URUGUAY'S TURN TO THE LEFT

The role of social organizations and organic intellectuals

MASTER THESIS

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this project is to understand the role of social organizations and intellectuals with regards to their contribution in spreading the vision and principles of the Broad Front as a coalition of left-wing parties and movements in Uruguay, ultimately leading to the party's victory in presidential elections, marking a milestone in Uruguayan history.

To achieve this I have conducted an analysis using two distinct theories. The first one is Antonio Gramsci's Theory of Cultural Hegemony and the second one is Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's Discourse Theory. On the other hand, I have gathered relevant empirical data in order to build up a background of information of the specific country and continent to provide a better understanding of the phenomenon being analysed. Moreover, the relevant qualitative data has been collected in relation to Uruguayan social organizations and intellectuals that have had a significant participation in civil society in the period 1990-2009 and which I have identified to share the same values and principles as the Broad Front. Regarding social organizations, I have firstly studied their worldview in relation to the antagonism and dominant worldview at the time, and I have later analysed the social actions these groups have carried out following this worldview. As for organic intellectuals, I have firstly studied their background in relation to their formal adherence to the Broad Front and secondly, I have identified their most relevant works within the defined time period which have contributed in the most significant way to the spreading of their worldview and of the Broad Front's ideas.

The worldview of the Broad Front is very much shared between the analysed social groups and organic intellectuals. As key actors in the Uruguayan civil society, especially when taking into account the Latin American context of the time, they have had great significance in articulating and spreading the world perspective of the indicated left-wing party, and have indeed contributed to establishing a common sense in line with it in the Uruguayan society. Moreover, social groups have been found to having greater influence in this process due to the quantity and quality of the actions they have carried out.

CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FUCVAM - Uruguayan Federation of Mutual Help Housing Cooperatives (Federación Uruguaya de Cooperativas de Viviendas de Ayuda Mutua)

FEUU - Federation of University Students (Federación de Estudiantes Universitarios)

PIT-CNT - Inter-Union Workers' Plenary - Workers' National Convention (Plenario Intersindical de Trabajadores - Convención Nacional de Trabajadores)

INTRODUCTION

The election of Tabaré Vázquez, candidate for the Broad Front party, in 2004 as the first left-wing president of Uruguay after a more than a century old tradition of a bipartisan political system, has come as a surprise to the Uruguayan society (Gaeda 2018). However, as incredible as it may seem considering the Uruguayan context and historical heritage, this event has followed a tendency observed throughout the great majority of the countries in the Latin American continent. Such tendency started to emerge after a period characterized by governments that carried out economic reforms in line with what was called the "Washington Consensus", promoted by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the U.S. Treasury, and to which Uruguay was not alien (Levitsky and Roberts 2012).

As the neoliberal measures of this period started revealing unwanted results in the social arena, popular participation began gaining increasing relevance in the political sphere, along with the rise left-wing parties, which acquired more and more strength in the political scene and acted as catalysts of popular demands (Levitsky and Roberts 2012). In this context, focusing on Uruguay as the country subject to this project, it is interesting to look into how this process developed, identifying the different actors that intervened and their role in the building of an alternative culture.

This project will focus specifically on social organizations and organic intellectuals, as key components of civil society, and their role in spreading the worldview of the Broad Front, which ultimately aided to the very first victory of this party in a presidential election in Uruguay.

RESEARCH QUESTION

How have Uruguayan social groups and organic intellectuals contributed to building the Broad Front's worldview in the country?

METHODOLOGY

Research perspective

Ontological and epistemological considerations

Ontology refers to the basic assumptions the researcher makes about reality, it is the philosophical basis from which a study or research is conducted. Considering this, in the particular project at hand I take a relativist approach, which is based on the premise that scientific laws are created by people who are part of a particular context, and that in each context, reality and facts depend on the viewpoint of the observer, meaning that there are as many truths as there are observers (Andrews 2016).

Regarding the epistemological approach taken in this project, it consists primarily of the interpretive approach, which states that reality is socially constructed and can therefore only be accessed or studied taking into consideration the conditions it is embedded in. The interpretive approach believes there is no objective reality and that therefore, in order to study any phenomenon, it cannot be taken out of its context (Lumen n.d.). The case of the Uruguayan left and its use of cultural hegemony to reach government spheres will be studied bearing in mind the specificities of the Uruguayan history and context along with those of the Latin American continent, which cannot be ignored (specially bearing in mind that the whole continent shifted to the left within a given time period). To ensure this and to have a deeper understanding of the phenomenon, Uruguayan sources will be used along with sources from various other Latin American countries. It is important that this process and the Uruguayan reality is understood as embedded in the Latin American context, which possesses several particularities that the region's leftist groups have felt influenced by, such as colonialism and the US' influence in the continent. Additionally, the rise of the Latin American left at the end of the 20th century has followed different patterns of development than other efforts made by left wing parties in other regions of the world, and have been regarded as rather successful when compared to these attempts.

Further acknowledging the relativist approach, Georges L. Bastin states that "regardless of researchers' intentions to be rigorous, they cannot escape their 'worldview'" (Bastin 2017, 269). Following this statement, I intend to recognize that my standpoint conducting this research is shaped by my particular worldview, meaning that the perspective, interpretations and direction of this project is affected by my experiences. In this particular case, this can be

beneficial to the research as I am Uruguayan and I therefore have an intrinsic understanding of the Uruguayan society.

Research approach

To answer my research question, I will use a deductive approach. The starting point of a deductive approach requires establishing a particular hypothesis based on an existent theory and testing that hypothesis by collecting the pertinent data and analysing it (Dudovskiy n.d). In this case, I start from the assumption that the Uruguayan left, mainly represented by the Broad Front party, has carried out a process aimed at establishing their worldview as hegemonic in their pursue of political power since the creation of the broad front in 1971. For this I analyse empirical qualitative data to understand the role of the main social groups and organic intellectuals associated to this party, in the entire process, reaching a final conclusion.

Structure of the project

The aim of this project is to comprehend the role of social groups and organic intellectuals in the process of building up a new worldview in Uruguayan society which is in line with the Broad Front's social, economic and political vision. To do this, I will build up a background of the Latin American context at the time, then briefly explain Uruguay's historical background and the country's general situation at the time. Moreover, I will explain the Broad Front's worldview, as it is important to understand which is the vision intended to be established. An analysis will be conducted firstly to understand the worldview the selected social groups have and their antagonisms with the dominant views. Secondly, I will analyse the social actions they have carried out that reflect this worldview. The social groups selected are FUCVAM, FEUU and PIT-CNT since, as it will be explained in more depth later, they have shown a strong relationship with the Broad Front and an adherence its worldview. To further deepen the analysis I have identified to intellectuals which, to my understanding, are the most relevant to the case as they have acknowledged their formal affiliation to the Broad Front and who have been part of the Broad Front government when this party reached office. I based my selection of these intellectuals on their history as militants for the party and their explicit affiliation to it, an element which is significant in order to consider them organic intellectuals, as there are other profiles of Uruguayan scholars which might share the Broad Front's views but do not specifically affiliate themselves to the party.

Choice of Uruguay and time period

I chose to study the particular case of Uruguay as it is quite a unique case in the Latin American region. From not long after its first Constitution was established in 1830 and until 1971 there existed only two traditional parties which governed for 170 years, until in 2005. The first left-wing party to emerge in the country, Frente Amplio (Broad Front) which was created in 1971, was elected in presidential elections and consequently governed for 15 years (3 presidential terms, until the current year). I am interested in analysing how this situation came about and developed until the Broad Front won the elections, and how it was maintained after that moment. Therefore, the period analysed in this project will go from 1990, year in which the Broad Front was elected for the Montevideo Municipal government, until 2009, the last year of the Broad Front's first government.

Choice of data

The investigation of this paper consists of qualitative data in the form of primary sources, including left intellectuals publications, official government and party documents, political parties' speeches fragments, unions' and social movements publications and statements. I will use these sources to analyse the worldview of the selected social groups and the social actions they have carried out that reflect this worldview. Additionally secondary sources, such as media news will be used as well as academic articles and textbooks concerning the topic of the Uruguayan left and its line of thought, which will be used to support the analysis of the primary data. The academic articles and books chosen provide studies and research which I find relevant to answer the posed research question, and whose authors prove of relevance to the topic at hand due to their academic background. Moreover, the scholars selected are mostly Uruguayan, in order to ensure respect the ontological and epistemological considerations of the project. Furthermore, the gathered data will be also applied to build up background knowledge to help achieve an understanding of the framework of the Uruguayan left and its political victory by means of cultural hegemony. I have chosen and reviewed the sources based on their pertinence, credibility and objectivity of the authors, publishers, the publication dates and due to the author's academic backgrounds which are relevant to the chosen topic. As a result of this, the great majority of

the selected authors are Uruguayan, such as Carlos Moreira, Sebastian Aguiar, Adolfo Garcé, Jaime Yaffé, Gustavo González, among others.

Choice of the Theory Framework

In order to understand the process of how the Broad Front in Uruguay reached the Presidency, considering the country had always been governed by two firmly established center-right political parties, I have chosen two different but complementary theoretical approaches, which are Gramsci's Theory of Cultural Hegemony and Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's Discourse Theory. These theories are intended to be used in combination in order to provide a profound understanding of the chosen topic.

Due to the coming to power of the left in Uruguay by means of democratic elections, after a very long period in which a very different political stream was dominant, it is important to understand how this process came about not only in the political sphere but also in the cultural realm. Therefore, I chose the Cultural Hegemony theory of Gramsci to analyze how this process was carried out focusing on the organic intellectuals and the social groups that influenced the Uruguayan society. In this sense I will study the way in which the leftist perspective was produced and spread through these intellectuals and groups and how it was perpetuated until after the Broad Front won the first presidential election. Due to the complexity of Gramsci's writings, I will utilize different scholars reviews of his work, mainly Thomas Bates and his essay titled (1975) "Gramsci and the Theory of Hegemony" and Mark Stoddart's "Ideology, Hegemony, Discourse: A Critical Review of Theories of Knowledge and Power" (2007). Additionally, I will take into consideration the understanding of Gramsci's theory in Latin America, by using the work of Burgos and Perez (2002) titled "The Gramscian Intervention in the Theoretical and Political Production of the Latin American Left", in order to compliment the analisis with a Latin American perspective.

To further analyze the data with regards to my research question I have chosen Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's Discourse Theory, however, only focusing on its application to social phenomena and not discourse analysis, due to its understanding of how subject and group identities are constructed through discourse and their importance establishing a particular line of ideas or meaning that seems "real" or "objective" in the social and political spheres within a State. In this case I have referred to their book Hegemony and Socialist Strategy. Towards a Radical Democratic (1985), also including other scholar's analysis of

their theory to achieve a deeper understanding of it, which are Marianne Jørgensen and Louise Phillips' "Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method" (2002) and the previously introduced scholar Mark Stoddart, who also provides a review of Laclau and Mouffe's theory in the aforementioned paper. I use Laclau and Mouffe's theory, as it closely relates to Gramsci's Theory of Hegemony, applying it to the analysis of social groups, how they have established their identity as a group and how they have carried out their intentions of establishing an objective meaning of reality in relation to their worldview, in line with the Broad Front's vision and contributing to the expansion of this vision.

Limitations

The analysis of this study has to be seen in light of some limitations. Although the chosen theories are very comprehensive regarding the selected topic and research question, the access to information regarding the chosen time period has been especially complicated, as from Uruguay there is not an extensive array of digitalized sources, especially from the end of the 20th century and before. Moreover, in the search of organic intellectuals, the amount of intellectuals who have expressed explicit adherence to the Broad Front was limited. Other intellectuals which were reviewed showed a similar vision to that of this party but could not be considered as organic intellectuals due to the lack of this explicit pronunciation in favor of the party.

THEORIES

Gramci's Cultural Hegemony theory

Gramsci developed his theory about hegemony during his time in prison, after his arrest in 1926 by Mussolini's fascist regime. This theory is not structured as such or written in a orderly manner, as it was developed throughout his Prison Notebooks, but where the idea of hegemony is clearly identified as central (Bates 1975, 351). He explains this concept as one alternative of social power, in opposition to State coercion, which is the State's capability of using force against those individuals that do not accept to participate in the capitalist system's production relations (Stoddart 2007, 201). Conversely, Gramsci's concept of hegemony, although he does not specifically define it, is based on the thesis that individuals are not only ruled by force but by ideas, and it is through the spreading and proliferation of their ideas (hegemony) that a group or individual can attain political leadership (Bates 1975, 351-352). In this sense, hegemony is based on the masses' almost unknowingly and passive acceptance of the ruling classes' ideas, which become part of their worldview and their guiding principles in everyday matters. Moreover, hegemony is not merely a system of ideas, but it is comprised of "experiences, relationships and activities"[1] which, in a way, functions as the common sense underlying people's behavior (Stoddart 2007, 201- 202).

According to Gramsci, Marx's concept of "superstructure" is not a reflection of a State's socioeconomic organization (the base), but this superstructure consists of two parts; the "civil society" and the "political society". The first being constituted of private entities or organizations, such as schools, churches, the media, parties, etc., while the second is formed by public institutions, like the government, the police and the army. The civil society is the intellectuals' action field, it is the sphere where they spread the ideas of the ruling class for this group to gain approval from the rest of society without the use of violence, but through hegemony (Bates 1975, 353). And it is not only intellectuals that expand the hegemonic power, but also the different entities within civil society , those that form the subaltern classes (as opposed to the ruling one) along with revolutionary political parties (Stoddart 2007, 202). According to Gramsci all of these groups must perform an educative role of the masses to for the social transformation process to take place and a new culture emerges (Landy 2009, 111).

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[1] Williams as cited by Stoddart 2007, 202

It is important to understand the specific concept of intellectuals Gramsci referred to when talking about those intellectuals in charge of disseminating a certain worldview for it to become hegemonic. He defines intellectuals a group of social agents which not only includes scholars but also those individuals that occupy technical or directive positions in a particular society and in a way organize culture, which include government officials, administrators, politicians and managers in the industrial sector. At the same time, he divides these groups in two segments, vertical and horizontal . The first refers to "directos", who organize society as a whole, and "specialists", who do the same but for the capitalists in the industrial sector, while the latter is divided in "traditional" and "organic" intellectuals (Ramos 1982).

Traditional intellectuals are not linked to a particular social class or political stream and relate to previous intellectuals, while the organic intellectuals are part of a particular social group or class, or form an alliance with it, which is a result of that society's economic structure, as each class creates its own intellectuals, and therefore provide this group a social awareness regarding its purpose in the social, economic and political spheres. Regarding intellectuals' position in society, it can be said that those in the vertical dimension, as defined in the previous paragraph, belong to civil society, the specialists linking civil society and the economic structure. On the other hand, in the horizontal dimension, organic intellectuals represent the dominant class in the coercive institutions of political society, while traditional intellectuals obtain consent from the masses within civil society. However, in a struggle over hegemony between different social groups, the organic intellectuals of the group which intends on becoming hegemonic, instead of focusing on reaching coercive means of domination, it should focus on attaining the masses consent, through a "war of position" (Ramos 1982) a term which will be explained later in this chapter.

Gramsci explains that modern capitalist societies are characterized by the use of hegemonic power instead of coercion, and he does not believe that radical change in these type of societies can be realized by revolutionary groups only taking over the means of production, rather, he affirms that a sustained war of position in the cultural sphere must be undertaken by the mentioned groups in civil society, in order to dissolve the ruling classes' hegemony. However, this is not a simple task. Gramsci states that attaining total hegemony within a society is not possible, as the process of establishing hegemonic domination has its very basis in the dispute between hegemony and counter-hegemony, and it is through social action that one or the other is better disseminated and becomes more popular (Stoddart 2007, 201-202). When total consent from the masses is not attained, the State apparatus steps in to discipline those who do not agree with the ruling classes' ideas, by using coercion (Bates 1975, 353).

"War of position" and "war of movement"

Going back to the aforementioned concept of war of position, this is one of the strategies Gramsci suggests for dismantling an existing government, as an alternative to a "war of movement", which is best to be performed in States with weakly rooted governments, and would mean to directly defy government authority, possibly involving a revolution. In contrast, a war of position should be carried out in States with a firmly established and legitimized government, and implies a steady and prolonged struggle in the cultural realm to gain ideological domination over the subaltern groups in society (Kurtz 1996). In general terms, this hegemonic struggle corresponds to a struggle "for the "appropriation" (...) of ideological elements"[2], that is, for the group which aspires to attain hegemony to rearticulate the old ideology components into their particular discourse in order to build consensus over a new worldview (Ramos 1982). In this sense, Gramsci believes that innovation in language is paramount to creating a new hegemony and that there are several sources of this type of innovation, which are the school, the media, theater and cinema, public and religious gatherings and events and popular as well as artistic writers. He states that language cannot be considered as something objective separated from social life, and, as language changes and terms acquire new meanings, so does the culture that language is part of, and the worldview it conveys (Landy 2009, 12).

Gramsci identifies certain elements that comprise the dominant culture, which he believed need to be consented by society to achieve hegemony, and which need to be taken into account when carrying out wars of position. These are are the "values, norms, perceptions, beliefs, sentiments and prejudices"[3] which determine the distribution of goods in a society, the institutions that intervene in this process, and the acceptable degree of disagreement towards them (Lears 1985, 569). Moreover, he states that when realizing a war of position, those groups trying to establish a new hegemony have to identify the "organic crises" within the social, political and economic spheres, which are situations where the worldview prevailing up to that moment weakens and individuals no longer share their leaders' ideas, which makes them abandon traditional parties. In such a scenario, many possible situations could take place, such as a new leader being chosen by the weakened but still ruling class to save them from destruction, but who becomes a tyrant towards the masses and eliminates all opposition. Another scenario could be the struggle between both the old

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[2] Ramos 1982
[3] Lears 1985, 569

leaders and the revolutionary groups which leads to an elimination of both sides, giving way the failed State's to an external power (Bates 1975, 364).

According to Gramsci, hegemony and dictatorship where two concepts that could not exist in reality without the other, although one always predominates. In his work *Il Materialismo Storico*, he explains how in Italy the Liberal Italy party was as authoritarian as Socialist Russia, and how in both cases, due to their lack of hegemony and consequently lack of the masses consent of their ideas, they had to resort to the use of force. He referred to these kind of societies, authoritarian ones, where there was no commonly accepted view of how it should be organized and where the use of coercion was predominant, as "economico-corporative" societies (Bates 1975, 354). Additionally, he believed it was logical that every major socio-political transformation led by any social class began with a period of dictatorship, which would last until the views of the ruling class regarding the transformation of the economic structure was accepted by the vast majority of the population. After this a period of peace would follow, where dictatorship would no longer be needed and hegemony would take its place (Bates 1975, 355).

One problem Gramsci was indeed concerned with, was the clear "indifference" of the masses towards revolutionaries' claims, which he explained reflected how the ruling class had succeeded in using the cultural sphere to subordinate the masses to their world view. But, for this to change so that revolutionaries' views are shared by the masses, Gramsci states that there needs to be an ideological struggle of opposing views, or "hegemonies", in society, to create a class consciousness, for individuals from the non-ruling-class to become aware of the fact that they belong to a specific group with a specific worldview, and can later develop their own view of reality. According to Gramsci, in this process, the part played by intellectuals is essential as they are the ones that provide a sense of leadership and organization for the masses in the hegemonic struggle (Bates 1975, pp360).

Regarding the age groups that should carry out the education of the masses, Gramsci believed that "the older generation always educate the young". He explains how there is a "generation gap" within the bourgeois, as the elders have failed in educating their youth, and the latter have resorted to the elders of the working class for guidance. According to Gramsci, the bourgeoisie have made insufficient use of intellectuals, whose influence is not enough to retain their young (he believes that specially the progressive intellectuals, have a much stronger influence than those from other social groups). However, he indicates that in times of crisis, the young bourgeois then return to their original group, as evidenced in the crisis of the Italian State in the beginning of the 1900s (Bates 1975, 353-361).

Gramsci explains that for hegemony to be used in certain regime, the correct balance between force and consent must exist, for it to seem like the use of force is supported by the masses. To create the impression that the people consent the use of force, the "parliamentary game"[4], as Bates describes it, is crucial, and it is those in the highest government spheres that have the edge in this game thanks to their superior position. They not only hold an advantage regarding parliament but also regarding ¨public opinion¨, something Gramsci finds crucial in his theory of hegemony. Public opinion is what links civil society and political society, previously defined, as it reflects society's level of consent towards a State's actions. If or when a State decides to take certain measures that believes will not be well received by the masses, before doing so, it first changes certain elements in civil society to promote positive public opinion towards them (Bates 1975, 363).

Lastly, but nevertheless important, Gramsci did not agree in any way with those left-wing intellectuals that justify the immoral or criminal actions carried out by revolutionaries towards the ruling class, since, to ethically approve and enforce this type of conduct, inferior to that of the ruling class, will make it impossible to replace it. According to Gramsci, the immoral, will never be able to build a new order, only those who are strong and righteous can really create a new culture which proves its "historical superiority"[5] and replaces the old one (Bates 1975, 365).

Gramsci in Latin America

In Latin America, Gramsci's ideas began proliferating in the mid 20th century, mainly in Argentina and Brazil. With the Cuban Revolution, Gramsci's theories started being introduced and to gain more importance in academia. In the 1970's, many Latin American countries had terrible dictatorial regimes, which served as the ideal environment for the Latin American left to reflect on the reasons why the old and radical leftist groups that arose during the 60's decade, did not succeed in their reformist projects. At the time, the view embedded in the Latin American left of how to achieve a socialist State followed the Leninist theory of revolution, which basically consisted of the revolutionary proletarian groups' political vanguard taking over the State apparatus and from that position carrying out the socialist revolution by transferring ownership of the key means of production to the State. According to Burgos and Perez, this theory had two underlying premises which needed to be denounced. The first one is that the subject group in which the revolutionary process

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[4] Bates 1975, 363
[5] Bates 1975, 365

focuses on is the proletarian class and the second is the State's seizure of the main means of production (Burgos & Perez 2002, 11-15). Moreover, the previous vision Latin American communist parties shared followed the Communist International's principles, which ignored the particular national context and history of each nation-State (Allen & Ouviña 2017).

In the 1970's, the Leninist revolutionary model started to be challenged by the Latin American left, and a new perspective on how to forge a socialist system was developed following Gramsci's thought. The way to achieve socialism was no longer considered to be the seizure of power in Marxist-Leninist terms, rather, it was by means of hegemony, built through civil society that a social transformation would be achieved (Burgos & Perez 2002). In addition to this, the introduction of Gramsci's ideas motivated the Latin American left to incorporate the specificities of their regional and national contexts (impoverished and mostly peasant societies, a week bourgeois class and well established authoritarian regimes) (Allen & Ouviña 2017). To reach power by means of establishing a new hegemony, the main premises of this new perspective where the following:

1) A revolution consists of a social process and cultural struggle, which Gramsci defines as a war of positions, in which new power relations are built, and not a single revolutionary act in the economic sphere. An example of this can be seen in the Brazilian workers party (Partido dos Trabalhadores) that expressed, in their First Congress, their understanding that the construction of a socialist regime could not be considered completed at the moment of reaching power, but that the democratic consolidation of a single political and cultural hegemony needed to be achieved after this (Burgos & Perez 2002).

2) Instead of a violent seizure of power, new power relations must be built to dissolve the old hegemony and create a new one. For this, the action of social movements should prevail over that of the State, which follows Gramsci's idea of political society being absorbed by civil society. And in this sense, hegemony must be understood as the process through which civil society is the one in charge of engineering a hegemonic power (Burgos & Perez 2002, 16).

3) The idea of socialism becomes equal to that of radical democracy in the political, social and economic arena. This idea of radical democracy follows Gramsci's notion of a society governing itself without outside influence or assistance, a "self-regulated society". According to Arico (cited by Burgos & Perez 2002) a new culture or organization form must be created, one that enables subjects to engage in public

affairs following to their own will, and in this way establishing a new type of democracy. This is basically what the Latin American left defines as participatory democracy as opposed to the "bourgeois representative democracy" (Burgos & Perez 2002).

4) The notion of diverse and heterogeneous subaltern groups replaces the idea of the proletarian or working class as the center figure and the driver of the socialist transformation. The Workers Party in Brazil, in their First Congress, reflected this vision as it expressed how oppression is not only dependent on class but also gender and race (Burgos & Perez 2002, 17)

5) With the Gramscian perspective, the political party and social movements maintain a relationship of equality, the first is regarded as a representative of the latter's interests and demands in the public sector (Burgos & Perez 2002, 18).

Lauclau and Mouffe's Discourse Theory

The concept of discourse Laclau and Mouffe develop in their book *Hegemony and socialist strategy: towards a radical democratic politics* (1985) does not apply just to the linguistic analysis but also to all social events. Opposite to Gramsci, who, as Marxist theorists, believes social classes exist objectively and all individuals belong to one knowingly or not, Laclau and Mouffe affirm that, just as with language, social groups and identity are not and can never be completely fixed or be considered objective facts, rather, they can be modified or adjusted. However this does not mean that everything is constantly changing, the social maintains a partial and temporary structure. Consequently, for them, an objective or "real" society does not exist, what exists is our own construction of society that only appears to be objective or real, and which is a result of the discursive struggle (Laclau & Mouffe 1985).

Since, as mentioned before, social phenomena are constructed by discourse as well, they can be analysed in the same way as language. For instance, as signs in language acquire their meaning by the difference in relation to other signs, the same happens with social events in relation to other different social events. Therefore, it can be said that all social actions are articulations, as they establish relations with other social actions, creating a unity of meaning (Laclau & Mouffe 1985).

Regarding the importance of political processes, they again differentiate from Gramsci. Gramsci posed that the economic base has an impact on the superstructure (civil society + political society) and that at the same time the political society in the latter influences the economy. For Laclau and Mouffe, it is only political discourse that influences the economic structure in a State and therefore how society is built, and not the other way around (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002, 9).

For Laclau and Mouffe, politics is the "the organisation of society in a particular way that excludes all other possible ways."[6]. Here again, they reflect how discourse encompasses our entire reality by understanding politics as the aggregate of processes that articulate discourse in an existing way or modify it, which ultimately determines the construction of society. Discourses that are fixed and seen as natural, the authors call "objective", and acquire this status as a result of political struggle throughout history, however, this does not mean their objectivity cannot be disputed and even changed by new political articulations. In society, there is a permanent political struggle among different discourses for one of them to become hegemonic, that is, for a consensus to be reached when a particular discourse becomes objective (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002).

Individual and group identity

For Laclau and Mouffe, just as the social exists through discursive processes so does individual and group identity. Regarding individual identity, they believe it is discourse that determines the positions and relations of individuals within society and not the economy: " Discourses always designate positions for people to occupy as subjects."[7] Individuals do not occupy a single position in society or are part of a single discourse, they can be positioned in multiple ways and in multiple discourses, even without noticing and without these positions coming into conflict with each other. For example, a man in a family can be a father and a son, in his work he can be an employee, at a birthday party he can be a guest, and so on. However, for an individual, conflict can emerge if opposing subject positions converge in the same social environment. Laclau and Mouffe call this situation overdetermination, and state that subject positions are in a constant struggle and therefore individuals are always overdetermined. A single position cannot be objectively established on a subject in an objective way, however, those positions that are not in an evident or visible struggle and that are regarded as natural or objective, are the result of a previous hegemonic contest which has triumphed over other subject positions (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002, 15).

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[6] Jørgensen & Phillips 2002, 11
[7] Jørgensen & Phillips 2002, 15

With regards to group formation, they state that the way groups are constructed is by prioritizing some subject positions over others, by leaving other possible identifications aside. For groups to be formed based on a single identity, chains of equivalence are created, which focus on a single identity all the group members have in common and ignores other alternative identities or differences between them. The example the authors set in this case is the group "blacks", and how other groups, for example white people in certain countries, where identified as a separate group by contrasting themselves with the "blacks", even though in many cases individuals from different groups can have more things or traits in common than with other individuals from their same group. Therefore, in group formation, one position is identified as principal and the differences between the members are ignored, becoming a political process (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002, 17). Laclau and Mouffe do not agree with the Marxist proposition that individuals' political identity derives from their class position, rather, they understand political identity as constructed collectively through discursive processes which create "relations of equivalence between subject positions"[8]. A political identity based on discourses of equivalence of the working class can certainly be created, however, political identity and social power can also emerge based on many alternative factors than socioeconomic position, which is clearly reflected in the emergence of newer social movements that base their formation, for instance, on gender, ethnic factors or sexuality (Stoddart 2007, 207).

A key aspect of group formation is representation. As Laclau and Mouffe believe groups do not exist objectively but are created once an individual speaks of them, to them or on behalf of them, that is, through discursive practice, formation and representation of the group happen at the same time. Representation of a group means an individual can represent the totality of the group when in a different physical space, for which there has to be an agreement between them for the specific person to be the representative. A group is formed and represented under a specific identity and in a specific social context, that is, by its distinction from other groups with a different identity that are represented and are part of that same social context. As a result of the formation of different groups a struggle between them for their meaning or worldview to be regarded as natural or objective emerges. At the same time, different views of society generate a division into multiple groups. Here, the authors show the examples of two different views of society and how they create different groups, for example, a class struggle understanding believes society is divided in different classes which are in constant confrontation, on the other hand, a feminist view of society considers a division based on gender (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002, 18- 19).

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[8] Stoddart 2007, 207

When there is conflict between identities, in the sense that the identities are antagonic and exclude each other, and can therefore potentially challenge each others' meaning fixation, a hegemonic intervention can be performed in favour of one particular discourse, which means that, one discourse or identity is imposed over another by means of articulating its elements in a different way. In this sense, it can be said that "hegemony" in the Gramscian sense and "discourse" are rather analogous terms, as they both describe the fixation of meaning (Jørgensen & Phillips 2002, 19)

BACKGROUND

Latin American context 1990 - 2009

The collapse of the Soviet Union with the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, although formally dissolved in December 1991, meant a turning point for the left all around the world, and specially in Latin America. Across the continent, socialist movements and parties were forced to reinvent themselves and find a different approach carry out their project, which could no longer involve a violent revolution, but had to be done through democratic means (Laje & Marquez 2017, 9). This event came about at the same time that in Latin America, at the beginning of the 90s there was a growing discontent with the reforms made by the so-called "neoliberal" governments since the beginning of the 80s. This led to what has been named the Latin American "pink tide" that swept across the continent in the end of the 20th century and beginning of the 21st, which meant an unprecedented wave of left governments coming to power (Burbach, Fox, Fuentes 2013, 19) beginning with Hugo Chavez' victory in Venezuela in 1998. After this, in 2000, came the election of Ricardo Lagos in Chile, the Workers' Party leader Luis Inacio Lula da Silva in 2002 in Brazil, Nestor Kirchner in Argentina in 2003, Tabare Vazquez in Uruguay in 2004, Evo Morales in Bolivia in 2005, one year later Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua and in that same year Rafael Correa was elected president of Ecuador. Towards the end of the decade Fernando Lugo won the elections in Paraguay and Mauricio Funes in El Salvador. Moreover, many of these governments were later re-elected, and by the end of the decade, in 2009, almost two thirds of Latin American countries had left wing or left leaning governments (Levitsky and Roberts, 2012, 1).

Uruguay context 1990 - 2009

Uruguay has a long-standing democratic tradition, initiated in 1917 after a reform of the electoral system, which was marked by a bipartisan system held between the National (or Blanco) party and the Colorado party since the 1830's, both center-right parties. Further deepening the democratic structure, in the first years of the 20th century the political participation was extended to include european immigrants, in 1932 the women's suffrage was approved and ten years later women were allowed to be part of Congress for the first time. Moreover, the political arena was rapidly diversified, with the creation of the Socialist Party in 1910 and the Communist party in 1921, along with the emergence social

movements and associations, such as students organizations and workers unions, which became increasingly influential in the political sphere (Lissidini 2016).

The long-standing Uruguayan democratic tradition was interrupted in 1973, when the military took power and established a dictatorship which lasted 13 years (Winn & Ferro-clerico, 488-450). During this period, the so-called "neoliberal" model started being implemented gradually since the time of the military dictatorship, during which several measures were taken in line with this model, such as the liberalization of the financial system, incentives given to FDI, the stimulation of exports through the industrial promotion law, etc. During the 90s decade, the governments of Lacalle (National Party) and Sanguinetti (Colorado Party) furthered the structural reforms of the economy and consolidated the neoliberal model (Alvayay & Rojas 1993). The result of this was a decreasing standard of living for the Uruguayan working class and along with it a growing social discontent. In the first years of the 21st century, more precisely in 2002, what is regarded as the worst economic crisis in Uruguay in the last 70 years erupted, a critical situation which deepened the gravity of society's economic situation (Gonzalez 2010).

In the political field, years after the democratic order was restored, in the 1990s presidential elections, the Frente Amplio was already considered part of the political tradition, with an increasing share of voters. This increase in voters was partly explained by a disillusionment in the traditional parties that were regarded as unable to solve the country's growth problems (Winn & Ferro-clerico, 488-450). The victory in the 2004 presidential elections of Tabaré Vázquez, the candidate of the center-left coalition Broad Front ("Frente Amplio") brought to an end the country's centenary bipartisan system (Schamis 2006, 26). The Frente Amplio coalition consisted, and still does, of the Uruguayan Communist Party, the Uruguayan Socialist Party and several other left-wing political movements which came together to form a single party in 1971.

It is important to point out that Vazquez was not new to the political scene, he had been Mayor of Montevideo from 1990 to 1994 (Winn & Ferro-clerico, 488-450). His presidential term from 2005 to 2009 was the first of three consecutive terms (15 years) in which the elected president was from the Broad Front, before the center-right presidential candidate Luis Lacalle Pou, from the National party, won the elections in 2019. After Vazquez' first mandate, José Mujica was elected president, and after he completed his term, Vazquez was elected president again in 2014. It is clear that since the end of the 20th century the Frente Amplio has become a major political force in Uruguay (Gaeda 2018, 5).

Worldview of the Broad Front

The Broad Front is a coalition of almost 30 Uruguayan left wing movements and parties which came together in 1971. It defines itself as a "political force for change and social justice, with a nationalist, progressive, democratic, anti-oligarchy and anti-imperialism conception"[9] (FA 2019,1). It has been characterized by a statist ideology that defends the role of the State as central in the planification of the economy, which does not trust in the market as the single entity that was able to distribute the resources evenly within society and ensuring growth and equality, completely opposing liberal thought, believing the rules of the free market only benefit the dominant classes and maintain imperialistic system (Garcé & Yaffé 2005).

Additionally, their conception of democracy is a combination of political participation and social justice, and proposed a deepening of democracy by extending the mechanisms of direct democracy and thus increasing citizens' participation and control of the State.This conception is reflected in the following statement by Tabare Vazquez: "It is about going forwards towards the development of a model which allows to reconcile (...) growth, wealth distribution with social justice, national and regional sovereignty, the comprehensive realization of men and women, freedom and the most broad political participation". Along this line, it also puts a great emphasis in the role of civil society and the organizations within it as key drivers of the articulation and implementation of public policies (Garcé & Yaffé 2005)..

It is important to point out that from its inception, the Broad Front's ideology has had a substantial change. It has changed its discourse of socialist revolution and seizure of power from 1971 to the necessity of winning democratic elections in order to reach power. Moreover, the notion of a real and achievable socialist project in a nearby future is now considered almost an utopia by this party. However, the values and principles that have shaped the Broad Front's identity are still very much present, the values of equality, justice and solidarity (Garcé & Yaffé 2005)

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[9] Statue of the Broad Front

ANALYSIS

Social movements and organizations

Regarding social movements, the case of Uruguay is a rather interesting case to analyse within the Latin American context due to the fact that society's struggles have traditionally been carried out mainly through institutionalized parties in the political arena. However, in the transition to democracy, after the military dictatorship, social movements, along with different trade unions, started to gain major influence in the social and political sphere as a result of their efforts to promote this transition. During the first years after the restoration of the democratic order, their demands focused on the search of truth and justice regarding the "desaparecidos", especially during the 90s and the first years of the following century, a period during which their claims were directed at the Blancos and Colorados parties, which successively won the presidential elections (Moreira 2010, 283-290). In this period, the movements with the most protagonism in the political and social scene were the labour movement central PIT-CNT, the cooperative movement FUCVAM and the student movement (Castro et. al 2012). As their demands were not met by the traditional parties, they started to gravitate towards the Frente Amplio, and a larger progressive bloc started to form, which gained increasing importance and played a crucial role in the before mentioned 2002 economic crisis that hit the country (Moreira 2010, 283-290). This period prior to the economic crisis can also be linked to Gramsci's notion of organic crisis, during which the worldview of the dominant neoliberal groups that prevailed was deeply weekend, specially by the economic crisis in 2002 and thus, as reality shows, the rest of society abandoned the traditional Colorado and National parties and in 2004 the Broad Front was elected.

In the below paragraphs will analyse these movements in relation to their role in contributing to build a new hegemony associated with the left and specifically to the rise of the Broad Front.

FUCVAM

Analysis of their Declaration of principles

This association was founded in 1970, as an organization that groups several housing cooperatives (FUCVAM 1999). Firstly, for the sake of the analysis, it is important to understand what are their principles and worldview. In their Declaration of Principles from

1999, published in their website, they start by declaring themselves as a cooperative movement born from the very core of the working class and that has been linked to the union trade movement since its inception. Moreover, they state the movement has taken a "series of strategic definitions of a totally classist character"[10] indicating that cooperativism, as they regard it, is not limited only to housing but comprises all the class' necessities, and that their classist framework leads them to have a clearly defined stance regarding the conflicts that arise in the Uruguayan society. They also declare the movement forms part of a popular block which is different from the dominant one (FUCVAM 1999). Firstly, utilizing Gramsci's framework, it can be identified how FUCVAM is part of civil society, as it is a private organization and not a public institution. In the very beginning it is made clear that the movement identifies itself as part of the working class and that the objectives it pursues and their demands are then directly related to the movement's working class identity. Here we can see Gramsci's thought reflected in the sense that is a movement which is composed of the working class, as opposed to the bourgeois ruling class of the time, but at the same time, considering the perception of Gramsci in Latin America, we see how a social movement is one of the main actors in the cultural struggle. Additionally, we see Laclau and Mouffe's concept of chain of equivalence reflected, in the sense that this group's formation is clearly based on a working class identity, (they state this themselves) the identity all members have in common, leaving all other subject positions aside.

Later on, they state that the movement utilizes a system of workers Direct Democracy, exercised through an Assembly in each neighborhood by every member of the cooperative, where each of them represents a vote. They indicate this system is associated to the cooperative's self-managed functioning which is an essential part of their process of social transformation. They also state that this type of democracy leads them to see the possibility of a wider sphere for decision-making, from the family, to the community and later on to the social-political sphere (FUCVAM 1999, 1). Here, the concept of Direct Democracy is equal to that of "radical democracy" in the Latin American understanding of Gramsci's idea of a self-regulated society. Also, they defend self-management as a way to prevent the influence or intervention of third parties in the Federation's decision-making process, which is precisely what radical democracy stands for. Moreover, they do not want to limit radical democracy to the functioning of the cooperatives within the Federation, but they intend a transformation of society, through what they later indicate as processes of formation and education, which I will study later in this analysis.

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[10] FUCVAM 1999, Declaration of Principles

One of the objectives they state in the Declaration is to establish a policy of relationships with all other organizations which pursue the same objectives as FUCVAM, this way, consolidating an alternative social bloc that makes popular proposals feasible. They also intend to promote the Federation as a guiding or leading group within the social and political spheres. It can be said that, in a way, they establish chains of equivalence, as defined by Laclau and Mouffe, but with other social movements which seek to achieve the same goals, focusing on these equal goals as determinant of an equivalent "identity" between the groups, in order to create a unified social bloc, and leaving out those groups which do not have the same objectives.

Finally they state that the continuous recessive economic policies, inspired in neoliberalism, have resulted in unemployment, marginalization, low salaries, etc., issues that, at the time, were being articulated by many plural movements, with a wide capacity of outreach and convocation (FUCVAM 1999, 5). Here, again, they critique the measures of the ruling class, once again opposing, their worldview since, as they state, it has had negative social and economic consequences, consequences that are not in line with the Federation's objectives or worldview.

Social actions

Gustavo Gonzalez writes, in 2013, a book titled "A story of FUCVAM" (Una historia de FUCVAM), where he tells the story of the movement from his perspective, being one of FUCVAM's former presidents. In the very foreword of the book, Uruguayan writer Raul Zibechi, who specializes in the study of social movements, states that: "Truth, like history, are political, cultural and social constructions"[11]. Moreover, the author himself, Gonzalez (2013), states that the book is not the "official" story of the movement, as he tells the story from his personal and political position. This reflects Laclau and Mouffe's understanding that there is not such thing as an objective reality, but that individuals themselves give meaning to what surrounds them. However, it is not my objective to analyse the book itself but to identify those events or actions the Federation has carried out which show their active role in establishing a new hegemonic worldview in the Uruguayan society.

In 1989, FUCVAM, in their fight against neoliberalism and its consequences in the country, begins occupying State lands for the first time, with the premise of the "right by necessity" as

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[11] Zibechi in "Una Historia de FUCVAM" pp-10 (2013)

opposed to private property rights (Gonzalez 2013). This action, based on the indicated premise, shows again their opposition to the dominant class they define as neoliberal, and their intention to shake the very basic structure of the capitalist system, which is private property. At the same time, the government tried suppressing the occupations on the basis of defense of private property (Gonzalez 2013), which shows the struggle between the two conflicting worldviews, the attempt of the workers movement to establish their notion of fundamental rights, while, the ruling class defends the established conception of these rights.

During the 90s decade this movement was already consolidated beyond the fight for decent housing, and now included in their premises the "fight for a democratic city for workers". (Gonzalez 2013). Here, they again show in their struggle their class awareness and identity as a social group, being the identity of "workers" what defines their members and their purpose, as Laclau and Mouffe explain in their theory of the social.

In 1990 occupations, vigils outside state organs and street protests by the movement continue, in an attempt to make the government pay attention to their demands. One of the most significant measures they take is to occupy the Ministry of Economy and Finance. Later on, with the beginning of the new century, more occupations, protests, vigils were carried out, almost every month, with premises such as "the globalization of capital must be opposed through the globalization of the solidarity of popular organizations" (Gonzalez 2013, 138). All of the mentioned social actions, street protests, vigils, occupation of lands, occupation of the Ministry, following Laclau and Mouffe's theory, can be regarded as clear examples of the establishing relations between these actions, and therefore their aim to create a unity of meaning in line with the movement's position and objectives. Their intention is to promote their worldview, and thus create an "objective" reality in accordance to that worldview, a reality in which solidarity is prefered over a capitalist system, as they oppose both concepts, implying they are not compatible with each other.

In the year 2000 they start proposing the idea of creating a "Social Front" that builds bridges with other social movements for a common struggle, although without leaving the class issues aside, which are part of their guiding principles (Gonzalez 2013, 155). Here again we can see a chain of equivalence is intended to be created with other social groups based on the objectives they have in common, which also define each social movement's identity. In the following year they organize a series of events and discussion rounds with different actors, posing the topic of the Social Front in the agenda of the popular movements (Gonzalez 2013, 158), and in 2002 the Trade Union's central (PIT-CNT) officially declares its

adherence to the social front (Gonzalez 2013, 160). In this moment, the intention of building a chain of equivalence with other groups, changes from being an intention to a reality, and following the understanding of Gramsci's hegemony theory in Latin America, it is seen how these subaltern groups gain further strength and influence towards the achievement of their common goals, in line with a common worldview.

In 2003, Mario Fígoli, one of the members of the board at the time stated that their whole project of building more than just houses "means the concrete practice of an alternative culture to the dominant one" (Gonzalez 2013, 168). Here they explicitly verbalize their project of establishing a different culture than the ruling one, as a key social group within civil society, they aim to dissolve the dominant classes' hegemony.

During the elections of 2009, where Tabaré Vazquez competed against the Blancos and Colorados, FUCVAM takes part in "The March for Hope". In the march's last act, summoned by PIT-CNT, la FEUU, FUCVAM y Onajpu, they held up the image of a chainsaw, used as a metaphor for what they considered represented the Blancos candidate of the new presidential elections, Luis Alberto Lacalle. They used this instrument as they stated that a "chainsaw" would bring to an end the achievements made by the working class in the previous period of government (2004-2009 Frente Amplio). In their flyers they declared they had to block the chainsaw from functioning and in the end of the event they tied an image of a chainsaw made out of cardboard and tied it to helium balloons for it to get lost far away (Uval 2009). This is a clear example, in line with Laclau and Mouffe's theory, of the object that is given a specific meaning through discourse which reflects FUCVAM, and the other social movement's, view of the dominant culture or class, a class that does not promote worker's progress and that would inhibit it. The chainsaw itself does not have that meaning, they ascribe that meaning to it in line with their cultural values.

A process or action Gramsci defines as essential in the establishment of a new hegemonic culture is the education of the masses, and how this role must be carried out by the organic intellectuals and subaltern classes in civil society. This premise can be clearly identified within FUCVAM, as in their Declaration of Principles they state the educational process will enable the community members to move from a field of action within the family and the community towards the socio-political arena. They indicate this formation must be based on the analysis of the cooperatives' everyday practice, to ensure their values and principles are maintained, the ideological basis of the project (Fucvam 1999). Here they state their aim to have an educative role in civil society, providing an education that is in line with their worldview, as explained before. Following this premise, in the 90's the Formation Center

within FUCVAM is created, from a perspective of popular education and using workshops as their main educational space, carrying out workshops of between 200 and 300 participants. Moreover, the educational practice was not only limited to workshops, but also encompassed dance, theatre, singing classes and other activities about the formation of cooperativism and the workers movement (Menendez n.d). The educational role towards the masses is clearly seen in the case of FUCVAM, where they not only intervene in providing formal education and formation but also try to infuse their worldview and values through cultural activities.

PIT-CNT

The PIT-CNT is Uruguay's trade union confederation, which groups together all of the country's trade unions. PIT stands for Workers Inter-union Plenary (Plenario Intersindical de Trabajadores) and CNT for National Workers Convention (Convención Nacional Trabajadores), and it was born under that name on May 1st 1984, as an immediate result of the workers fights and repression during the military dictatorship, which officially ended in 1985, in addition to the historical traditions and struggles of the Uruguayan and international workers movement (Porrini 2015). As a first approach to the analysis of the PIT-CNT, it is clearly identified as part of civil society and not political society, in a Gramscian sense, as it is a private organization and not a public institution.

Analysis of their Declaration of principles

In their statue, apart from the union's rules, they declare also their principles and way of functioning, through which their worldview can be perceived. Firstly, they declare the PIT-CNT is constituted by the working class to achieve their objectives and to defend the working class' union and public freedoms along with their economic, social and labour rights (PIT-CNT n.d, A). Here, like in the previously analysed case of FUCVAM, from the start they identify themselves as representing the working class, therefore, we can either relate it to Gramsci's notion of the workers as a class which organizes to establish their hegemony, but it also can be seen through Laclau and Mouffe's notion of the workers as a social movement, having been created based on the subject position all its members have in common as workers, ignoring other possible subject positions. The concept of representation, as the latter authors define it, is also reflected in the PIT-CNT's statue, since, as they state, a group is formed once someone speaks of it, which is precisely what is being done in this statue. At the same time, the CNT creates a chain of equivalence not only within the group itself,

between the workers, but also with all unions in the country, when stating "(...) it will work to group together all of our country's labour organizations (...)" (PIT-CNT n.d., A). Moreover, they extend this association to other "popular organizations" which are in line with their "principles, programs and statutory regulations" (PIT-CNT n.d., A). In this sense, it can be said they will relate and connect with other social organizations as long as they share the same ideas, establishing in this way a chain of equivalence with other groups based on a common worldview.

They move on to say they fight for a society "without exploited and exploiters" (PIT-CNT n.d., A). Here again they define an antagonism between the exploited, which would be the working class, and the exploiters, which would be the bourgeoisie or the dominant class at the moment.

Social actions

During the half of the year 2002, the year of the biggest economic crisis in Uruguay, the PIT-CNT called for mass mobilizations under different premises, which included reforming the role of the State for a better distribution of wealth and the defense of national production, among others, stating also that the economic model and way of governing at the time needed to end. In May 1st of that same year, the unions confederation called for a mass protest, along with representatives of the Broad Front and FUCVAM, among other organizations, against the neoliberal model, against the rupture of diplomatic relations with Cuba and the United State's foreign policy towards Latin America and the Middle East (Olesker 2002). In the above mentioned events we can see several elements worth analysing. The PIT-CNT organized several mobilizations, all opposing the at-the-time government and their worldview and economic model, which followed the neoliberal propositions, which the PIT-CNT made clear in the mobilizations of the 1st of May. This is reflected again as they voice their opposition the US's foreign policy towards the Latin American continent, which was based in neoliberalism, and they oppose the break of diplomatic relations with Cuba, a country which since 1959, after the Cuban Revolution, has had a socialist regime (Martinez 1990). Here, their position against the hegemony of neoliberal model and their identification with the left is clear. By manifesting their demands through mass mobilizations they also engaged other groups within civil society, which shows their intervention in a war of position, as defined by Gramsci, to dismantle the established worldview and the intention of spreading their left-wing perspective.

Another important element used in the political arena by the workers union central, was the use of referendums, a mechanism through which they collected signatures within civil society in order to block a number of legislative bills presented by the official government parties at the time. In this framework, one of the most important referendums they promoted was in 1992 against the Public Enterprises Law, which aimed to privatize key sectors of the Uruguayan economy which were controlled by the State, a law they were able to repeal with the support of 79% of the Uruguayan population. This again, shows another milestone in this war of position, where the PIT-CNT did not let the neoliberal agenda of the government further advance.

Regarding the PIT-CNT's educational role in society, they have created the Cuesta Duarte Institute, in 1989, in order to "provide technical support to organized workers regarding formation and investigation for their better performance in the action and representation of their equals within the framework of the class struggle" (PIT-CNT n.d., B). They provide this formation around three central topics, which are: first; the formation of delegates and collective negotiation, second; the conception and method for the unions activities, third; work formation related to occupational health and the environment and lastly; formation of educators for each trade union (PASEM 2014, 323). In the creation and functioning of this institute, clearly shows the union confederation's awareness of education as essential to spread their ideas, playing an educational role within civil society, which Gramsci poses as essential for establishing a new hegemonic culture. Although the Cuesta Duarte Institute focuses specifically on workers union's topics, it works as a channel to disseminate the PIT-CNT's worldview, which, as it has been indicated before, are in line with left-wing ideas.

Lastly, it is important to discuss the relationship between the PIT-CNT and the Broad Front, as in this case it is very explicit. Padrón & Wachendorfer (2017) state that it is no surprise that the labour movement in Uruguay felt represented by most of the Uruguayan left's proposals, and that towards the end of the latter's consolidation in the 1970s, it already encompassed all of the organized civil society's claims in their political program. They also affirm that the Broad Front party would not have been able to win the 2004 presidential elections in Uruguay without the strategic alliance with the PIT-CNT, an alliance which respects both body's autonomy. Moreover, Jose Mujica (former Uruguayan president between 2010 and 2015) declared that "the BF and PIT-CNT are two animals born from the same placenta (...) the alliance with the trade unions becomes strategic, not only to win an election but also to change the country" (Padrón & Wachendorfer 2017).

FEUU

The Federation of University Students of Uruguay was founded in April 1929. It is a union organization which joins together the University of the Republic of Uruguay's students under the premise of defending the student's general interests, and their social and university aspirations (FEUU 2012). Like the before analysed organizations, during the military dictatorship they played an important role in protesting against the de facto government, the FEUU participated in mass mobilizations which lead to the restoration of democracy (FEUU n.d.). This is an organization included in civil society, as Gramsci defines it, as it is a private organization of university students and not a public institution.

Analysis of their Declaration of principles

Firstly, they are an organization of University students, therefore, applying Laclau and Mouffe's theory of the social, they create a chain of equivalence,based on their subject positions as University students, and not regarding other positions. In their statue, the FEUU defined their worldview and objectives, based on the principles that have identified the federation since its inception in 1929. Within their objectives statement, they declare their defence of democracy within an anti-imperialist conception, principles in line with the Broad Front's. Following this, they add two objectives which show their relationship with the workers union confederation, firstly by saying to "Contribute and to fight for a society without exploiters or exploited", and secondly by declaring they aim to strengthen the strategic alliance with the organized working class (FEUU 2012). Here they show a clear linkage with the PIT-CNT, a strategic alliance between these social groups, which share the common objective of a fairer society, which is ultimately also a common objective with the Uruguayan left. Moreover, it can be said that this association can also represent those individuals which are members of both organizations, being workers and University students at the same time, therefore presenting alternative subject positions in different environments, which, in this case are not antagonistic. Moreover, they promote the implementation of educational policies towards the different "popular sectors" (FEUU 2012) as opposed to the ruling class which is not part of those popular sectors.

Social actions

Unfortunately the social actions of the FEUU have not been widely documented, however, several Uruguayan scholars have linked this group, or the student movement as a whole, to the victory of the left in the 2004 presidential elections. For example, Constanza Moreira

(2004) states that the Broad Front's mobilization capacity and its alliance with the workers and the students movements have made it an unprecedented political phenomenon. Moreover, Carlos Moreira (2010) indicates how the previously two mentioned movements began to abandon, in the second half of the 20th century, the fight in the social arena to join the political partisan project that lead to the creation of the Broad Front. He indicates that these movements were not independent social movements, rather, they acted in relation to the Broad Front's political strategy. Castro (et.al. 2014) states the relationship between the Broad Front and uruguayan social movements cannot be fully understood without taking into account their jointed emergence. He adds the FEUU, along with other movements, represents the social front of a political project which has its political vanguard represented by the Broad front, that, in the 90s decade focused their struggles against the neoliberal model established in the country. Through the reflections of these scholars we can identify how, as Laclau and Mouffe describe it, a social movement such as the FEUU does not emerge automatically with a political intention, but that this political identity is built. In this case, the emergence of FEUU responded to the university students' social claims, related to their education, but later, there claims started to relate to those of other movements, such as the PIT-CNT and FUCVAM, finally coming together in the Broad Front's political project, which also gave the FEUU a political identity and widened its field of action.

Some actions carried out by FEUU in civil society can be identified in the existing literature. During the years of the military dictatorship, the FEUU was banned, however, after this period ended it returned to the field of activism for the defence of the university student's interests, and in 1996 it returned played a major role in the opposition against an educational reform promoted by the government (Aguiar 2012). During the year 2002, the FEUU, along with other actors in the educational sphere (teachers and secondary school students) participated in several mass mobilizations and occupation of schools and higher education institutes, declaring their discontempt with the government of Jorge Batlle, president at the time, and its policies regarding education. In that year, together with the PIT-CNT and FUCVAM, they held an act in the Republic University against the draft bill pushed by the government which declared budget cuts in the State, especially for higher education (Olesker 2002). In the above mentioned cases, the FEUU's opposition to the ruling class is reflected in their reactions to the ruling class' measures.

In the pronunciation of the FEUU's principles and the actions within civil society, Gramsci's notion of the "generation gap" is reflected to some extent. It can be said the FEUU is comprised of mostly young people, being that they are students, from different socioeconomic classes, included the upper class, and their aggrupation around the

previously analysed worldview, shows a failure in the case of the upper classes to spread their ideas of promotion of neoliberalism to their young, which are included within this group, and a predominance of a progressive worldview.

Organic intellectuals

Following the above analysis of the role of social groups in the construction of a new worldview in Uruguay, I will now analyse the background and main works of the two intellectuals I have identified as the most relevant within this process, and identify the main elements that point to them aiding to the hegemonic process of the Broad Front.

Daniel Olesker

Daniel Olesker is an Uruguayan economist and politician, member of the central committee Socialist Party, which is a sector within the Broad Front and was Minister of Public Health in 20120 and Minister of Social Development in 2011 the Broad Front's government of Jose Mujica. He started his political activism at the age of 18, in 1970, as a member of the left-wing Movement March 26, which is a sector within the Broad Front. He was also a member of the Executive Committee of FEUU, and member of its steering groups during the before mentioned mass protests and occupations. He is also a Professor at the Republic University in the Faculty of Economics and the faculty of Law and a researcher, having published books and papers on the topics of social inclusion and economic and labor policies. Moreover, he has president of the previously mentioned PIT-CNT Cuesta Duarte Institute and acted as an economic consultant for FUCVAM (FCEA 2017). This introduction of Olesker is done in order to visualize some of the reasons why I have identified him as an organic intellectual. Firstly, he was part of different groups, such as the the FEUU and the PIT-CNT, which I have previously explained where key groups in the struggle against the neoliberal hegemony installed in the country mainly from the 90s decade until the presidential victory of the Broad Front. As stated by Gramsci (1971), explained in the theory section, every social group creates their own organic intellectuals, in this case, subaltern groups, those that were not part of the ruling ones but that aspired to be hegemonic. Being tied organically to FEUU, Movement March 26, etc., he has defended or promoted the same interests as those of the groups he identified with. Moreover, following Gramsci's theory, in

the beginning of his years as a political activist, while being part of the subaltern groups as opposed to the hegemonic class, he played a role in spreading the ideas of the subaltern groups, in the struggle for hegemony against the dominance of neoliberalism. But, as Gramsci explains, when organic intellectuals are part of the dominant class they represent the dominant class in the State´s institution, which is exactly what happened in the case of Olesker, as when the Broad Front came into power, he was consequently named head of the Ministry of Public health and later on of the Ministry of Social Development.

Now, regarding Olesker´s role in spreading the ideas of the subaltern groups of the period this project analyses, it is pertinent to point out he has published an important number of academic papers along with ten books authored by himself as well as in collaboration with others, most of them related to economic and social issues in Latin America and Uruguay. In relation to his books, the most relevant ones within the analysed period are the following two: "Growth and exclusion: birth, consolidation and crisis of the capitalist accumulation model in Uruguay (1968-2000)" published in 2001 and "Growth and inclusion: accomplishments of the Broad Front´s government" published in 2009 (FCEA 2017). Firstly, it is important to analyse the titles of these books, which signify an evident antagonism. In "Growth and exclusion" he poses the capitalist system as the direct cause of the"growth and exclusion", as opposed to the last book where he establishes the Broad Front's government as the generator of "growth and inclusion", clearly establishing an opposition between these two models, and defending the Broad Front's model as positive.

Next, I will briefly analyse both books in line with the proposed theories to understand how Olesker encompasses the worldview of the subaltern groups as opposed to the ruling ones in the period prior to the Broad Front's presidential victory and during the party's first government term in order to aid to further establish that worldview.

Growth and exclusion: birth, consolidation and crisis of the capitalist accumulation model in Uruguay (1968-2000)

All in all, in this book he explains how during the period 1968 to the 2000 Uruguay had economic growth but with an unequal distribution of the results of this growth, due to the capitalist model applied, which he states is liberal capitalism.

Firstly, in the theoretical framework of the book Olesker (2001) shows his view of how capitalism has created an unequal development of the countries around the world, dividing

them in dominant and dependent countries, and how the first have greatly accumulated wealth. He states that globalization and the liberalization of the dependant economies has increased the expansion of the central countries' capitalism. In this case we can link his view to FUCVAM's previously mentioned premise of " "the globalization of capital must be opposed through the globalization of the solidarity of popular organizations" (Gonzalez 2013, 138, which in the end accompanies the same notion of the opposition against capitalism. After this, he indicates his opposition to the new role of the State in the liberal capitalist society, indicating it has destroyed social organizations, particularly workers organizations and that has eliminated most of the public services provided by the State (Olesker, 2001) showing again his disagreement with liberal capitalism and his defense of social organizations, which, as analysed before, in the case of the Uruguayan society have played a great role in spreading an alternative view to the dominant one in the analysed period.

Growth and inclusion: accomplishments of the Broad Front´s government

In this book Olesker (2009) talks about the performance of the Broad Front's government in their first presidential term, which he states has changed the exclusion model to an inclusion one.

Firstly, it is important to point out that he ends the introduction section of his book with the Marxist slogan "From each according to his ability; To each according to his needs" (Olesker 2009) which denotes from the beginning his affinity towards socialist thought, as opposed to the liberal notion of "meritocracy", understood as the system where, in a fair society, an individual reaches a position of privilege as a result of their efforts or achievements[12],

Olesker (2009) opposes the dominant liberal ideology, which was still present at the time, indicating that it promoted a type of development based in individualism, material success and consumerism, and indicates the concept of development had to be "recomposed" towards a notion of development that focuses on people and not objects. This is a clear example of Gramsci's understanding that Gramsci believes that innovation in language is key to creating a new hegemony, since, as language is part of culture, the new meanings conveyed to language will be reflected in a new culture as well. In this case Olesker intends to attribute a new meaning to the concept of development, differentiating it from to the meaning established by the dominant worldview.

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[12] Sandel 1998, 72

To continue, Olesker (2009) explains the role of the State in the Broad Front's first government, and indicates that to further deepen their project a "progressive decentralization of the management in order to gradually transfer the power to citizens" will be needed. This proposition directly relates to the concept of radical democracy, as the understanding of Latin America's left of Gramsci's notion of a self-regulated society, a society that enables individuals to engage in public matters following to their own desires, a concept that has been previously analysed for the case of FUCVAM.

Carlos Liscano

He is an Uruguayan writer and journalist born in 1949. In his younger years he was part of the MLN (National Liberation Movement), a sector within the Broad Front, until he became imprisoned in the military dictatorship. After this he lived in Sweden for several years and came back to Uruguay in 1996 (Sosa 2016).

One of the most relevant groups he published was "Conversations with Tabaré Vazquez", in 2003, the year before Vazquez won the Presidential Elections which basically consists of an interview to Vazquez about his life and his ideas for the coming government. In the beginning of the book he states Liscano states that this book is a "propaganda book", and a book for "spreading the ideas of Tabare Vazquez". Moreover, he declares that from his side, the book means taking a political stance, making a social and political commitment (Liscano 2003, 9). Firstly, regarding the above, it is important to point out that Lescano takes a political position, which is in favour of the Broad Front or at least in favour of Vazquez ideas, who in the end was at the time the most important representative of the Broad Front. In this sense, the Gramscian concept of organic intellectual starts materializing in Liscano as he identifies himself with the Broad Front. Moreover, he declares the intention of the book is to spread the ideas of the future presidential candidate for this party, something Gramsci indicates is the main role of organic intellectuals, to spread the ideas of the ruling, or aspiring to be, class. Liscano is clearly aware of his role in building a new hegemony.

In an interview Liscano recognizes the importance of organic intellectuals and culture in creating, and he describes how before the 2004 presidential elections he had spoken to candidate Vazquez about the importance of working with the "culture workers " (Lauro & Garcia 2020)

CONCLUSION

The aim of this project was to understand the role of social movements and organic intellectuals in spreading the ideas of the left in Uruguay, aiming to transform the neoliberal hegemony of the time, helping to build a new hegemony, and thus aiding to the success of the Broad Front in the 2004 elections. I have analysed FUCVAM, FEUU and PIT-CNT's Declaration of principles, along with the actions they've carried out in civil society, influencing at the same time political society. Along with this I have studied the backgrounds and main publications relevant to the topic of Daniel Olesker and Carlos Liscano, whom I have identified as organic intellectuals associated to the Broad Front. Regarding the chosen social organizations, which I have analysed using Gramsci's theory of Cultural Hegemony and Laclau and Mouffe's Discourse Theory, it can be concluded that not only did these movements share to a great extent the worldview of the Broad Front, but also they carried out specific actions, impregnated with their ideology, which aimed at establishing a new culture and in this way it aided to the victory of the Broad Front. There is of course not a clear pronouncement by the social movement standing their explicit association to the Broad Front. However history shows these social movements served as the social base for which would later be introduced in the political arena by the Broad Front.

Regarding the intellectuals' role in this process, in the Gramscian notion of organic intellectuals, being those that spread the ideas of the dominant culture and whom are explicitly associated to that dominant group or the group which intends to become dominant, for the very case of the Broad Front they are rather limited. I have analyse the cases of the two organic intellectuals I have identified as most relevant in the promotion of the Broad Front's worldview, who, at the same time, have explicitly recognized their membership to the party, and who have later moved to occupying public positions in the first government of the Broad Front. In this analysis I was also limited to the publications they have made, publications that indeed show a significant linkage, bearing in mind that what many Uruguayan intellectuals reflect in their work is a recollection of events, without showing a clear adherence to a specific vision and without spreading the ideas of a certain party or group. So in this case I can conclude that in the Gramscian perspective, the role of intellectuals in spreading the ideas of the left has not been so significant, rather, they have remained rather passive. The identified and analysed social movements, as part of the subaltern classes, has definitely been the key drivers of the process.

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