest

Third, forms of protest compose of how a social movement chooses to organize itself and create action to pressure change for its demands. Protest ranges from movement to movement, but the forms of protest are often determined by the movement through collective decision-making processes and reveal how actors perceived their message would come across the strongest. While protests are often thought about as square occupations or hunger strikes, this analysis will also define protests as systems that are intended to disrupt the current system. Along those lines, I will outline how creating action and agency, communal practices, generating publications, and holding public assemblies are all forms of protest.

The ability and decision to act on a discontentment is a form of protest.[79] Social movements can choose how to act to a perceived threat, and action can range from actively pursuing projects to resisting existing power.[80] Action is a form of protest over reaction because it requires the mobilization of finite resources and commitment to see the action resolved. In Greece and Argentina, the movements formed mechanisms that allowed for action to be taken. They were self-organized spaces that served as an act of resistance to the broader political institutions.[81]

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[79] Maeckelbergh, *The Will of the Many: How the Alterglobalisation Movement Is Changing the Face of Democracy*, 123.
[80] Maeckelbergh, 123.
[81] Maeckelbergh, 123–24.

Self-organized spaces additionally served as an experimental site for the re-imagination of democracy discussed previously. Communal practices were employed by both movements and promoted reciprocity and cooperation. Calderon shares that these communitarian projects included, "communal kitchens in poor urban neighborhoods, mothers' committees, consumer cooperatives, [and] other kinds of communitarian traditions."[82] Existent institutions were not sufficient in providing for the needs of the participants, and so social movements created an alternative that demonstrated the power of mobilization.

As the social movements were re-imagining and experimenting with new organizational structures and actively opposing existent structures, it was crucial that the movements had an outlet to publicize their thought pieces. Movements sought to spread knowledge within and outside of the movement, so they erected printing presses and publishing houses to promote dissemination of information.[83] These publication forces allowed the movements to respond to any actions publicly and directly from the government and drive their revolutionary narrative forward.

Most idea generation within the movements came through public assemblies, which offered alternative spaces for decision making. Unlike the electoral political system, social movements would seek conflict as conflict was an extension of diversity.[84] Conflict was mitigated through limiting discussions to the logistics of a plan rather than the ideology

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[82] Calderon, Piscitelli, and Luis Reyna, "Social Movement: Actors, Theories, Expectations," 33.

[83] Pratt, *Class, Nation and Identity : The Anthropology of Political Movements*, 8; Maeckelbergh, *The Will of the Many: How the Alterglobalisation Movement Is Changing the Face of Democracy*, 124.

[84] Maeckelbergh, *The Will of the Many: How the Alterglobalisation Movement Is Changing the Face of Democracy*, 100.

behind that plan.[85] Embracing conflict improved the conversational environment of the assemblies as people could advocate more comfortably for their own beliefs and feel heard by the masses.

Forms of protest in the analysis will both be defined through conventional means (picketing or occupying public spaces) and nonconventional means (providing alternatives to institutions). Both definitions of protest are important in understanding the impact of the social movements because they provide a space for protestors to act on their concerns and determine the best course of action.

While there are more than just the three independent variables that can shape how successful a social movement is, there provide a solid framework for analysis. Each case study will be explored through the lens of the independent variables to understand how a social movement can enact the change it seeks to make. Being a successful social movement is extraordinarily difficult given the power of a state in society, but when it succeeds, it can demonstrate how people can mobilize for a collective desire action.

Dependent Variables

To understand what the impact of a social movement is after an economic crisis, the scope of how "impact" is defined must be narrowed. For this analysis, I defined impact as the movement's success and outcomes from the movement. Success is defined as the movement's ability to attain the goals it set out and outcomes are the effects of the social movement on the broader political or cultural sphere.

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[85] Maeckelbergh, 102.

For both movements, their primary goal was to oppose the austerity measures imposed from the IMF onto their countries. Sprinkled in with that primary goal, each movement had additional sub-goals related to resisting the current government structure, opposing elites, identifying an alternative to neoliberal economic policies, and renegotiating the debt. These sub-goals were found in smaller actor groups within the broader movement and demonstrated the desires of the diverse participants. Due to the differences in the smaller goals, social movements tended to fracture over time and evolve into various forms of political and social participation. In measuring social movements' impact, identifying how those internal goals were actualized will be crucial in our analysis.

Outcomes will be the ability of the movement to enact change in a broader scope of society, slightly outside of the primary goal of the movements. Most of this broader impact occurred in the political space, through seizing on apertures of political opportunity and shifting the standing political landscape. Outcomes will be different from success because outcomes do not need to be explicitly outlined by the social movement to be considered a component of its impact. This is an important distinction since outcomes tend to be unplanned and can demonstrate the long-term societal shifts from the social movements without their active participation.

Economic crises can create strong fractures within the society and expose large downfalls in governments. Social movements provide people the opportunity to demand action and have their voices be heard for change. A thorough analysis of two case studies will reveal the impact social movements can have during and after times of economic crises. For the following analysis, each case study will be provided background

information, an exploration of the three independent variables, and the output of the movements.

Chapter 2: Argentina Case Study

When unemployed rates rose to 21.5% and 53.3% of people lived under the poverty line in 2002, Argentina's public mobilized to protest the policies that worsened its economic crisis.[86] This mobilization effort became known as the *piquetero* movement, which translates to "pickets" in English. The *piquetero* movement utilized road blockages and public protests to demand increased public spending for the unemployed and marginalized people. With the movement's rise after Argentina's 2001 economic crisis, local *piquetero* organizations advocated for higher levels of public participation and offered support to community members through social projects. Argentina's anti-austerity movement demonstrates how localized decision making can improve the material conditions of community members, but how there is a limited impact of social movements on national policy.

In this case study, I will explain the following: how the *piquetero* movement developed, why the forms of protest aligned with its demands, how contentions around movement-government relationship fractured the *piqueteros*, and the long-term impact of this movement on Argentinean society. While the *piqueteros* were successful at mobilizing a diverse array of the population and improving community-level decision-making, they ultimately were not successful at reversing austerity measures imposed from the International Monetary Fund. Overall, the piquetero movement impacted the provincial and local levels at a higher rate than the national level, which will be demonstrated through

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[86] Barbara Sutton, *Bodies in Crisis: Culture, Violence, and Women's Resistance in Neoliberal Argentina*, Book Collections on Project MUSE (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2010), 37, http://site.ebrary.com/id/10386160.

this case study. Before exploring the independent variables, it will be important to contextualize the movement in Argentina's history.

Background of Argentina's *Piquetero* Movement

While the *piquetero* movement grew significantly during Argentina's 2001 economic crisis, its origins trace back to 1996 when the government privatized an oil company in the Neuquén province.[87] The 1996 privatization was just one facet of the government's larger transition towards a more neoliberal economic order, that resulted in the shrinkage of pensions, privatization of public companies, and stoppages of unemployment payments.

Argentina, as well as Latin America more generally, had a long history of social organization and high public expenditures on social goods.[88] As the country shifted its policies and the economy worsened, social movement organizations (SMOs) under the *piquetero* umbrella mobilized to advocate for payments for the unemployed and reversal of the neoliberal policies.

The broader *piquetero* movement was comprised of smaller organizations with different operating structures and political purposes.[89] The term *piquetero* was used to describe the larger movement after some groups organized under the National Piquetera Assembly in 2001 to amplify the movement's negotiating power with the government.[90]

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[87] Andrea D'Atri and Celeste Escati, "The Piquetera/o Movement of Argentina," *Association for Women's Rights in Development*, Building Feminists Movements and Organizations, 2008, 2.
[88] James Petras, *The New Development Politics: The Age of Empire Building and New Social Movements.* (Farnham: Ashgate Pub., 2007), 125, http://public.ebookcentral.proquest.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=429819.
[89] D'Atri and Escati, "The Piquetera/o Movement of Argentina," 6.
[90] D'Atri and Escati, 6.

While each group did mobilize under different goals, the movement aimed to improve the working conditions of Argentineans, secure government funding for the unemployed, and utilized general assemblies to make decisions.[91]

Within this broader umbrella of the movement, there were a couple key sub-groups that heavily influenced the outcomes of the *piqueteros*. These sub-groups were often formed from labor or political organizations and had different relationships to the government during the movement's rise.[92] Groups that had the closest relationship to the state were Federacion de la Tierra y Vivienda (FTV) and Central de Trabajadores Argentinos (CTA).[93] From there, the Corriente Clasista y Combativa (CCC) sometimes worked with the government and the Movimiento Terroritorial de Liberacion (MTL) was the most radical out of all of the groups and rarely sought action with the state.[94] These smaller movements eventually formed coalitions between each other such as the FTV-CTA, which grew into a larger standing political party.[95] By understanding these smaller units within the broader movement, it is possible to see how diverse the interests of the *Piqueteros* was.

The *piquetero's* efforts heavily built on Argentina and Latin America's history of social movements that already emphasized labor rights. Argentina's strong history with social movements originated with a broader trend in Latin America. From the 1970s to the 1980s, social movements in Latin America focused on human rights, feminist and ethnic

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[91] Edward C. Epstein, "The Piquetero Movement Of Greater Buenos Aires: Working Class Protest During The Current Argentine Crisis," *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies / Revue Canadienne Des Études Latino-Américaines et Caraïbes* 28, no. 55/56 (2003): 12–13.
[92] Isabella Alcañiz and Melissa Scheier, "New Social Movements with Old Party Politics: The MTL Piqueteros and the Communist Party in Argentina," *Latin American Perspectives* 34, no. 2 (2007): 157.
[93] Alcañiz and Scheier, 157.
[94] Alcañiz and Scheier, 157.
[95] Alcañiz and Scheier, 158.

movements, and ecology.[96] This era was considered to be the first wave of social movements in the region and were led by mostly lower or middle class professionals who wanted to challenge the military and civilian regimes.[97] These movements evolved from the mid-1980s to today, where most of the social movements aim to promote and defend economic interests for mass portions of the population.[98] As social movements worked to improve economic conditions, they were often protesting against neoliberal policies that international financial institutions (IFIs) imposed beginning in the 1970s.[99]

The *piquetero* movement tailed an initial wave of economic social movements that began after the 1980s Latin America debt crisis. As discussed previously, countries like the United States and IFIs created loans to support the economic development of least-developed countries in the 1960s and 1970s.[100] Interest rates on these loans increased dramatically by 1980 that made paying off the debts by the low-income countries incredibly difficult.[101] While Argentina attempted to raise funding to pay off its debt by selling bonds at reduced interest rates, increasing taxes, and renegotiating its debt, these attempts failed and Argentina defaulted on its debts twice in 1982 and 1989 respectively.[102]

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[96] James Petras, *The New Development Politics: The Age of Empire Building and New Social Movements.* (Farnham: Ashgate Pub., 2007), 125, http://public.ebookcentral.proquest.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=429819.

[97] Petras, 125.

[98] Petras, 125.

[99] Gary Prevost, Carlos Oliva Campos, and Harry E. Vanden, *Social Movements and Leftist Governments in Latin America: Confrontation or Co-Optation?.* (London: Zed Books, 2012), 23, http://www.dawsonera.com/depp/reader/protected/external/AbstractView/S9781780321851.

[100] David Felix, "Latin America's Debt Crisis," *World Policy Journal* 7, no. 4 (1990): 736.

[101] Felix, 736.

[102] Ben Bartensteing, Sydney Maki, and Marisa Gertz, "One Country, Nine Defaults: Argentina Is Caught in a Vicious Cycle - Bloomberg," *Bloomberg*, September 11, 2019, https://www.bloomberg.com/news/photo-essays/2019-09-11/one-country-eight-defaults-the-argentine-debacles; Felix, "Latin America's Debt Crisis," 756; Tomás J. T. Baliño, "The Argentine Banking Crisis of 1980," in *Banking Crises* (USA: International Monetary Fund, 1991), 109, https://www.elibrary.imf.org/view/books/071/00636-9781557751874-en/ch02.xml.

After the 1980s debts defaulted, the IMF and IFIs further pressured the Argentinean government to shift towards neoliberal policies that worsened the living conditions for most citizens by prioritizing economic output for global trade.[103] Industries that had been run by the state since the 1950s that provided government pensions and wages were suddenly privatized to increase production efficiency, but workers were left without the same labor protections or compensation.[104]

Neoliberalism fundamentally shifted the Argentinean economy. These shifts began with President Carlos Raul Menem and President Fernando de la Rúa, who spearheaded most of the country's neoliberal policy that was prescribed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) after a previous economic crisis in the late-1980s.[105] Central to the IMF's plan in Argentina was decreasing public spending and increasing currency stability with the convertibility plan. The primary goal of decreasing public spending was to minimize the public debt owed by Argentina to other nations. Key tenants of the public financial shrinkage included:

> Privatization of most state-owned companies, privatization of social security, and
> the reduction of employers' contributions; cuts in public expenditures; transfer of
> various state responsibilities in the health and education sector to the provinces and
> municipalities; greater openness of the economy to foreign investment and imports;

[103] Geethanjali Nataraj and Pravakar Sahoo, "Argentina's Crisis: Causes and Consequences," *Economic and Political Weekly* 38, no. 17 (2003): 1641.

[104] Nataraj and Sahoo, 1641.

[105] Barbara Sutton, *Bodies in Crisis: Culture, Violence, and Women's Resistance in Neoliberal Argentina*, Book Collections on Project MUSE (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2010), 165, http://site.ebrary.com/id/10386160.

deregulation of the financial sector (facilitating capital flight); and the weakening

of workers' rights through labor "flexibilization" laws.[106]

As seen in the quote, most government spending needed to be reduced, and this occurred

in a country where the government is heavily invested in the social sector. For example, in

2019, Argentina invested 41.12% of its GDP into public goods like education, health, and

defense.[107] From 2001 to 2002, when the economic crisis was heightened, the government

decreased its spending from 26.43% in 2001 to 21.85% in 2002.[108] This decrease

demonstrates the effects that austerity measures had on the economy at the time.

One of the other largest effects of the neoliberal agenda was currency stabilization

through the 1991 convertibility plan. The convertibility plan aimed to peg the peso the

dollar so that international investors could reliably trade with Argentina without fear of

losing profit from speculation.[109] While these convertibility plan did reduce the tariff rate

from 22% in 1991 to 11% in 1998 and increase foreign bank deposits from 26% of all

Argentine bank deposits in 1994 to 41% by 1998, it also decreased public sector

employment by 20% and froze public employee wages.[110] The convertibility plan aimed to

increase foreign investment in Argentina and decrease the cost of exports so Argentina

could sell more of its goods in the global market. Higher levels of trade were correlated to

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[106] Sutton, 36.

[107] "Argentina - General Government Expenditure," CountryEconomy, accessed April 24, 2022, https://countryeconomy.com/government/expenditure/argentina.

[108] "Argentina - General Government Expenditure."

[109] Esteban Pérez-Caldentey and Matías Vernengo, "A Tale of Two Monetary Reforms: Argentinean Convertibility in Historical Perspective" Working Paper No: 2007-01 (2007): 20.

[110] Pérez-Caldentey and Vernengo, "A Tale of Two Monetary Reforms: Argentinean Convertibility in Historical Perspective," 21.

higher levels of government revenue, which in turn allowed for more revenue to pay off international debts.[111]

As the government implemented more neoliberal measures throughout the 1990s, economic conditions for most workers worsened beginning in 1996 and the crisis peaked in 2001 when the peso collapsed. While the government was able to keep the peso pegged successfully for a couple of years, much of this stability washed away when Argentina no longer held enough US dollars to back its currency and peso lost almost all its value. In this same timeframe, the government suspended withdrawals from banks to prevent additional foreign reserves from leaving the country, but this policy only escalated discontentment in middle class households.[112] People continuously attempted to pull out their deposits until banks collapsed and Argentina defaulted on their foreign debt in 2001 for the third time in 10 years.[113] The era of the convertibility plan was over.

The 2001 Argentinean economic crisis heightened tensions and unraveled much of the society. During this time, 50% of the total population and 2/3rd of the urban population were unemployed.[114] The total number of people who lived in poverty increased from 29.4% in 1995 to 53.3% in 2002.[115] In the span of a year, Argentina went from being considered to be the most secure nation to defaulting on its debts with international

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[111] Tigran Poghosyan, "How Do Public Debt Cycles Interact with Financial Cycles?," *International Monetary Fund*, IMF Working Paper, no. WP/15/248 (November 2015): 5.
[112] *Social Movements and Leftist Governments in Latin America: Confrontation or Co-Optation?*. (London: Zed Books, 2012), 24, http://www.dawsonera.com/depp/reader/protected/external/AbstractView/S9781780321851.
[113] Ernesto Talvi, "Thirty-Five Years of Recurring Financial Crises in Latin America: Toward a New (and Better) Paradigm?," *Brookings* (blog), November 30, 1AD, https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/thirty-five-years-of-recurring-financial-crises-in-latin-america-toward-a-new-and-better-paradigm/.
[114] Moira Birss, "The Piquetero Movement: Organizing for Democracy and Social Change in Argentina's Informal Sector," *Journal of the International Institute* 12, no. 2 (Winter 2005), http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.4750978.0012.206.
[115] Birss.

institutions. The IMF loaned Argentina an additional $7 billion in December 2001 to attempt to protect the nation, but this additional debt burden only accelerated the conflict.[116] In the years following the economic crisis, most of the population was left without a job, access to financial resources, or a social security net, and the nation was upset. The crisis increased dissatisfaction from the people towards the state, which formed a desire to mobilize.

Mobilization began in 1996 when people protested in the towns of Cutral and Plaza Huincul after privatization of factories led to job cuts and shutdowns.[117] Simultaneously, protests were happening in the towns of Neuquén and General Mosconi to protest the privatization of an oil company and high electricity rates when state subsidies halted.[118] In Salta and Jujuy, teachers protested after not receiving their wages and a mass movement started as community members picketed alongside the teachers.[119] These smaller regional protests established the two key characteristics of the *piquetero* movement: the picket and the assembly.[120] When the peso collapsed in 2001, groups in Buenos Aires adopted the pickets to protest high levels of unemployment sweeping the city and the *piquetero* movement was born.[121]

As mentioned previously, the *piquetero* movement was not one unified movement and instead was comprised of smaller organizations that aligned through the pickets and assemblies. The movement saw highest levels of participation in 2002, with a steady

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[116] J.F. Hornbeck, "The Financial Crisis in Argentina," in *Argentina : Economic, Political and Social Issues* (New York: Nova Science Publishers, Inc, 2009), 136.
[117] Petras, *The New Development Politics*, 128.
[118] Petras, 128.
[119] D'Atri and Escati, "The Piquetera/o Movement of Argentina," 2.
[120] Gabriela Bukstein, "A Time of Opportunities: The Piquetero Movement and Democratization in Argentina," *Univeristy of Buenos Aires*, 2008, 128.
[121] D'Atri and Escati, "The Piquetera/o Movement of Argentina," 4.

decline in protestors from 2004 onwards. While the movement lost participation, some of the sub-movements gained political positions and acquired state funding for the unemployed or community projects. It is important to note that the different sub-movements had different goals and used different means to achieve their ends. This analysis is going to be a limited view into a broad movement but will still reveal how leveraging political opportunity can impact neoliberal policies in Argentina.

With the context of the crisis and social movement, it is now possible to explore how the *piquetero* movement was successful at funding some of its community projects and creating community-level democracies but was unsuccessful at reversing any large austerity measures. The movement utilized pickets and blockages to influence change within the government, yet the disagreements around how to interact with the government limited the movement's long-term sustainability. The next sections will explore how the independent variables further shaped Argentina's success and outcomes.

Locus of Decision Making: Argentina

The *piquetero* movement distinguishes itself from other movements in the region by maintaining a decentralized structure. One of the central tenants driving the movement was the ability for local communities to dictate and decide their desired course of action. Moira Birss, a human rights activist at the nonprofit Amazon Watch, referred to the organization's structure as "non-hierarchical and neighborhood-based model."[122] The non-hierarchal nature of the organization means that each sub unit of the movement driven by

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[122] Birss, "The Piquetero Movement."

collective action, rather than having strong figure heads. By being neighborhood based, each unit is mostly contained within one barrio. The *piquetero* movement catalyzes decisions through its *asambleas*, or community gatherings.

Asambleas allow the movement to connect with communities and create collective action through a democratic consensus. Each barrio would have an *asamblea*, where members would gather for hours to discuss current grievances and exchange ideas around solutions. There were no expectations or prescriptions of what the *asambleas* were to talk about, and instead individuals drove the conversation and voted on issues when presented with a potential plan of action.[123] The goal of *asambleas* was to offer a space to marginalized community members for discussion and debate.[124]

Ideologically, the *asambleas* worked to resolve two crises at one time: capitalism in the neoliberal model and democratic representation.[125] Decision-making was intentionally restricted to the localized bodies because the piqueteros viewed local communities as the end recipients of their social change. For example, most *asambleas* in Buenos Aires rarely discussed national issues and limited group discussions to matters that were the most salient for the community at the time.[126] This limitation meant that each issue a member brought up could be sufficiently addressed and proceeded through. In a nation where the government had acted against the desires of most citizens, *asambleas* allowed people to feel connected to decision-making institutions again.

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[123] Sutton, *Bodies in Crisis*, 167.
[124] Ana Dinerstein, "¡Que Se Vayan Todos! Popular Insurrection and the Asambleas Barriales in Argentina," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 22, no. 2 (April 2003): 195.
[125] Federico Matías Rossi, "Las asambleas vecinales y populares en la Argentina: las particularidades organizativas de la acción colectiva contenciosa," *Sociológica* 19, no. 57 (April 2005): 121.
[126] Matías Rossi, 121.

Given the makeup of the movement of mostly unemployed people, there was little previous political experience to build from. For many of the participants, "these fora were opportunities for many individuals who had no previous political exposure to experiment with innovative forms of political participation."[127] By presenting people with direct means to participation, the movement was able to centralize decision making into the hands of the people who were participating. It additionally minimized any delegation given that delegation was a practice of the hierarchical organizations the *piqueteros* wanted to reject.[128] It provided a direct forum for participation, not found in other outlets of society at the time.

The purpose of the *asambelas* in the movement evolved over time as well. Their original goal was to respond to the austerity measures from the IMF, but over time they served as a new form of institution on the community-level.[129] Most *asambelas* worked autonomously within their neighborhood and would organize their own agendas and projects.[130] Some of these community projects included running workshops on health or democracy, publishing on websites or blogs, and organizing community members around social initiatives like soup kitchens.[131] *Asambelas* strived to offer a space of union for *vecinos*, or neighbors in English, and actively rejected the notion that the state would provide for its citizens.[132]

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[127] Sutton, 167.
[128] Dinerstein, "¡Que Se Vayan Todos! Popular Insurrection and the Asambleas Barriales in Argentina," 197.
[129] Dinerstein, 195.
[130] Dinerstein, 195.
[131] Dinerstein, 195.
[132] Dinerstein, 196.

The community-level aspect of *asambelas* allowed for population-dense areas to feel a sense of community and enact localized change, especially in the capital city of Buenos Aires. In the capital, there were 112 registered *asambleas* in March 2002 and each gathering would expect 90 to 130 people.[133] With these numbers, that means that around 1% of electoral voters in Buenos Aires, or 12,500 people, frequently participated in the *asambleas*.[134] This level of participation did decrease over time, but reveals the strength the forums held within society.

The decentralized nature of these *asambelas* meant that communities could shape their outcomes and projects. One of the challenges posed by this decision-making model though was the lack of negotiating power with the government.[135] To combat this absence of centralization, some of the sub-groups in the movement launched the National Piquetera Assembly that would work in unison to negotiate with the government.[136] For groups who opposed any government involvement, they formed the National Piquetero Block.[137] While both sub-groups took different approaches to political opportunity, they still often worked together to coordinate national blockades or protests. Even with the national assemblies, smaller community-level organizations still took precedent in decision making. The purpose of the national coalitions was to strictly influence the government, and the lack of figurehead or leader in the national organization demonstrates how the local still took priority.

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[133] Matías Rossi, "Las asambleas vecinales y populares en la Argentina: las particularidades organizativas de la acción colectiva contenciosa," 118.
[134] Matías Rossi, 118.
[135] D'Atri and Escati, "The Piquetera/o Movement of Argentina," 6.
[136] D'Atri and Escati, 6.
[137] D'Atri and Escati, 6.

Decision-making in Argentina's movement focused on localized structures with *asambleas*. Communities built meeting spaces that were intentionally horizontal and focused on the needs of the immediate community to increase democratic action. As the movement spread, smaller coalitions formed to strengthen the movement's demands against the government, but these coalitions never had a leadership structure as a means to restrict creating a hierarchy. Localized decision-making allowed for individuals to feel connected to the movement and feel like they could influence the outcomes.

Locus of decision-making will connect to the outcomes of the *piquetero* movement as the *asambleas* continued past the height of the crisis to support community cohesion. The decentralized nature of the movement though also restricted its ability to sustain itself past the economic crisis as the smaller sub-groups disagreed with how to form relationships with the government. Decentralization can lead to lack of cohesion, which was present in Argentina after 2002. In the next section, I will further explore the relationship between the movement and the government, which builds on previous conceptions of political opportunity.

Relationship with Government: Argentina

It has been established that the *piquetero* movement maintained a localized form of decision-making, which led to differing ideas being present within the same overall movement for how the *piqueteros* should connect with the government. On one side of the spectrum, some local branches wanted to maintain very close connections to the government and even supported politicians to run for office. On the other side, some local movements distanced themselves completely from government. As opinions ranged from

anarchy to political integration, the *piquetero* movement was able to customize its desired relationship to the government based upon the desires of its participants.

While the *piquetero* movement maintained flexibility nationally in its relationship to the government, the government almost universally acted to repress, contain, or co-opt the movement.[138] Four different presidents served while the *piquetero* movement was the most active: Carlos Menem from 1989 to 1999, Fernando de la Rúa from 1999 to 2001, Eduardo Duhalde from 2002 to 2003, and Nestor Kirchner from 2003 to 2007.[139] Each president took a slightly different approach to the social movements, with Duhalde using the most violence to suppress the blockades and Kirchner working to negotiate with some organizations.[140] The national government saw the *piquetero* movement as a threat to Argentina's economic recovery as the national government needed to implement austerity measures to appease the IMF, while facing internal stoppages to the economy when there was blockades or protests.[141]

The government overall felt threatened by the road blockades as the stoppage of commerce alongside the protests places a great deal of stress on the economy. Frequently, the protestors were met with strong opposition or even violence from the government. In September 2001, President Fernando de la Rúa employed the state police force to resist some of the initial roadblocks. Government police killed five protestors and squashed the

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[138] D'Atri and Escati, 3.
[139] Three additional presidents served from December 2001 to Janurary 2002, but the longest term only lasted 1 month between the 3 presidents. This was a period of high political turnover and contention in Argentina resulting from the economic crisis. "List of Presidents of Argentina," *ENTRANCEINDIA* (blog), January 4, 2018, https://entranceindia.com/year-book/list-of-presidents-of-argentina/.
[140] D'Atri and Escati, "The Piquetera/o Movement of Argentina," 3.
[141] Edward C. Epstein, "Perpetuating Social Movements amid Declining Opportunity: The Survival Strategies of Two Argentine Piquetero Groups," *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies / Revista Europea de Estudios Latinoamericanos y Del Caribe*, no. 86 (2009): 4.

protest with violence, which ignited a greater level of anger from the public.[142] Under

President Duhalde, the violence against protestors continued and two young *piqueteros*

were killed by the police in Buenos Aires.[143] After both series of murders, the movement

rallied around the protestors' deaths in the narrative that the state constantly employs

violence against the poor.[144] Throughout the movement's height, both national and state

governments would respond to the issue with violence or intimidation.

This form of state violence against the movement can also be seen through the

government's attempts to stop the protests through legislation. In the December 2001

protests, President De La Rua suspended constitutional rights and freedoms for 30 days

after protestors had escalated to looting government buildings and businesses.[145] The

suspension of these rights meant that protestors no longer could speak freely or assemble

and that the government could arrest people at will.[146] The escalations in government

responses demonstrate how, especially initially, the government felt threatened by the

protestors.

Additionally, both the government and social movements leveraged public funding

to gain and control power. After the initial wave of protests in 1996, the government

responded by creating *Plan Más Vida*, which gave unemployed people a subsidy in

exchange for work.[147] The subsidies were distributed through community-level

manzaneras.[148] Two *manzaneras* oversaw ten *manzanas* and each *manzana* composed of

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[142] Petras, 133.
[143] D'Atri and Escati, "The Piquetera/o Movement of Argentina," 7.
[144] D'Atri and Escati, 7.
[145] (Alvarez and Newman 49)
[146] https://www.nytimes.com/2001/12/21/world/argentine-leader-his-nation-frayed-abruptly-resigns.html
[147] D'Atri and Escati, "The Piquetera/o Movement of Argentina," 4.
[148] Nicolás Dallorso, "Entre el cuidado y el control: el rol de las 'manzaneras' y 'comadres' en conflictos
domésticos y barriales," *Congreso Argentino de Antropología Social* IX (2008): 10.

four blocks in the neighborhood.[149] Unemployed women were appointed to head the *manzaneras* by provincial government officials and the women would distribute the funding to families on the condition that they were not conflictive.[150] The state defined conflictive as operating public soup kitchens, hosting political gatherings, or running businesses out of their homes, therefore demonstrating how the government tied public aid to people's political participation and used social connections as a mechanism regulate mobilization.[151]

Many families depended upon the public funding during the economic crisis, and connecting political participation to finances meant people often limited their protesting to secure their family's wellbeing. Additionally, once the economic crisis worsened in 2001, the *manzanera* network was leveraged by the *piquetero* movement to organize assemblies and rally community members.[152] The government had originally used social networks to curb its population from participating in protests, but once the crisis escalated, those same networks pivoted to the *piquetero* movement as an alternative to the government structures. This pivot represents the fluidity of the relationships between the government and social groups in Argentina, which explains the complexity of the *piquetero* movement's relationship to the government.

The exchange of power between the state and piquetero movements and money can be further seen through the Dulhade's 2002 *Programa Jefas y Jefes de Hoger Desocupados* (*Programa Jefas/Jefes*). The program provided a monthly income of 150 pesos per child

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149 D'Atri and Escati, "The Piquetera/o Movement of Argentina," 7.
150 D'Atri and Escati, 6.
151 D'Atri and Escati, 6.
152 Samir Mayekar, "Examining the Argentine Government's Response to the Piquetero Movement" (Senior Thesis, Evanston, IL, Northwestern Univesity, 2006), 27.

for families in exchange for the child attending school and the parents working in a government project.[153] The program was designed in direct response to the protests and aimed to resolve the high-levels of poverty in the nation. The number of Argentineans who were living in poverty increased to almost 50%, and so *Programa Jefas/Jefes* was a direct respond to the nation's economic needs.[154]

Instead of utilizing just *manzanera* networks, the government worked with different community-level organizations to distribute the subsidies for *Programa Jefas/Jefes*.[155] Some of these community groups included *piquetero* organizations, who would keep a percentage of the subsidy for their own social projects.[156] Out of the 2 million families who received funding through *Programa Jefas/Jefes, piquetero*-associated organizations distributed 10% of that funding through a total of 101,300 distribution sites.[157]

By controlling the distribution of subsidies, the *piquetero* organizations were able to fund their community projects and negotiate with the government to receive higher subsidies for their community. While the media criticized *piquetero* groups for taking a percentage of the subsidy and accused them of robbing the poor, the participants in these groups felt a strong sense of identity to the movement and were willing to give a percentage for the social projects to benefit the broader community.[158] The utilization of these public

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[153] Daniel Kostzer, "Argentina: A Case Study on the Plan Jefes y Jefas de Hogar Desocupados, or the Employment Road to Economic Recovery," *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2008, 17, https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1132772.
[154] Sutton, *Bodies in Crisis*, 37.
[155] Laura Pautassi, "Beneficios y beneficiarias: análisis del Programa Jefes y Jefas de Hogar Desocupados de Argentina," *Proyecto Género, Pobreza y Empleo (GPE-OIT) y el Proyecto Enfrentando los Retos del Trabajo Decente en la Crisis Argentina (Proyecto de Cooperación Técnica OIT-Gobierno de Argentina)*, August 2003, 6.
[156] Epstein, "Perpetuating Social Movements amid Declining Opportunity," 6.
[157] Epstein, 6; Epstein, "THE PIQUETERO MOVEMENT OF GREATER BUENOS AIRES," 25.
[158] Epstein, "THE PIQUETERO MOVEMENT OF GREATER BUENOS AIRES," 28.

funds to achieve movement goals is an example of the *piquetero* movement leveraging its political opportunity.

While the *piquetero* movement did pose a challenge to the government overall, the movement's strength within communities was sometimes viewed as a vehicle for positive change from the government. There are instances where the government actively sought a relationship with a *piquetero* movement to work towards a common goal. For example, a minister in the city of Buenos Aires worked with *piquetero* movements in 2002 to resolve the high levels of looting present at the time and try to create a sense of peace for the community.[159] A government's desire to work with the movement would be at odds sometimes of the movement's desire for autonomy, but the individual nature of the sub-movements allowed for successful relationships if there was an aligned goal.

The dynamic present in these government-movement relationships is important to examine as it explains how political opportunity was both created and acted upon. The government occasionally desired to form these coalitions because of the close connections that the *piquetero* movements had within their communities because of their localized structure. For *piquetero* organizations, they sometimes desired forming closer relationships to the government because they wanted to influence subsidy distribution or petition for more social programs. Not all organizations desired this type of relationship with the

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[159] Federico M. Rossi, "Beyond Clientelism: The Piquetero Movement and the State in Argentina," in *Handbook of Social Movements across Latin America*, ed. Paul Almeida and Allen Cordero Ulate, Handbooks of Sociology and Social Research (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2015), 121, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-9912-6_9.

government and not all government wanted to work with the protestors, but in instances where there was collaboration, the goals of that partnership were often achieved.[160]

The flexible nature of the movement's relationship to the government allowed for adaptability. By lacking a strong prescription to how the movement was going to relate to the government, it allowed local units who could enact more change through the government to do so. Localized decision making also ensured the members could dictate how they were going to interact with international parties like media agencies. It is difficult to apply a unified definition of how the movement related to the government, but this remained to be one of the movement's strengths.

Forms of Protest: Argentina

As previously explained, the very name of the movement reveals how the group most frequently protested: with *piquetes* or pickets. *Piquetes* involved the blockage of roads or highways by physically placing people to prevent movement. While *piquetes* were the most common form of protest, the movement also engaged in economic protests with its parallel economy projects and community reliance. The parallel economy stemmed from a desire for stability, which people believed the traditional economy could no longer provide them. In this section, we will explore what the most common types of protest were and how those were effective tools given the movement's demands.

Pickets provided a perfect opportunity for the movement that could not have been possible with any other form of protest. With road stoppages, the simple action of standing

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[160] Gonzalo Pérez Alvarez and Rachel Grace Newman, "Continuity and Rupture in the Labor and Piquetero Movements in Argentine Patagonia, 1990–2011," *Latin American Perspectives* 42, no. 2 (2015): 49.

in a road was able to garner attention quickly from decision makers given the high dependence Argentina had on roads for commerce. That form of protest had a low barrier to entry and allowed the large numbers of unemployed people to actively participate in having their voices heard. Before the *piquetero* movement, there was a strong presence of trade unions in Argentina, especially ones connected to the state-owned enterprises. The movement was able to capitalize on the falling support for trade unions as unemployment increased and the traditional means of labor organization no longer could support the community.[161]

Given the fall of the trade union and massive loss of jobs, the traditional picket line protests were no longer effective since there was no workplace to avoid. Instead, protesters would link arms to form chains with their bodies or use tires to build barriers to physically block access to a road.[162] These stoppages were referred to as "corta de ruta," translating to cut the route in English, and allowed the high population of unemployed people to easily serve as volunteers in the barricades.[163] Between 1997 and 2002, there was 4,676 road blockages throughout Argentina, with 27% of them occurring in the province of Buenos Aires, 15% happening in Jujuy, and 13% taking place in the city of Buenos Aires.[164] Much of the movement's success can be attributed to its form of protest since it allowed for easy mass mobilization and heavily impacted the local economies.

As the protestors blockaded the roads, members from the movement would stand at the front of the line to protect against attacks from the police and speak to the press.[165]

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[161] Birss, "The Piquetero Movement."
[162] Sutton, *Bodies in Crisis*, 165.
[163] Petras, *The New Development Politics*, 127.
[164] Epstein, "THE PIQUETERO MOVEMENT OF GREATER BUENOS AIRES," 22.
[165] D'Atri and Escati, "The Piquetera/o Movement of Argentina," 5.

While these security forces were predominantly men, the movement's women decided it would be especially important that women served on the frontlines, too.[166] Women served a vital role in speaking with the press, ensuring alcohol was not consumed during street actions, and that columns of protestors would not be broken.[167] The visibility of women through the blockades served as a form of protest because it challenged the gender norms of how women could contribute to society and change.

Outside of the physical blockades, the *piquetero* movement protested economically by offering alternative means of income and economic participation. While economic protests may not seem to fit under forms of protest, identifying alternative means of participation in society detracted from the government's economic recovery. Instead of money circulating through traditional businesses and banks, money would then flow through underground or local sources. This desired effect was referred to as "parallel economy." Many of the activities for the parallel economy would happen in semi-autonomous zones set up by the unemployed to serve as anarchical spheres.[168] The parallel economy either sought to provide people with basic needs like food or new organizational structures to businesses.

All the alternative economic models were run by the local movement's volunteers and adopted the decentralized model of planning. For providing basic services, communities would set up soup kitchens, *comedores*, that would be staffed by volunteers who cooked for the community and sometimes operated a building as a community

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[166] D'Atri and Escati, 6.
[167] D'Atri and Escati, 6.
[168] Petras, 132.

center.[169] *Comedores* could have community gardens, education classes, afterschool tutoring, and serve as the houses for the *asemblias*.

Women were especially important in these community projects as they transitioned from their positions in the *manzanera* networks to the *piquetero* movement. They often would record community grievances during *asemblias* and organize those action items for community centers.[170] These responsibilities did often support domestic gender stereotypes, such as being responsible for *comedores*, planting gardens, preparing food, and running community orchards, but women also found themselves interacting heavily with the *piquetero* community network.[171] Women had a heightened position of decision-making on the community-level.

Additionally, women created a system of reporting and prosecuting domestic abuse because the police failed to take domestic violence cases seriously. In the *piquetero* system, a woman could report the instance she experienced to a council of women and then that council would visit the abuser at their house.[172] Instead of using violence against the abuser like the state traditionally would, the women would lecture the abuser about why their actions were hurtful and inappropriate and ask them to attend a support group that the movement held.[173] While this system may not appear to be a form of protest, it demonstrates how the movement build its own internal structures to handle issues the state did not address. The *piquetero* movement's approach to sexual assault was an alternative approach outside of the state's traditional system.

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[169] Sutton, *Bodies in Crisis*, 165.
[170] D'Atri and Escati, "The Piquetera/o Movement of Argentina," 3.
[171] D'Atri and Escati, 7.
[172] D'Atri and Escati, 6.
[173] D'Atri and Escati, 6.

Providing alternatives to existent resources also continued with media. In 2003, a *piquetero* organization called Grupo Alavio formed an alliance with other groups to launch a television program.[174] Titled "TV-piquetera," the show was broadcasted onto community televisions and aimed to spread the message of what the movement was doing.[175] Most of the publications during the time from mass media portrayed *piqueteros* negatively, and the movement wanted to show interviews with community members and its social projects in action.[176] The show's production team was exclusively amateurs who learned how to operate the equipment for this project and it was broadcasted via hijacking local television stations.[177] The television experience reveals how the *piquetero* movement protested not just through road blockages, but also through dissemination of information.

Another form of protest was the *empresas recuperadas*, or recovered companies. *Empresas recuperadas* were businesses that completely run by the employees themselves after the original owners would abandon or fail the original businesses.[178] By 2008, there were more than 150 recovered factories with more than 15,000 workers, demonstrating the wide effects these business models had on the economy.[179] The worker-owned factories would operate with a popular consensus and be governed by the interests of the employees. Each company had a different operating model, but they all allowed employee-led initiatives dictate how the business was going to be run.

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[174] Marie Trigona, "The Making Of Piquetero Television," *NACLA Report on the Americas* 37, no. 4 (January 2004): 32, https://doi.org/10.1080/10714839.2004.11722436.
[175] Trigona, 32.
[176] Trigona, 33.
[177] Trigona, 33.
[178] Sutton, 168.
[179] Prevost, Oliva Campos, and Vanden, *Social Movements and Leftist Governments in Latin America*, 31.

The Brukman Factory is an example of an *empresa recuperada* since the women workers took over the garment factory once the owner had turned it over.[180] It is evident the police viewed these alternative economic models as forms of protest because they would impose violence onto the factories, such as teargassing the Brukman factory before the 2003 presidential election.[181]

Many *empresas recuperadas* had a direct relationship to the *piquetero* movement, but some also operated outside of the movement. One example of this union is the Zanon Ceramics Factory, where all the workers joined the Movement of Unemployed Workers (Movimiento de Trabajadores Desocupados or MTD).[182] The MTD were one of the main players within the broader *piquetero* movement who later went onto form relationships with the government. When there was a series of attacks from the police against the Zanon factory, protestors from MTD stood outside the factory to protect the workers.[183] This partnership between workers and the *piqueteros* represents how alliance were formed within the group to reach the final goal of improving conditions for workers.

Between the comedores and empresas recuperadas, the *piquetero* movement was able to create alterative means to society that challenged management-owned businesses or state-run social programs. Additionally, the parallel economy provided people with a stronger sense of individual action in a larger problem and helped the movement gain more support.

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[180] Sutton, *Bodies in Crisis*, 169.
[181] Sutton, 169.
[182] D'Atri and Escati, "The Piquetera/o Movement of Argentina," 9.
[183] D'Atri and Escati, 8.

The forms of protest that the *piquetero* movement selected were the physical blockades of key infrastructure and opting for alternative methods of economic participation. Both of these protest types inevitably affected Argentina's economy and warranted upset from politicians and the state. These types of protest were likely only as successful as they were because of the broader social environment in the country, yet can still allude to how context is important in determining what the best course of action should be for a social movement. The *piqueteros* knew their main members were unemployed who wanted a larger sense of economic security in the society. The targets of their protests were the people who they believed ruined the economy in the first place, therefore there was a strong connection between the forms of protest and the movement's context. It is evident the movement gained a lot of support, but now we need to explore how impactful these forms of protest were on creating change.

Demands of the *Piquetero* Movement

Given the independent variables present in this case study, we must now try to assess the impact the *piquetero* movement had on Argentinean society during the economic crisis. Before exploring both the success and outcomes of the movement, it will be helpful to understand what the demands of the movement overall were.

As previously explained, most of the movement happened on a local level so the national level lacked a strong authority over the smaller actors, but some national demands were still set forth. The *piquetero*'s national demands were sketched out during a conference in La Plata in August and September 2001. The gathering was attended by other 2,000 delegates from different groups who all sought action to reverse neoliberal policies

and worked together to lay out what the groups were going to strive for.[184] The main theme in these demands is a stoppage to the policies recommended by the International Monetary Fund. The conference's list of demands transformed into the movement's and grounded much of the local organization.

The conference outlined six immediate demands and five strategic goals. The demands asked for specific policies from the government and the goals outlined more long-term solutions. The demands, as quoted directly, were:

1. Derogation of the structural adjustment, the zero deficit policies and the judicial process against arrested and other activists.

2. The withdrawal of the austerity budget.

3. The extension and defence of the public employment schemes and food allocations to each unemployed worker over 16 years of age, the establishment of a massive register of unemployed under the control of the unemployed organizations meeting in the assembly.

4. One hundred pesos (peso=US$1.00) per hectare for small and medium-size farmers in order to seed their fields.

5. Prohibition of firings.

6. The immediate withdrawal of the gendarmes from the town of General Moscon[185]

Additionally, the strategic goals were:

1. Non-payment of the illegitimate and fraudulent foreign debt.

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[184] Petras, *The New Development Politics*, 132.
[185] Petras, 132.

2. Public control of the pension funds.

3. Renationalization of the banks and strategic enterprises.

4. Forgiveness of the debts of small farmers and sustainable prices for their products.

5. Ousting of the hunger-provoking regimes and any reshuffle of politicians. The Assembly ended by calling for an active thirty-six hour general strike and a national committee to coordinate activities with the dissident trade union confederation – the CTA.[186]

These demands all focus around a couple of central goals: rejection of austerity measures, defrauding of foreign debt, demand for improved worker's conditions and increased government subsidies. Most of these demands are a direct product of Argentina's economic position as workers who used to hold stable jobs in the public-sector lost those positions and state-subsidies were cut with the austerity measures.

The list of demands and goals inspired other local groups to be created and offered somewhat of a framework for an inherently decentralized organization. It will be helpful to keep these demands in mind when examining what the success and outcomes of the movement were.

Measuring Success of the Movement: Argentina

As defined previously, success is how the movement was able to accomplish goals it self-outlined. In this analysis, it appears that the movement was successful initially at

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[186] Petras, 132.

garnering support across a broad population but was unable to maintain that support after 2003 when the economy began to improve. Overall, the forms of protest allowed the movement to grow quickly, while the decentralization and flexible relationship to the government created internal tension that limited long term growth.

Much of the movement's success can be attributed to its ability to gain supporters from all economic classes, backgrounds, and genders. The form of protest and decentralization allowed members of society who normally were marginalized to have increased voices and stronger attachments to action. For example, up to 65% of the movement was ran by women, including most of the parallel economy activities and *asemblias*.[187] The decentralized nature allowed women to gain a presence in the movement not found in traditional political society.

Additionally, the high levels of unemployment meant that people who never faced unemployment suddenly were, like middle class individuals, and the large unemployed population widened the potential base further.[188] Middle class support was especially high during December 2001 when the peso collapsed, and the *piqueteros* saw teachers, public professionals, municipal workers, and pensioners flock to the movement.[189] The *piquetes* provided expansive opportunities to protest because as long as people had time, there were able to actively participate and get involved. The *piquetero* movement faced a lot of success in identifying a diverse range of the population to recruit to the movement, which provided it with privileges of publicity other movements did not have.

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[187] Sutton, *Bodies in Crisis*, 166.
[188] Birss, "The Piquetero Movement."
[189] Petras, *The New Development Politics*, 129.

While the movement gained traction initially, its decentralized structure and flexible relationship with government also posed ideological challenges within the group that eventually made it difficult to summon national action. The movement began to factionalize as early as the 1990s, but accelerated during 2002, when different sub-units had conflicting opinions on how close the movement should be to the government. President Eduardo Dulhade, who served a brief term as president from January 2002 to May 2003 after President de la Rua stepped down from office, sought agreements with the movements. The government offered the movements money if they agreed to establish themselves as legally identified social movement organizations. Federico Rossi from Argentina's National Scientific and Technical Research Council explained this split when saying:

> During Duhalde's tenure, a group of SMOs followed a path of establishment of agreements for the sustainability of governability (Federación de Trabajadores por la Tierra, Vivienda y Hábitat, FTV, and CCC). A second group did not accept these agreements. Within this group, there were two alternative strategies: one of disruption (MTR and Coordinadora de Trabajadores Desocupados "Aníbal Verón" (Coordination of Unemployed Workers Aníbal Verón, CTD) and its later subdivisions), and another of electoral vote-catching (Polo Obrero, PO, Movimiento Sin Trabajo, "Teresa Vive", and Movimiento Independiente de Jubilados y Desocupados, MIJD, mainly).[190]

The broader movement divided between those who did and did not accept agreements, and then even within those who did not accept agreements, there were groups

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[190] Rossi, "Beyond Clientelism," 124.

who choose different courses of actions. Most of this splitting can be attributed to the fact that the movement lacked a national authority or governing body. As it was central to the core of the movement, each local faction could choose a path of action it found best, but this hurt the overall movement's ability to stay cohesive in the long run. There was a lot of complexities in how the government and movement related, including the government attempting to institutionalize some of the sub-movements.

Not only was the government able to exploit the decentralization, but internally this caused issues in the movement's ability to maintain ideological momentum. After the 2001 La Plata Conference, there were very few similar events that asked delegates to brainstorm more shared goals. Most of the future vision was derived from that singular conference, leaving little room for future unification. A strong separation in the movement started happening in 2002 when groups received subsidies from provincial governments for their parallel economy projects, which was seen by others as a dilution of the anarchical nature of the parallel economy.[191] The lack of central authority also led to dramatic actions by some of the more fringe units, like burning government buildings. The increased violence in 2002 deterred some of the middle-class support and weakened the strong coalition the movement originally built.[192] The decentralization of the movement meant it was difficult to regulate how it would grow and evolve, meaning as the economy improve, people's demands shifted and strayed from the original.

The *piquetero* movement was successful at building an audience but lost its ability to regulate and maintain that audience. Strengths from the movement included the form of

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[191] Prevost, Oliva Campos, and Vanden, *Social Movements and Leftist Governments in Latin America*, 31.
[192] Birss, "The Piquetero Movement."

protest which allowed people to get quickly involved without a lot of resources. It was weakened by its decentralization since the group was unable to adapt its shared goals over a long period of time. Given the intentional decentralization, it could be argued that the group would have preferred to lose momentum than give up its community-based action, but this did still inevitably impact the success of the movement. Internally, the group acted as it was intended to be built, temporary and flexible, and its success somewhat limited.

Outcomes from the Movement: Argentina

Outcomes will be measured as the group's ability to enact change on the broader society and political system. As stated previously, the *piquetero* movement experienced a fracture in 2003 between organizations who wanted to maintain a close relationship to the government and those who did not. This split resulted in the government approaching social movements in a new way. Additionally, the social projects that the *piquetero* movement supported like the *comedores* and *empresas recuperadas* maintained their strength in society as a solid alternative to capitalism. This section will explore how the movement's efforts shaped Argentina's social, political, and economic landscape.

In regard to the immediate political shifts during the protests, the *piquetero* movement was effective at placing political pressures on the government. This pressure can best be seen through the high political turnover after the 2001 economic crisis. Initial protests in 2001 caused President De La Rúa to resign and then caused a turnover of three presidents within two years.[193] The president resigned dramatically by exiting the

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[193] D'Atri and Escati, "The Piquetera/o Movement of Argentina," 7.

presidential estate by helicopter at night and sending his resignation letter to the legislature an hour prior.[194] Argentineans clearly demonstrated their frustrations towards the sitting presidents and protested constantly to a point where politicians continuously resigned.

Once Kirchner took power in 2003, he approached the movement with a dual strategy based upon the movement's desire to work with the government.[195] For the *piquetero* movements who were open to negotiations with the government, Kirchner worked closely with them and even put some of their leaders in government positions.[196] With organizations that opposed the government, Kirchner launched a media campaign against those groups to turn public support against the movement.[197] This media campaign included portraying the *piqueteros* as people who just wanted to cause economic harm to the country by blocking the roads.[198] Kirchner needed to turn public opinion out of favor from the movement in order to slowly stop the protests.

Due to this media coverage and the improving economic situation, public opinion about the movement slowly faded. Public opinion of the movement quickly shifted so that by December 2003, 87.4% of Argentineans disapproved of the blockages.[199] In January 2003, 73.9% of Argentineans still supported the motives of the *piqueteros*, but by December of that same year, support dropped to 56.2%.[200] The decreasing public support

[194] Alvarez and Newman, "Continuity and Rupture in the Labor and Piquetero Movements in Argentine Patagonia, 1990–2011," 49.
[195] D'Atri and Escati, "The Piquetera/o Movement of Argentina," 10.
[196] Epstein, "Perpetuating Social Movements amid Declining Opportunity," 8.
[197] Epstein, 7.
[198] Trigona, "The Making Of Piquetero Television," 32.
[199] "Latin American Weekly Report" (Latin American News, December 9, 2003), https://www-latinnews-com.ccl.idm.oclc.org/media/k2/pdf/alts.pdf.
[200] "Latin American Weekly Report."

placed pressures on the movement to either adapt their form of protest to be less contentious or accept that protest support might be dwindling.

For the groups who were willing to work with the government, Kirchner publicly stated that he was open to working with them and wanted to incorporate their demands into his government's policy.[201] One means of doing that was placing *piquetero* leaders into government positions, like Luis D'Elia. D'Elia was a leader of the FTV since 1998 and positioned FTV particularly close to the government throughout his term.[202] When Dulhalde was drafting *Programa Jefas/Jefes*, FTV was one of two *piquetero* groups who sat on a presidential advising committee.[203] While FTV still actively protested the Argentinean government and disagreed with austerity measures, they also saw political institutions as a means for conducting change.[204]

As Kirchner welcomed working with more *piquetero* movements, D'Elia announced that FTV would be replacing its protests with supporting the Kirchner administration.[205] FTV later denied that D'Elia vowed to give up protests in exchange for political support, but FTV seldomly opposed the government directly from that point forward.[206] In February 2006, Kirchner announced that D'Elia would become the Secretary of Lands for Social Habitat in the Ministry of Planning.[207] D'Elia accepted this position with the hope that he would have direct access to government finances and could support FTV's goals on the governmental level.[208] It is clear that D'Elia's desire to work with the

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[201] "Latin American Weekly Report."
[202] Epstein, "Perpetuating Social Movements amid Declining Opportunity," 9.
[203] Epstein, 9.
[204] Epstein, 9.
[205] Epstein, 9.
[206] Epstein, 10.
[207] Epstein, 10.
[208] Epstein, 10.

government prevented Kirchner from openly criticizing FTV and even won him a position in a ministry office.

Once in office, D'Elia found that the position he was appointed did not allow him to carry out the goals of FTV. He did not have access to government finances to increase subsidies and did not have access to land appropriations.[209] The disconnect in what D'Elia thought he would accomplish versus what he was actually able to accomplish caused tensions between him and Kirchner, where he then resigned in November 2006.[210] The realities of D'Elia's government term demonstrate how Kirchner leveraged political opportunities to prevent further protests while simultaneously laying the foundation for how political parties could incorporate the demands of social movements in their term.

Beyond government impact, the *piquetero* movement's social projects continued past the height of the movement. *Empresas recuperadas* and *comedores* still maintained connections with *piquetero* groups and continued to operate outside of the capitalistic framework by either being employee run or offering social goods for free. The legacy from these social projects still impacts communities today, demonstrating the power the movement had on impacting non-political change. While the *piquetero* movement failed to fundamentally change the austerity measures, they were able to impact how communities formed relationships internally and those economic experiments.

Comedores, or soup kitchens, have operated in Argentina since the 1920s, but saw an uptick in importance during the 1980s and 2000s economic recessions.[211] In 2001,

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[209] Epstein, 10.

[210] "D'Elia Resignation Because of Chavez?," *Center for Security Policy* (blog), November 17, 2006, https://centerforsecuritypolicy.org/delia-resignation-because-of-chavez-2/.

[211] Frei-Herrmann, "Los Comedores Populares Argentinos En Tiempos Del COVID-19," 15.

piquetero movements opened *comedores* within their communities to feed the unemployed workers when state food subsidies diminished.[212] When the economy improved in 2003, these *comedores* kept their kitchens open since the communities began to rely on their services. The *comedores* established a network of food security that was utilized again during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Piquetero* groups like CCC, MTL, and Barrios de Pie mobilized to both keep *comedores* open and distribute food to households when Argentineans were forced to stay home in March 2020.[213] While the *piquetero* groups might not be protesting with blockages, they left a significant impact on crisis management within communities.

Empresas recuperadas continued after the economy rebounded, which demonstrates that worker-owned businesses were not just popular during times of economic crises, but also could be sustained as a real solution to neoliberal business practices. Since the 1990s, there have been 185 enterprises that are officially registered as *empresas recuperadas*.[214] Kirchner identified the value of these businesses in 2003 and worked to increase state support through developing programs and ministries with specific resources for *empresas recuperadas*.[215] The Program for Competitiveness in Self-Managed Enterprises launched in 2004 and provided business support and technical assistance to *empresas recuperadas*.[216] With the state's support, the worker-owned businesses have continued to excel as an alternative to traditional business management.

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[212] Prevost, Oliva Campos, and Vanden, *Social Movements and Leftist Governments in Latin America*, 23.

[213] Frei-Herrmann, "Los Comedores Populares Argentinos En Tiempos Del COVID-19," 27.

[214] "'Empresas Recuperadas': Argentina's Recovered Factory Movement," Participatory Economic Alternatives, June 2019, 1, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/20.500.12413/14567/FINAl_ERT_V3.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y.

[215] "'Empresas Recuperadas': Argentina's Recovered Factory Movement," 2.

[216] "'Empresas Recuperadas': Argentina's Recovered Factory Movement," 2.

The *piquetero* movement heightened imaginative thinking for Argentina around how communities could organize to provide resources outside of the state and how businesses could be run. While the movement was not successful at reversing or even impacting the austerity policies from the IMF, it is clear that it still impacted Argentinean politics by carving out how the state responds to social movements. Kirchner shaped much of the dynamics between movements and the government for the future, despite the smear campaign he employed against the more anti-government organizations.

From this analysis of the movement, it is evident that their form of protest with road blockages were extremely effective in bringing the government to the negotiating table because of the economy-stopping effects of blockages. Its other initiatives, including the *empresa recuperada* and *comedores*, had a profound impact on social and community-level relationships that have been crucial during the COVID-19 pandemic and its corresponding crisis. While little policy was changed during the movement, it shifted how the government responds to social needs and how communities view their capacity to enact change.

International financial institutions still seem to yield more power over nations' policies than the people themselves, according to the Argentina case study. This is partially due to the fact that Argentina holds a high level of debt from IFIs and that the debt payment structure requires that Argentina complies with IFIs' regulations. While the *piquetero* movement did not reverse the austerity measures, I will next examine Greece's anti-austerity movement to identify if that movement had a larger impact.

Chapter 3: Greece Case Study

Between 2010 and 2012, 20% of Greek citizens protested across Greece against imposed austerity measures from the International Monetary Fund, European Central Bank, and the European Union Commission.[217] The high level of participation in these protests demonstrates how pervasive the impact of the austerity measures was and how Greeks lost faith in their government.[218] In this investigation of the long-term impact of social movements in influencing governments, Greece serves as a strong case study because of its similarities to other anti-austerity movements at the time and because of the role trade unions and political parties had in mobilization. Ultimately, the movement had no effect on the implementation of future austerity measures, but it did effect Greece's political landscape by expanding the political makeup and shifting historical voting patterns.

Building on the analysis of the *piquetero* movement in Argentina, this case study of Greece aims to dissect the broader movement to understand how the locus of decision making, relationship to government, and forms of protest impacted the success and outcomes of the movement. Before exploring the independent and dependent variables, it will be crucial to contextualize the Greek movement within the global anti-austerity movement given its similarities. The Greek case study reveals how political mobilization

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[217] Theodoros Rakopoulos, "Resonance of Solidarity: Meanings of a Local Concept in Anti-Austerity Greece," *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 32, no. 2 (2014): 315, https://doi.org/10.1353/mgs.2014.0040; Nikos Sotirakopoulos and Olga Ntalaka, "From the Streets and the Occupied Squares to the Central Political Field: The Narratives of the Anti-Austerity Camp in Greece," in *Beyond the Internet* (Routledge, 2015), 83.

[218] Emiliano Treré, Sandra Jeppesen, and Alice Mattoni, "Comparing Digital Protest Media Imaginaries: Anti-Austerity Movements in Greece, Italy & Spain," *TripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique. Open Access Journal for a Global Sustainable Information Society* 15, no. 2 (May 29, 2017): 411, https://doi.org/10.31269/triplec.v15i2.772.

can affect the long-term outcomes of a social movement, which differs from the *piquetero* movement.

Background of Greece Anti-Austerity Movement

The Greek anti-austerity movement built on similar movements occurring throughout the globe after the 2008 economic recession. Other examples of contemporary movements included the Spanish Indignados and the global Occupy movements.[219] While all of these movements took place in exceptionally different political and social climates, they all borrowed elements of organization and action from each other.[220] Each country's individual movement additionally was composed of different groups within the society that traditionally would not have worked together, but unified under their disapproval of austerity measures and neoliberalism.[221] Social media became an especially powerful tool between 2011 and 2013, allowing the groups to both mobilize within their own countries and exchange ideas between sub-movements.[222] The global anti-austerity movement contextualizes some of Greece's actions regarding protest form and movement evolution.

The 2008 economic crisis effected Europe in a distinct way as nations focused on bailing out the financial sectors and imposed austerity measures that negatively impacted the citizens.[223] By 2012, 25 million Europeans were unemployed and the value of the euro

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[219] Peter Millership, "World Intrigued by 'Occupy Wall Street' Movement," *Reuters*, October 11, 2011, sec. U.S. News, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-wallstreet-world-idUSTRE79A3OB20111011.

[220] Millership.

[221] Amador Fernández-Savater et al., "Life after the Squares: Reflections on the Consequences of the Occupy Movements," *Social Movement Studies* 16, no. 1 (January 2, 2017): 120, https://doi.org/10.1080/14742837.2016.1244478.

[222] Treré, Jeppesen, and Mattoni, "Comparing Digital Protest Media Imaginaries," 409.

[223] Kostas Kanellopoulos, "Political Opportunities, Threats and Opportunism: Examining SYRIZA's Rise in Crisis-Ridden Greek Politics," in *Challenging Austerity* (Routledge, 2017), 90.

dropped.[224] Southern European countries experienced especially high-levels of austerity measures from the IMF and EU that fueled social upheaval towards the supranational institutions.[225] While most of the anti-austerity movements occurred in the European Union protesting, southern EU nations experienced the brunt of the austerity measures given their weaker economies compared to the northern nations.[226] The tension between northern countries Germany and the United Kingdom versus southern countries such as Greece, Italy, and Spain grew during this period.[227]

Between all of the movements, one of the similarities was the use of public space occupation as a form of protest. A public square became an effective international symbol for that movement.[228] The Spanish *Indignados* movement built on the public occupation and directly inspired Greece's occupation of Syntagma Square, home to Parliament and where all of the austerity measures were being voted on. Syntagma itself translates to constitution and has been the site for protests since 1843 in Greece.[229]

This between movement link was so close that the catalyst for Greek protests started when an *Indignados* Facebook meme circulated that accused Greek people of sleeping in spring 2011.[230] This meme inspired an anonymous post that called upon Greek citizens to protest in Syntagma Square on May 25th.[231] With the squares as the central locations to the

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[224] Tom Kington et al., "Europe Unites in Austerity Protests against Cuts and Job Losses," *The Guardian*, November 14, 2012, sec. Business, https://www.theguardian.com/business/2012/nov/14/europe-unite-austerity-protests.

[225] Kington et al.

[226] Kington et al.

[227] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, "From the Streets and the Occupied Squares to the Central Political Field," 84.

[228] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 84.

[229] Marilena Simiti, "Rage and Protest: The Case of the Greek Indignant Movement," *Hellenic Observatory Papers on Greece and Southeast Europe*, February 2014, 6.

[230] Treré, Jeppesen, and Mattoni, "Comparing Digital Protest Media Imaginaries," 409.

[231] Treré, Jeppesen, and Mattoni, 409.

protests, international press reported on the sub-movements as a broader phenomenon against neoliberalism and narrativized the separate struggle into a collective battle.[232]

Beyond understanding the global anti-austerity movement, it is important to examine specific characteristics regarding the Greek movement. Over the three years, there was roughly 32 large protests that were attended by a diverse array of the society.[233] Some of the key subsets of participants included unemployed workers with no previous experience in activism, the lower tier of the bourgeoise who experienced a decrease in their standard of living, leftist and anarchist political organizations, and trade unions.[234] All of the sub-groups of the Syntagma Square occupation varied drastically, but unified under opposing austerity, racism, police violence, and disapproval of the existing government.[235] The spread of participants allowed high levels of participation in the protests, but also created a lack of universally held beliefs that prevented the movement from sustaining after 2012.[236]

The composition of the Greek movement was a significant departure from the two-party political system that existed in Greece since the 1974, dominated by the social-democratic PASOK party and center-right Nea Dimokratia party.[237] While Greek Parliament did contain other parties, these two major parties switched off controlling majority power every couple of terms and would maintain a clientele relationship with the

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[232] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, "From the Streets and the Occupied Squares to the Central Political Field," 84.
[233] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 80–81.
[234] Nikos Symeonides, "The 'Movement of the Squares' and the Perspectives It Creates," *International Viewpoint* (blog), June 14, 2011, https://internationalviewpoint.org/spip.php?article2181.
[235] Jon Wiltshire, "After Syntagma: Where Are the Occupiers Now?," *OpenDemocracy* (blog), May 24, 2013, https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/opensecurity/after-syntagma-where-are-occupiers-now/.
[236] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, "From the Streets and the Occupied Squares to the Central Political Field," 87.
[237] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 78.

middle class by exchanging favors for votes.[238] Despite being an EU member state, the political parties benefitted from Greece's insular economy, where only 9% of citizens worked in big businesses and most people were employed in small to medium family owned businesses.[239] The middle class thrived with a highly regulated pricing market, strong union representation connected to the political parties, and job protections.[240] With a combination of a two-party system and insular economy, Greece was especially vulnerable to the 2008 economic crisis.

After Greece's economy backslid post-2008, the PASOK-led government at the time needed to finance its debt and could not with the nation's current position.[241] Greece had employed bonds before 2010 to finance its debt, but this was no longer feasible and so the PASOK party turned to a tripartite coalition, nicknamed the Troika, of the European Central Bank, International Monetary Fund, and EU Commission to draft a plan to resolve the debt crisis.[242] The resolution from the Troika was giving Greece the largest loan since World War II, if the nation imposed strict austerity measures via a memorandum of understanding.[243] Despite resistance, Greece passed two rounds of austerity measures in three years that shrunk the gross domestic product by 25% and increased the unemployment rate to 26.7% in 2013.[244] The Greek economy caused strain on its citizens by cutting off access to education and health funding, increasing taxes, and decreasing

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[238] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 78.
[239] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 78.
[240] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 78.
[241] Rakopoulos, "Resonance of Solidarity," 315.
[242] Rakopoulos, 315.
[243] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, "From the Streets and the Occupied Squares to the Central Political Field," 79.
[244] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 79; Rakopoulos, "Resonance of Solidarity," 315.

wages.[245] Austerity measures failed to address the needs of Greek citizens and drove discontentment that fueled the protests.

The mass scale and diverse composition of the Greece anti-austerity movement demonstrates how pervasive the impact of austerity measures can be on a country's economy and citizens' livelihoods. In the global system where austerity measures are being drafted and imposed by an outside party, it is important to examine how individual citizens can or cannot influence economic policies. In the next section, the Syntagma Square movement will be analyzed under each independent variable to explain why the movement successfully shifted the voting landscape, but failed to change Greece's path in neoliberalism.

Locus of Decision Making: Greece

Similar to many of the anti-austerity movements at the time, Greece's locus of decision making can be best categorized as decentralized through general assemblies. It is more difficult to categorize Greece's locus given the nature of its actors from political organizations to trade unions, but the major sub-units of the movement influenced the future of the protests. Most decisions were decided via a democratic voting system and no one person or power influenced the trajectory too heavily. The decentralized nature ensured individual actors could continue to support the movement despite contrasting ideological viewpoints.

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[245] Rakopoulos, "Resonance of Solidarity," 315.

To fully understand the decision-making process within the movement, it is important to examine the cross sections of the movement itself. The two most relevant cross sections for this analysis are geographical and association-based. For geographical, Syntagma Square was divided into a lower and upper section with different decision-making mechanisms.[246] For association-based, the trade unions and political parties influenced some of the outcomes and success of the movement.[247] The mechanisms of interaction between all forces shape the eventual outcome of the decision making, and the complexity of the interests between stakeholders.

As protestors occupied Syntagma Square over the course of the movement, the square self-segregated into two distinctive zones based on ideological beliefs and political positions. The left- and right-wing nationalists camped closer to the Parliament building in the upper square, and would engage by shouting threats and demands to Parliament.[248] In the lower square, a more complex social system was set up that included leftists, anarchists, and autonomists who self-organized general assemblies and community spaces.[249] Georgia Alexandri, who was a student at the time of the protests, shared with the online publication openDemocracy that the lower square contained people's assemblies and the upper square had a less organized group who made threats directly to Parliament.[250] Both geography-based groups still participated in the broader movement, but engaged with the physical square space in distinctive ways.

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[246] Treré, Jeppesen, and Mattoni, "Comparing Digital Protest Media Imaginaries," 409.
[247] Kanellopoulos, "Political Opportunities, Threats and Opportunism," 409.
[248] Treré, Jeppesen, and Mattoni, "Comparing Digital Protest Media Imaginaries," 409.
[249] Treré, Jeppesen, and Mattoni, 409.
[250] Wiltshire, "After Syntagma."

While many organizations participated in the protests, the lens of association-based decision-making will focus primarily on trade unions and political organizations given their prevalence and level of influence in the movement.[251] The largest trade unions were the Confederation of Greek Workers (GSEE) and the Central Union of Civil Servants (ADEDY), both of whom had connection to the two existing Greek political parties.[252] The two most influential political organizations were the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) and the Coalition of the Radical Left – Progressive Alliance (SYRIZA).[253] Each of the four key actors held different ideological viewpoints and motivations for participation in the movement, which makes analyzing the influence of each in decision making extraordinarily difficult.

One means to measure the level of influence in decision making is to perform a network analysis, which was conducted by a team of political comparativists at the University of Athens in 2017. In this study, the researchers surveyed members from 34 organization and groups that were involved in planning protests to determine the linkages between group ideologies and decision making.[254] Those survey findings were mapped based on respondents' perceptions of similarities or dissimilarities between groups and the maps reveal that there was no strong central force and that the network remained together through an extensive network of intergroup dynamics.[255] This aligns with the reality that each party approached the broader anti-austerity movement with a different goal, resulting

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[251] Treré, Jeppesen, and Mattoni, "Comparing Digital Protest Media Imaginaries," 410.

[252] Kanellopoulos, "Political Opportunities, Threats and Opportunism," 96.

[253] Kanellopoulos, 96.

[254] Kanellopoulos, 104.

[255] Kostas Kanellopoulos et al., "Competing Modes of Coordination in the Greek Anti-Austerity Campaign, 2010-2012," *Social Movement Studies* 16, no. 1 (2017): 108, https://doi.org/10.1080/14742837.2016.1153464.

in the movement's lack of long-term plan and focus on preventing a second round of austerity measures.

Given the context of some decision-making actors and the complexity of the network, it is evident that the locus of decision-making was decentralized. For decisions that were made among the movement, self-organization and direct democracy were key mechanisms to how those decisions were made.[256] Especially within the lower square, people organized into general assemblies and working groups to accomplish tasks and support the mini social ecosystem in the square.[257] The goal of this organizational technique was to ensure a horizontal ruling procedure that created a demand for direct democracy, equality, dignity, and justice.[258] Every evening, the movement would hold a general assembly where people could share their opinions for 90-seconds and no exclusive dialogue could occur.[259] When decisions were voted on, all approved decisions were posted in the morning across the square and every night on the website.[260] People's assemblies decentralized the decision-making for the movement and created a new political aperture separate from the existing Greek government.

In the course of the anti-austerity movement, decision-making remained complicated given the varied interests of the key stakeholders, but smaller subsets of self-organization allowed for protests and mass mobilization to be coordinated without the domination of one actor. Decentralization allowed for higher rates of participation and

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[256] Treré, Jeppesen, and Mattoni, "Comparing Digital Protest Media Imaginaries," 409.
[257] Treré, Jeppesen, and Mattoni, 409.
[258] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, "From the Streets and the Occupied Squares to the Central Political Field," 85.
[259] Stathis Gourgouris, "Greece's Democratic Dreams," *Al Jazeera*, July 21, 2011, https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2011/7/21/democratic-dreams-rage-in-athens.
[260] Gourgouris.

democratic principles, but also prevented the movement from ever establishing a broader goal to rally behind. Both the *piquetero* movement and the Syntagma Square occupation employed people's assemblies, which hints at the importance of de-centralization in social movements.

Relationship to Government: Greece

As previously stated, the diverse actors in Greece's movement created few cohesion points, but one of those cohesion points was a rejection of the current government system. Greece had two primary political parties from 1974 to 2012, and the approval of the memorandum left most Greek citizens unsatisfied with the existing parties.[261] While the movement rejecting any standing political party, the involved political organizations were divided in their desires to be involved in the broader political system. For SYRIZA, they mobilized into a political party for the 2012 and 2015 elections, while KKE rejected any form of government involvement. The transition of SYRIZA from a political organization to party and their electoral success demonstrates the societal departure from PASOK and Nea Dimokratia.

The disapproval of the standing political parties deeply affected the mechanisms of the movement by both banning their iconography from the square and restricting organizations that had previous connections to the parties. In the square, any symbol, flag, or banner that was associated with a distinctive party or organization was banned to prevent further fragmentation.[262] Somewhat ironically, the only flags that flew above the square

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[261] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, "From the Streets and the Occupied Squares to the Central Political Field," 77.

[262] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 87.

were international, like Spain or Portugal's, to show Greece's support for other anti-austerity movements.[263] Additionally, one of the Greek movement's chants was "In a magic night, just like in Argentina, you'll be queuing to fly away with an helicopter," which alluded to President De La Rua's helicopter escape from the Argentine presidential estate.[264] The portrayal of international over domestic alliances reveals how interconnected the movements were to each other, and shows how strongly Greece rejected its own standing political parties.

Additionally, the rejection of standing political parties continued with constraints put onto trade unions like GSEE and ADEDY because of their connection to political parties.[265] Most of the protestors distrusted trade unions for this reason as they were "actually fronts of the main political parties in Greece."[266] While trade unions did organize many of the initial protests, only individuals from GSEE or ADEDY participated in people's assemblies and the unions rarely publicized their affiliation while calling for protests or strikes.[267] The movement's relationship to trade unions demonstrates how distrustful it was towards the standing political institution and explains the rejection of political iconography from the square.

Political organizations remained split on their relationship to the government, with SYRIZA mobilizing into a political party and KKE rejecting any institutionalization. While neither built relationships with existent parties, they both interacted with the government

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[263] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 87.
[264] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 87.
[265] Kanellopoulos et al., "Competing Modes of Coordination in the Greek Anti-Austerity Campaign, 2010-2012," 104.
[266] Kanellopoulos et al., 104.
[267] Kanellopoulos et al., 108.

through rejecting or embracing political opportunity.[268] Kosta Kanellopoulos, a political scientist from the University of Athens, explored the role that political opportunity has in the longevity of a social movement and found that SYRIZA capitalized more heavily than KKE for political mobilization.[269] Because of this political institutionalization, SYRIZA was more successful in the long-term in accruing public support than KKE.

SYRIZA formed a coalition of political organizations in June 2011 to counter the influence of trade unions in the protests.[270] SYRIZA operated under a coalitional mode of collective action, which prioritized building alliances with other groups over maintaining a long term vision or future.[271] This approach to collective action can best be seen through SYRIZA's communications. In Kanellopoulos's study, he found that 69% of SYRIZA's messaging involved calling upon the existing Greek government, 15% of the time blamed the EU or Troika, communicated to the interior of SYRIZA 7% of the time, and targeted the Greek people only 6%.[272] SYRIZA seized heavily on the political opportunity aperture, especially near the 2012 elections, and decided to engage in the existing governmental structures.

In contrast, KKE refrained from any political participation because their narrative for the movement focused more around class consciousness and anti-capitalism.[273] KKE's messaging promoted class unity as a means of eliminating capitalism and a desire to focus on improved means of production for workers, which aligns with their communist basis.[274]

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[268] Kanellopoulos, "Political Opportunities, Threats and Opportunism," 92.
[269] Kanellopoulos, 96.
[270] Kanellopoulos, 96.
[271] Kanellopoulos et al., "Competing Modes of Coordination in the Greek Anti-Austerity Campaign, 2010-2012," 103.
[272] Kanellopoulos, "Political Opportunities, Threats and Opportunism," 101.
[273] Kanellopoulos, 97.
[274] Kanellopoulos, 97.

Unlike SYRIZA's focus on alliance building, KKE utilized the organizational mode of collective action and desired to preserve ideological autonomy as a movement.[275] Especially as SYRIZA established itself as a more political party, KKE rejected SYRIZA's desire for unity between parties, but continued to protest aligned SYRIZA through 2015.[276] The distinction is most evident between the two groups in their messaging, where KKE targeted 22% of its communication directly to the Greek people compared to SYRIZA's 6%.[277] Societal change for KKE needed to occur through the workers, rather than through the political systems. Rejection of traditional governmental structures by KKE further demonstrates the divide within the anti-austerity movement for a uniform future.

Just as the movement broadly rejected the standing political system, the PASOK party and government used violence against the protestors on multiple occasions between 2011 and 2013. Before the second round of austerity measures, police employed tear gas to clear the square, but clashes between protestors and police continued onto the side streets.[278] Conflict between police forces and protestors widened the gap of trust between the movement and two-parties.

The Greek anti-austerity movement clearly rejected the standing political system. Even though the movement was divided between the KKE and SYRIZA for future political involvement, all sub-actors disapproved of PASOK and ND and banned iconography for any association to minimize that conflict. Trade unions experienced restrained

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[275] Kanellopoulos et al., "Competing Modes of Coordination in the Greek Anti-Austerity Campaign, 2010-2012," 103.
[276] Kanellopoulos, "Political Opportunities, Threats and Opportunism," 98.
[277] Kanellopoulos et al., "Competing Modes of Coordination in the Greek Anti-Austerity Campaign, 2010-2012," 101.
[278] "Police Clash with Protesters Outside Greek Parliament," *France24*, October 19, 2011, https://www.france24.com/en/20111019-new-48-hour-general-strike-begins-greece-unions-parliament-austerity-debt-crisis-sarvaricas.

relationships within the broader anti-austerity movement because of their historical relationship to the standing parties. Greece's relationship to government is more unilateral across the movement than Argentina's relationship, demonstrating how relationship to government can impact the institutionalization of movements.

Forms of Protest: Greece

Social movements leverage different forms of protest that correspond to the intended outcomes of action. In global anti-austerity movement, the goal was to prevent additional austerity measures from being passed and to reject neoliberalism imposed by global institutions. Some of Greece's protest forms were borrowed from other social movements, and some developed specifically under the context of Syntagma Square. For the case study of Greece, there was a unique sense of communitarianism present in Syntagma not found in other European anti-austerity movements that reveals how central the re-imagination of democracy was to the Greek theater.

The most common form of protest between the movements was the occupation of a public square, which became Syntagma Square for Greece. Syntagma was ideally located right outside of Parliament, which is where all of the decisions regarding the austerity measures were made.[279] As international press covered the movement, Syntagma Square symbolized the home of the movement opposing the collapse of the Greek economy and of the power of the anti-austerity movement.[280] The occupation of the square lasted from May 2010 to October 2012 with fluctuations in attendance based on the government's

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[279] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, "From the Streets and the Occupied Squares to the Central Political Field," 81.
[280] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 84.

proximity to passing another austerity measure.[281] This form of protest was a mostly peaceful endeavor, where protestors gathered in people's assemblies or organized future protests.

Violence seldomly broke out in the three years of occupation, but did result in a couple deaths throughout the three years from both police and protestor violence. These deaths became symbols for both sides of the movement and came to represent both the state of police violence and justified the high police presence within the square.[282] The largest bout of violence occurred in October 2011 after Parliament passed another round of austerity measured that resulted in two days of strikes and 500 injuries from police brutality.[283] Greece was shut down as a nation during the October protests because nearly 100,000 people marched in Athens.[284]

News stories from that time period reveal the continued anger and disbelief in the government from the protestors. France24 quoted Akis Papadopoulous, a 50-year-old public sector worker and protestor, saying, "Who are they trying to fool? They won't save us. With these measures the poor become poorer and the rich richer."[285] In addition to violence between police and protestors, there was also property damage and the burning of a bank building that killed three employees inside.[286]

While there were smaller bouts of violence, most of the occupation remained peaceful and the square transformed into a micro-community built on principles of

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[281] Gourgouris, "Greece's Democratic Dreams."
[282] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, "From the Streets and the Occupied Squares to the Central Political Field," 82.
[283] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 82.
[284] "Police Clash with Protesters Outside Greek Parliament."
[285] "Police Clash with Protesters Outside Greek Parliament."
[286] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, "From the Streets and the Occupied Squares to the Central Political Field," 81.

cooperation and access.[287] Community facets included: a hospital, media center, transportation support, translation services for international protestors, bathrooms, kitchens, a performing arts center, and a central organizing office for the square.[288] Much of this community building aimed at building common spaces that re-imagined how to share resources and services to the participants.[289] As needs were identified within people's assemblies, working groups would be tasked with planning and executing that resource service to ensure the community maintained operations.[290] The community nature of the occupation represents a form of protest as people actively created institutions that responded to the failures of the government and provided alternatives.

Collective action extended beyond community building to economic protesting as some organized within the "I don't pay" movement, which aimed at wielding economic power to shift governmental policy. Given the rising price of public goods like highway tolls and decreasing wages, participants in the "I don't pay" movement would occupy highway toll booths and allowing people to pass without paying.[291] Additional forms of economic protest included reconnecting electricity for houses who could not afford to pay the electricity, setting up solidarity kitchens in neighborhoods to feed the poor, and offering mutual aid through solidarity economies.[292] Some of these community support networks, especially the solidarity kitchens, still exist in neighborhoods throughout Athens today.[293]

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[287] Treré, Jeppesen, and Mattoni, "Comparing Digital Protest Media Imaginaries," 409.
[288] Gourgouris, "Greece's Democratic Dreams."
[289] Fernández-Savater et al., "Life after the Squares," 138.
[290] Fernández-Savater et al., 138.
[291] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, "From the Streets and the Occupied Squares to the Central Political Field," 84.
[292] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 84; Wiltshire, "After Syntagma"; Rakopoulos, "Resonance of Solidarity," 313.
[293] Wiltshire, "After Syntagma."

Economic protests were particularly effective because they both supported people who faced poverty and demonstrated an alternative to the normative economic model.[294]

The final form of protest for the Greek anti-austerity movement was through social media and information dissemination. The digital landscape became an especially powerful tool during these protests because of the rise of Facebook and Twitter in the early 2010s.[295] Protestors were both able to collect stories to share with an international audience and mobilize citizens to gather for protests via these platforms.[296] The main Syntagma Square protest page had 80,000 followers by 2011 and was frequently filled with content related to stories from the economic downturn, examples of police violence, or calls to protest.[297] Social media served as an especially helpful tool in mobilization because of the ease of information spread and distrust in conventional media in Greece.

Beyond utilizing social media, working groups also organized press societies within the square that self-wrote and published stories from the movement. The anti-austerity movement did not trust Greek newspapers because of their ties to political and financial groups, so online sites like the Press Project and Indymedia became frequent publication locations.[298] In the Press Project, journalists who lost their jobs during the recession were employed to record the general assembly notes and craft narratives for online publication.[299] Indymedia launched in Athens originally in 2001 and served as a

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[294] Rakopoulos, "Resonance of Solidarity," 313.
[295] Treré, Jeppesen, and Mattoni, "Comparing Digital Protest Media Imaginaries," 414.
[296] Treré, Jeppesen, and Mattoni, 414.
[297] Treré, Jeppesen, and Mattoni, 415.
[298] Treré, Jeppesen, and Mattoni, 415; Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, "From the Streets and the Occupied Squares to the Central Political Field," 88.
[299] Treré, Jeppesen, and Mattoni, "Comparing Digital Protest Media Imaginaries," 415.

direct contrast to the elite-controlled media sources elsewhere.[300] By disseminating and generating original stories from the movement itself, they were able to maintain leverage over the narrative of the movement and develop a broader audience both in Greece and the world. Storytelling is a form of protest as it circumvents traditional institutions and allowed the anti-austerity movement to gain international traction.

Protesting in Greece occurred through occupation, community action in moments of state failure, developing alternative economic realities, and publishing narratives outside of conventional media. All of these forms of protest align with the movement's call to action as they dismantle the power structures present and apply pressure to institutions for change. While Greece's protest methods aligned more closely to other anti-austerity movements and created less of a societal hassle than Argentina, they were still effective at stating a message and spreading the demands to the targeted audience.

Demands of Movement: Greece

Given the previous analysis of the independent variables of social movements, it is evident Greece had a sustained and expansive social movement. Social movements all have a shared goal of bringing about some degree of change or educating a target population about an issue, which is why it is important to measure the success and outcomes of social movements in enacting that change. Before examining what the success and outcomes of Syntagma Square were, we should outline what the movement demanded first.

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[300] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, "From the Streets and the Occupied Squares to the Central Political Field," 89.

Similar to the *piquetero* movement, there was no cohesive view for what the movement wanted in the long-term, but sociology professor Maria Kousis at the University of Crete did document the demands of the movement during the time of the protests. The most common thread through these demands was the reversal of austerity measures that included wage and pension cuts, tax increases, and high unemployment rates.[301] In one of the first calls to protest in summer 2011, a people's assembly in Syntagma Square published a declaration sharing, "We will not leave the squares until those who compelled us to come here go away: Government, Troika…, Banks, IMF Memoranda, and everyone that exploits us. We send them the message that the debt is not ours. DIRECT DEMOCRACY NOW! EQUALITY – JUSTICE – DIGNITY!"[302] This declaration demonstrates a failure of the movement to outline specific demands, as it instead outlines difficult tasks such as asking the government and Troika to "go away." The main consensus of the group was a rejection of the imposed austerity measures, but goals beyond that point fluctuated.

While it may appear as if the lack of cohesion is disorganized, the movement intentionally choose this looseness to a degree. As mentioned previously, Syntagma Square banned any political party or trade union identifiers to prevent an ideological monopoly. Political parties and trade unions were a part of the forces that imposed the measures, but the lack of ideological backing created a vacuum that allowed populism to thrive.[303] While general assemblies would draft goals, many of these became contradictory throughout the movement's evolution and a disconnect existed between the broader movement and the

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[301] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 83.
[302] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 85.
[303] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 86.

left-wing organizations.[304] Decentralization meant inclusion of extra voices and a broader base for mobilization.

In addition to the rejection of austerity measures, there was a desire to build a new political regime through a stronger foundation of democracy.[305] The movement maintained a certain focus towards studying and defining what democracy was, should be, and how to accomplish that. Especially within the lower square, protestors would spend the days reading through exchanged books and pamphlets about democracy and heavily believed in self-education.[306] This sentiment towards democracy was additionally strengthened by the protests' location in Athens, the birthplace of democracy, and encouraged protestors to rethink democracy as a "felt" democracy.[307] The principles of felt democracy drove the people's assemblies as coordination between parties and space to be heard were considered to be necessary steps to taking collective action.[308] While it is difficult to imagine the principles of felt democracy working successfully on a nation-wide level, protestors wanted to experiment with what they considered to be an improved system over the failures of the Greek government.

Improved democracy and rejection of austerity measures were the largest demands from the Syntagma Square movement. As the study shifts to focus on the success and outcomes of the movement, its demands are an important reference point. The movement lacked a cohesive vision given its competing interests and political ideologies, but the few

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[304] Symeonides, "The 'Movement of the Squares' and the Perspectives It Creates."
[305] Fernández-Savater et al., "Life after the Squares," 137.
[306] Gourgouris, "Greece's Democratic Dreams."
[307] Gourgouris; Fernández-Savater et al., "Life after the Squares," 137.
[308] Fernández-Savater et al., "Life after the Squares," 137.

goals it agreed upon did shape how the SYRIZA party ran for office and how the voter base shifted after the 2012 elections.

Success of Movement: Greece

Success in this analysis is defined as a movement's internal ability to grow or sustain itself. For the Greece anti-austerity movement, success was accomplished through its wide coalitional forces, its ability to maintain a central narrative around anti-austerity, and the partial mobilization into a political party with SYRIZA. While the Greek Parliament faced decisions regarding austerity measures, the Syntagma Square movement was fairly successful at garnering support and driving action, but failed to build a long-term vision which led to its downfall by 2015.

The movement was extremely successful at garnering a broad band of support unprecedented in the two-party Greece, as groups ranging from anarchists to ring-wing nationalists to communists occupied the square together.[309] Small social movement organizations, political organizations, and trade unions collaborated together without a strong sense of electoral incentives, allowing the movement to remain mostly apolitical.[310] The largest actors in the movement before Syntagma Square were the trade unions, GSEE and ADEDY, and even they acted against their pre-established interests in labor in order to support the anti-austerity goal.[311] While most sub-groups still maintained their own interests, there was heavy coalition forming that created a network of loose ties for

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[309] Kanellopoulos, "Political Opportunities, Threats and Opportunism," 96.

[310] Kanellopoulos et al., "Competing Modes of Coordination in the Greek Anti-Austerity Campaign, 2010-2012," 112.

[311] Kanellopoulos, "Political Opportunities, Threats and Opportunism," 96.

collaboration.[312] In a 2015 study published in *Social Movement Studies*, most organizers from distinct sub-units indicated that they were open to cooperation but that they held their group's ideology to be the best.[313] The broad base of the network is one facet of success because it demonstrated the movement's ability to hold a message large enough for different parties to desire involvement in.

Part of the broad base of support can be attributed to the success of the movement in generating and proliferating a narrative of anti-austerity. As mentioned in the forms of protest section, Syntagma Square hosted many journalists who would post on online forums like Indymedia or social media to conjure support.[314] Most the narrative promoted on these online platforms framed the crisis around the Troika, rather than larger structural issues in Greece or neoliberalism more broadly, but the focus on the Troika allowed for right-wing supporters to rally behind the messaging as well.[315] Sotirakopolous and Ntalaka criticized this narrative formation for focusing more on the symptom of the crisis instead of the deeper issue that caused Greece's initial debt crisis.[316] While the diagnosis of the narrative framing is correct, the movement still faced success in being able to proliferate the anti-austerity message to its networks.

Beyond the broad base and messaging success, the movement was additionally able to catalyze its frustrations into a more institutionalized means through the strengthening of the SYRIZA party after 2012. SYRIZA was the only political organization within the

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[312] Kanellopoulos et al., "Competing Modes of Coordination in the Greek Anti-Austerity Campaign, 2010-2012," 111.

[313] Kanellopoulos et al., 111.

[314] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, "From the Streets and the Occupied Squares to the Central Political Field," 77.

[315] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 777.

[316] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 77.

movement that capitalized on a political aperture, but this action resulted in SYRIZA winning seats in both the 2012 and 2014 parliamentary elections.[317] The accomplishment of SYRIZA as a political party can be attributed to its generally anti-capitalistic, pro-EU messaging that felt more tangible than KKE's communism to the Greek voter base.[318] SYRIZA's campaign separated itself dramatically from old politics, drew on the fact that it was a new coalition of left ideas, and appeared stable enough within the broader anti-austerity movements to be able to enact change.[319] The cohesive political front of SYRIZA especially strengthened in 2012 and afterwards as members of KKE and another communist coalition shifted support to SYRIZA as a more viable long-term path to change in Greece.[320] SYRIZA took advantage of a political opportunity successfully and laid out the foundation for sustained progress in the nation.

While the anti-austerity movement was successful at building a wide base, crafting a universal message, and identifying a political opportunity, its successes fell short after 2013 partially due to its failure to solidify a long-term goal for the movement.[321] Protestors who previously belonged to the middle class desired for Greek society to return to a pre-2008 level and leftists wanted to reimagine capitalism and democracy.[322] After the second round of austerity measures passed in 2012, most of the occupiers disbanded from the square and protests occurred on a one-off basis.[323] Even KKE and SYRIZA, who were two of the most suspected allies, disagreed on both the role of capitalism and Greece's future

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[317] Kanellopoulos, "Political Opportunities, Threats and Opportunism," 101.
[318] Kanellopoulos, 101.
[319] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, "From the Streets and the Occupied Squares to the Central Political Field," 93.
[320] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 93.
[321] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 86.
[322] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 87.
[323] Wiltshire, "After Syntagma."

relationship to the EU.[324] Decentralization in the movement caused fractures in future stability and restricted the success of the movement after 2012.

Outcomes from the Movement

Internal cohesion remained limited through the anti-austerity movement, but the movement also enacted outside change onto the broader Greek society through its outcomes. Outcomes have been defined as a movement's ability to enact change on the broader society, which Syntagma Square significantly accomplished through its shifting of Greek political consciousness and voter outcomes. While the movement achieved positive outcomes, it also failed to reverse or alter austerity measures post-2012 and in fact, the SYRIZA party passed additional austerity measures in 2015.[325] The movement's outcomes were limited to an ideological and political realm and did not alter economic outcome as it may have intended.

One of the first political shifts that occurred in the movement was the weakening of elites and institutions, especially through the resignation of PASOK Parliament members in 2011.[326] Initial protests caused this mass resignation, although there was no impact on the eventual passing of the austerity measures.[327] The elites were additionally tied to the existing government, whom people lost further trust in as the protests evolved.[328] While this societal distrust can be attributed to the overall economic downturn, the

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[324] Kanellopoulos, "Political Opportunities, Threats and Opportunism," 97.
[325] Kanellopoulos, 91.
[326] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, "From the Streets and the Occupied Squares to the Central Political Field," 82.
[327] Kanellopoulos, "Political Opportunities, Threats and Opportunism," 91.
[328] Gourgouris, "Greece's Democratic Dreams."

mobilization of the movement allowed for individuals to take action.[329] Gourgouis referred

to this shift as a "radical alteration of Greek political culture," where people used the means

of protesting to identify new norms of political organization through people's assemblies

and separated themselves from traditional institutions like the IMF.[330] The Memorandum

was viewed as a "death sentence on Greek economic life" and encouraged a reimagination

of politics.[331]

 The re-imagination of politics was supposed to occur through the election of

SYRIZA into office, but the international economic pressures caused SYRIZA to

implement further austerity measures. The later austerity measures can be viewed as a

failed outcome of the movement because neoliberalism ideals still ended up heavily

influencing the anti-austerity party. After 2015, SYRIZA formed a coalition with the far-

right independent party to gain majority in Parliament, and shortly afterwards accepted a

deal with the Troika for further austerity such as selling off public businesses and

infrastructure.[332] While SYRIZA campaigned on an anti-memorandum platform, its

actions resulted in distrust from usual allies and organized protests from the KKE and trade

unions.[333] Neoliberalism kept a stronghold on the Greek economy and swayed the party

who vowed against it. The mere fact that the sole political party who advocated against

austerity measures ended up passing more reveals how strong international institutions are

in domestic politics, to a degree even the anti-austerity movement could not contend.

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[329] Gourgouris; Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, "From the Streets and the Occupied Squares to the Central Political Field," 82.
[330] Gourgouris, "Greece's Democratic Dreams."
[331] Gourgouris.
[332] Kanellopoulos, "Political Opportunities, Threats and Opportunism," 91.
[333] Fernández-Savater et al., "Life after the Squares," 139.

Another shift in Greece's relationship to international institutions was its relationship to the European Union. While no laws changed, SYRIZA especially promoted a future vision of the EU where northern countries would financially support southern countries.[334] Support would occur through Eurobonds that would finance infrastructure and social projects in less economically rich countries to encourage the overall strength of the Euro.[335] According to SYRIZA's 2012 campaign slogans, a vote for SYRIZA was a vote to strengthen Greece and other southern countries in the EU who faced repressive pressures from northern leaders like Angela Merkel.[336] The interconnectedness of the Eurozone meant Greece was viewed as a frontier to shift broader neoliberal mechanisms.[337]

Domestically, Greece experienced a shift in its voter demographics away from the conventional parties and towards SYRIZA and KKE. Since 1974, only PASOK and Nea Dimokratia were ever in power and this did not change until the 2012 election.[338] The two-party system remained stable for most of Greek history because of the clientele system, but once citizens stopped believing the two parties could provide for basic privileges, the horizon for other parties widened.[339] This shift can best be seen through voting numbers between 2009 and 2012. Previously, PASOK and ND received collectively 80% of the vote, but those percentages decreased to 42% by June 2012 and 30% by May 2012.[340] The fall of the conventional parties meant for the rise of SYRIZA, where its vote share increased

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[334] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, "From the Streets and the Occupied Squares to the Central Political Field," 93.
[335] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 93.
[336] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 93.
[337] Gourgouris, "Greece's Democratic Dreams."
[338] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, "From the Streets and the Occupied Squares to the Central Political Field," 79.
[339] Sotirakopoulos and Ntalaka, 79.
[340] Kanellopoulos et al., "Competing Modes of Coordination in the Greek Anti-Austerity Campaign, 2010-2012," 91.

from 4.5% in 2009 to 27% in June 2012 and 46% in January 2015.[341][342] It gained a majority of the Parliament for 2015 and fundamentally shifted Greece's two-party history. Even though only 20% of Greek citizens participated in the anti-austerity protests, the 46% of SYRIZA voters reveal how the anti-austerity message carried to a further audience.

The Greek anti-austerity movement shifted how citizens conceived of their government and voting patterns, but had no effect on reversing any austerity measures. Similar to Argentina, this case study demonstrates the difficulties of moving away from neoliberalism. As long as the IMF and EU hold neoliberal principles at the center of their economic policies, it will be nearly impossible for smaller nations to reject austerity measures or neoliberalism more broadly. Financial institutions yield the power and the power is defined through neoliberalism.

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[341] Kanellopoulos et al., 91.
[342] Kanellopoulos et al., 91.

Conclusion

In both Greece and Argentina, citizens mobilized with social movements to try to influence government policy around austerity measures. Social movements are just one means that citizens of a country can take to advocate for change in their country, and they are particularly powerful tools for creating a sense of action and urgency. This thesis analyzed how successful social movements were at impacting their country's economic policy and identified that neither Argentina nor Greece reversed its austerity measures. Both movements were successful at shifting other aspects of society though through establishing political parties or social projects.

Argentina's anti-austerity movement gained popularity after the country's 2001 peso crisis that left 50% of the population living under the poverty line. The *piquetero* movement built on Argentina's strong history of labor unions, but instead focused its attention on opposing austerity measures and securing subsidies for unemployed workers. While the movement failed to reverse any austerity measures, it left a legacy in the social sphere because of its community projects that provided an alternative to state-run resources.

The context of Argentina's movement was particularly relevant as the country had been implementing austerity measures since the 1980s. The 1980s debt crisis resulted in the "lost decade," to which the country responded by privatizing its state-run industries and shifting its economy to follow more neoliberal principles. During this transition period, citizens felt the constraints of neoliberalism as they lost their pensions, state-backed jobs,

and saw their salaries being cut. Initial protests for the *piquetero* movement began in 1996 and involved road blockages outside a recently privatized oil processing facility in the Neuquén province. Similar protests followed between 1996 and 2001 as the neoliberal transition continuously placed Argentineans out of their jobs.

These original protests all utilized the road blockage as their primary form of protest, which was extraordinarily effective at garnering government attention. The road blockages prevented economic activities between regions and placed strain on national logistics networks. The *piqueteros* additionally would coordinate between smaller organizations such as labor unions or political groups to increase the number of participants in the protests. Road blockages could last from a couple hours to weeks, and effectively pressured government officials to come to the negotiating table with the movement.

The *piquetero* movement had a complex relationship to the government, with some factions of the movement wanting to build close relationships and other factions wanting to completely reject any government interaction. This division created an internal tension in the *piquetero* movement with groups like FTV serving on the board to oversee President Duhalde's social programs and other groups like the CCC actively planning blockages through 2003.

As the movement split, Kirchner adopted a dual-strategy approach and launched a media campaign against the non-cooperative groups to decrease public support for the movement. By the end of 2003, the *piquetero* movement lost most of its diverse support network for the road blockages and transitioned to focusing on community projects or negotiating with the government. For the organizations that wanted to work with the government, they ended up controlling how government subsidies were distributed to

citizens and successfully increased subsidies in some communities. For the groups that did not want to work with the government, they started to focus more internally on building up social projects or creating alternative media channels.

The *piquetero* movement lost most of its momentum by 2003 because the economy improved and wages stabilized, but the country still faced its austerity measures. The economic improvement was due to an increase in international commodity prices that allowed the country to bring in higher revenue from taxes and tariffs. As the economy rebounded, unemployment rates decreased and the demands from the unemployed workers weakened. The impact of the austerity measures on civilian lives was less severe because people started earning higher incomes. Because the impact was lessened, protestors also lost momentum in their opposition to the measures, which can be seen through the decrease in public support.

While austerity measures remained, the *piquetero* movement created a network of community-level support organizations that shifted the social sphere of the country. *Comedores* and *empresas recuperadas* were both originally formed as responses to failures in capitalism or the state. Their success during the height of the movement could be attributed to the decentralized decision-making processes employed that allowed those institutions to quickly pivot their programming based on the needs of the community. Decentralized decision-making meant that participants in both organizations could feel their grievances being heard and taken seriously.

Local decision-making in Argentina proved to be successful at sustaining long-term change, as seen through the prevalence of both *comedores* and *empresas recuperadas* today. While the government allocated more state resources to supporting both community-

led initiatives, their relative autonomy reveals that these government-organization relationships can focus primarily on financial support to allow the organizations to maintain their decentralized nature. This form of relationship between civil society organizations and the government was originally experimented with under the Kirchner administration in 2003, and are still employed today because of that success.

Argentina's *piquetero* movement was not successful at its primary goals of reversing austerity measures, but it was successful at identifying state subsidies for the unemployed and offering successful alternatives to state support. Its power as a social movement to enact change occurred primarily on a local level within communities and regional level through state subsidies. It was not able to successfully influence international power, which demonstrates how IMF demands are still in a higher position on the political power hierarchy for Argentina.

The social movement in Greece posed a somewhat similar outcome to the *piquetero* movement as they were not able to reverse austerity measures and instead passed an additional round of them once an anti-austerity political party took over. The case study of Greece reveals how strong the IMF truly can be as even the staunchest opponents of austerity measures passed a third round of them in 2015. Greece's movement was successful though at shifting the political landscape by upending a 60-year-old two party system. Its occupation of the square, creation of alternative media, and focus on assemblies allowed it to also engage a diverse set of actors in the protests that would have traditionally never worked together. Greece's anti-austerity movement demonstrates the power of alliance but warns against the power of the IMF.

Greece's anti-austerity movement began in 2010 with protests around Syntagma Square before the government passed its first round of austerity measures. The movement accelerated in 2011 when Parliament was debating passing another. The movement slowed after a second round of austerity measures were passed in 2012. From 2012 to 2015, there was a divide in the movement between those who wanted to formalize into a political party and those who wanted to oppose government action. This split was similarly seen in Argentina and demonstrates the impact that political opportunity structures can have on the longevity of a movement.

SYRIZA began to mobilize its community in 2011 towards beginning a political party as they saw institutionalization as the primary path to reach their goals. They started gaining national votes in the 2011 Parliamentary election and ended up winning the majority by the 2015 elections. The success of SYRIZA in building a political network reveals how seizing political opportunities can allow for social movements to sustain over a longer period. SYRIZA's success also reversed the 60-year domination of Parliament from the PASOK and Nea Dimokratia parties. Greek citizens were seeking an alternative to the established system and SYRIZA provided that alternative.

Once SYRIZA was in power, they passed an additional round of austerity measures in 2015, despite running on an anti-austerity platform. The additional austerity measures were passed within the same year of their election and demonstrates the amount of influence the IMF still had on the country. In comparison to Argentina, Greece had a worse outcome from the social movement because their political party ended up perpetuating the issue they were trying to resist.

Although the movement was not successful at reversing austerity measures, they did build a diverse set of supporters and strengthened the "felt" sense of democracy lost in Greece. In the square occupation, protestors would engage in nightly conversations where members could all speak for 90-seconds, and horizontal decision-making was employed to decrease the impact of privilege. Given the distrust of the nation in its standing political system, these assemblies allowed citizens to feel connected to the movement and shape the continuously evolving goals.

Assemblies also served as experimentation grounds for social projects, like the projects seen in Argentina. In Greece, their main form of protest was the occupation of Syntagma Square and that occupation included a transformation of the square into a micro-community. Hospitals, education centers, publishing divisions, and kitchens were all established in the city center and in surrounding neighborhoods to support the protestors. These social projects were intended to provide an alternative to state resources, but did not experience the same level of institutional support as the *piquetero* movement's projects. The distinction between the two movements long-term impact is that the *piquetero* movement utilized their distribution of state subsidies to partially fund their social projects, while Greece's anti-austerity movement relied solely upon the donations of participants.

Greece overall had a larger impact on the political landscape than Argentina and this was due to SYRIZA's decision to fully mobilize into a political party. In contrast, Argentina only saw social movements form close allyships with existing political parties and no organization attempted to launch its own completely independent political party. This decision could be attributed to the fact that the Kirchner administration worked to

integrate the demands of social movements into his own policy, so that social movements felt more supported on a governmental level after 2003.

The differences in political party formation between the two movements also could indicate how social movements can best mobilize to achieve their demands. It is difficult to make sweeping claims about how to best utilize political opportunity, but it is important to note that more of the *piquetero*'s demands were met by working collaboratively with the government. SYRIZA's passing of additional austerity measures either reveals how powerful the IMF is in influencing policy or it demonstrates that mobilizing into a political party is not as effective in accomplishing movement goals. This can be a further point of study for this field as identifying how social movements should engage with political opportunity can support the actualization of more social movement goals in the future.

One limitation of this analysis is the role that Internet could play on the success and outcomes of social movements. One distinguishing factor between Argentina and Greece's movements was the role of the internet in broadcasting the movement's goals. On one hand, Argentina's movement occurred before widespread Internet access, so it could not serve as a tool to disseminate the message to a broader audience. Greece, on the other hand, saw its movement's rise in the same year as Facebook's ascension, which allowed it to use the Internet to communicate to a broader audience. Social media and online blogs allowed for thought leaders from the anti-austerity movement to share resources with greater ease and connect to other anti-austerity movements in Europe. The Internet helped accelerate Greece's mobilization, but also could have limited its long-term viability by decreasing the importance of community-level organization.

Another important distinction between the two movements is their differences in the locus of decision-making. For Greece, most of its mobilization occurred around the square and involved one main forum for deliberation. There was no national oversight organization and sub-organizations formed intergroup alliances that were informal and varied. Because of this structure, the movement failed to develop a strong neighborhood-level sense of community that the *piquetero* movement relied heavily on for the success of their social projects. In Argentina, there was a loose national network, but most decisions occurred through community-level groups. There was a specific location-based focus in Argentina that allowed the members of the group to share an identity and interest in their physical neighborhood. It appears as if focusing on the community allowed the *piquetero* movement to build crisis support networks that have remained helpful through the coronavirus pandemic.

It is evident that both Argentina and Greece failed to reverse austerity measures, but they both had different means of impact. Social movements likely cannot impact how a government interacts with international financial institutions as IFIs continue to hold more power through their resources. Countries will still be seeking financial support from international organizations as this is how the global system is currently oriented. Neoliberalism means that countries are incentivized to orient their economies towards global exportation.

Social movements are not a sufficient means to reverse austerity measures. It appears as if right now the only way that nations will not experience austerity measures is if the IMF stops imposing them with their loan packages. For this to occur, the IMF needs

to be intentional with the conditions for its debt and should work more collaboratively with countries to structure debts.

Austerity measures clearly harmed the economic standing of most Greek and Argentinean citizens after their economic crises. While the measures were drafted in attempt to stabilize countries' economies in the long-term by decreasing public expenditures, the short-term impact of these adjustments left citizens in worse positions. In the future, the IMF should consider eliminating austerity requirements with its debt packages for countries currently experiencing economic crises.

In terms of how citizens can influence international policy, social movements are likely not the most effective means. This analysis concluded that social movements could have a significant impact within their communities or countries, but that international institutions still dominate policy recommendation. A further analysis could be conducted of how international social movements might be able to overcome the barriers that Argentina and Greece faced, but we can conclude for now that social movements impact communities more than global politics.

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