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Politics and Time: The Nostalgic, the Opportunist and the Utopian. An Existential Analytic of Podemos' Ecstatic Times[1]

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> The time is out of joint
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> William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (2003, p. 52)

> When the past speaks it always speaks as an oracle:
> only if you are an architect of the future and know the present will you understand it
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> Friedrich Nietzsche, *Second Untimely Meditation. On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life* (2004, p. 94)

1. Introduction: Podemos and Time

After the economic crisis of 2008 and the cycle of social mobilisations that opened up in 2011 with the 15M *Indignados* Movement, in 2014 Spain saw the birth of a new left-populist party called *Podemos*. In its original manifesto, 'Mover ficha' [*First Move*], a diverse group of activists and intellectuals called for 'turning outrage into political change' (Público, 2014), since there was the fear that the peak of popular protests against austerity measures implemented by the conservative government led by Mariano Rajoy would progressively slow down (Portos, 2019, p. 49, figure 1) unless the struggle was taken to the institutional level, in a position to dispute the elections to the European Parliament of 2014. Podemos' surprising success – achieving more than 1 million votes and five seats in parliament– showed, amongst other lessons, that the 15M had already realised to a great extent a certain cultural *transformation*, and it was now just a matter of political *translation*. Indeed, at some point even 80 per cent of the Spanish population supported the demands shouted in the squares (Europa Press, 2011), with slogans like: 'Que no nos representan!'

[*They don't represent us!*], 'Democracia Real Ya!' [*Real Democracy Now!*] or 'No somos mercancía en manos de políticos y banqueros' [*We are not commodities in the hands of politicians and bankers*]. The future Political Secretary of Podemos already analysed in those days the 'transversality', 'counter-hegemony' and 'winning dimension' of that new and democratic discourse (Errejón, 2011b, 2015). Moreover, Podemos never claimed to be the 'representation' of the 15M Movement – which was always called, in fact, 'unrepresentable'– nor a social experiment in the laboratory; rather I propose that the best way to understand it might be as a (political) *translation*. 'Traduttore, traditore' [*Translator, traitor*], it is said in Italian, therefore accepting that there is always a certain remnant which is lost in any translation, but it still aims at the same time to move from one plane to another –in this case, from the streets to the institutions. *Mutatis mutandis*, that is the same aspect that Kioupkiolis attempts to grasp with regards to populism when he states that Podemos represents a 'unique reflexive application' of Laclau's theory (2016, p. 103).

The *subjective* conditions were in place as much as the *objective* ones for such a great leap forward. In 'Understanding Podemos', Pablo Iglesias, then already General Secretary, reviewed the three main ingredients that formed part of what would be called the 'Podemos hypothesis' (2015, p. 14). First there was the application of the 'populist hypothesis' to the European context, as theorised by Íñigo Errejón primarily drawing on the work of Ernesto Laclau. Although the future Political Secretary of Podemos foresaw the 'latinamericanisation of Southern Europe', he made three important amendments to the 'populist hypothesis' if it had to be applied to the Spanish case: (1) the resistance of the state despite its legitimacy, representation and economic weakening (which turned the pure Gramscian case of an 'organic crisis' into a more nuanced 'regime crisis'); (2) the *nominal* survival of the middle classes despite the frustration in their *expectations* (which made Podemos always add 'citizenship' to 'the people'); and (3) the pluri-national character of the Spanish state (which, alongside its parliamentary system, made any attempts at a 'direct assault' more difficult than in a Latin American presidential election) (Errejón, 2011a, p. 106). The second ingredient that formed part of Podemos' recipe was the testing and experimentation of the populist discourse around two new and far-left TV programmes called *Fort Apache* and *La Tuerka* [*The Screw*]. This was mainly Pablo Iglesias' own effort, which saw him achieve a great audience and popularity among what he called the 'TV Nation', thus paving the way for the charismatic *hyper-leadership* required in the first Podemos. In his article, Iglesias stops here, but I believe it would be fair to also add a third ingredient: the supply of Izquierda Anticapitalista's [*the Anticapitalist Left's*] organisational muscle, which was crucial at least in Podemos' early stages. Indeed, not only

was its leader, Miguel Urbán, part of the original circle, but to have the support of at least one already-existing far-left party's base became decisive after meeting Izquierda Unida's [*the United Left's*] 'coldness, not to say open hostility (… and) stubborn conservatism' at the beginning (Iglesias, 2015, p. 15).

Like Plato's tripartite theory of the soul, then, we could say that the original Podemos was conformed by three subjective factors –Errejón's populist theorisation (*head*), Iglesias' charismatic hyper-leadership (*face and voice*), and Izquierda Anticapitalista's organisational force (*muscle*) – which at the very beginning worked as one sole body in a kind of symbiotic unity. Of course, this is a simplification, since the main topic of politics is *power*, no group can ever accept to hold a vision enclosed by a certain division of labour and which would not ambition to impose its particular worldview onto the rest. Perhaps this is the reason why, after the surprising success of the European Parliament elections in 2014, it became more visible that there were in fact three currents within Podemos, which were colloquially called *Pablistas*, *Errejonistas* and *Anticapitalistas*. Since politics revolves around *conflict*, these original differences began to accelerate once important strategic decisions had to be made, leading to the setting-aside of the *Anticapitalistas* from the Citizen's Counsel after the first General Assembly in 2014 (which took place at the Vistalegre Stadium in Madrid) and the subsequent setting-aside of the *Errejonistas* after Vistalegre 2 in 2017, until it is accurate to say that today the leadership of Podemos can only be aligned with the *Pablistas*. Now, how are we to understand this *diremption* of Podemos into three currents when it was precisely their *unity* which has to be found as the original source of its success?

Before we put forward the *temporal* dimension, it might be useful to say that all the significant secondary literature on Podemos' internal conflicts can be subdivided into three different explanatory realms: *ideology, politics* and *class*. Chazel and Fernández Vázquez offer a paramount example of the first kind. Whereas they start by recognising that 'the dispute has been described as a conflict between a traditional left-wing (Iglesias) and a classic populist strategy (Errejón)' – and, we could also add, Trotskyist Marxism (Izquierda Anticapitalista) – Chazel and Fernández Vázquez conclude by stating that in fact 'they both intended to implement a populist logic (as defined by Ernesto Laclau) but had different understandings of it' (2019, p. 2). I would only add here that perhaps the difference between Iglesias and Errejón's readings of *On Populist Reason* had to do with the former interpreting it merely as a *tactical* move (subordinated to the objective of winning the first general election) whereas the latter understood it as a full-blown strategy (the construction of 'a people' as a long-term process). Furthermore, Chazel and Fernández Vázquez also add that 'most of the academic literature on Podemos emphasizes the

importance of the ideological dimension (e.g. Franzé, 2017a; Gómez-Reino & Llamazares, 2019; Kioupkiolis, 2016) when studying the party. In line with those works, we argue that the importance of the ideas as an explanatory factor to internal conflicts is largely amplified as Podemos was created by political science professors' (2019, p. 4). Chazel and Fernández Vázquez develop this ideological dimension of the factional struggle by recognising a fundamental difference between Iglesias's *negrist* version of the 'populist hypothesis' placing the emphasis on 'how to maintain the *autonomy* and heterogeneity of the different struggles', and Errejón's amendment to Laclau's theory about the relationship between populism and institutionalism – falling in line with the works of Gerardo Aboy, Javier Franzé and Francisco Panizza – which led him to focus on 'how to *unite* those same struggles' (Chazel and Fernández Vázquez, 2019, pp. 7, 13).

Unsatisfied with a purely *ideological* analysis, Kioupkiolis (2016), on the one hand, and Mazzolini and Borriello (2021), on the other, turn their gaze towards broader *political* reasons, and particularly to the competition around power. The former identifies a certain 'ambiguity' in Podemos' 'hybrid mix' between *egalitarian* and *authoritarian* tendencies, or, as he puts it: 'the horizontal, open, diverse, networked and assembly-based mobilizations of the multitude on the streets and the web, on the one hand, and the vertical, hierarchical, unified, formal and representative structures of party formations, on the other' (Kioupkiolis, 2016, p. 100). On the other hand, Mazzolini and Borriello do not place so much emphasis on the constitutive tension between populism and radical democracy as on the dilemma between *rupture* and *normalisation* – let us remember, for instance, that Gramsci's newspaper had the double meaning of 'order' and 'novelty': *L'Ordine Nuovo*. Their overall assessment is optimistic since they considered Podemos' original expectations to have been excessive in the first place, so that 'they have perceived as a relative failure what would otherwise have been considered as a resounding success. In short, they have endured a process of "normalisation"' (Mazzolini & Borriello, 2021, p. 3).

Thirdly, and lastly, Rendueles and Sola would surely consider all these interpretations of Podemos' internal conflicts to be too 'cultural', since they perform a more quantitative and class-based analysis, coming from a clear Marxist inspiration. Their point of departure is that 'behind "the people" there are very different class realities' (Rendueles and Sola, 2017, p. 7). Furthermore:

> Faced with the dominance of middle-class politics and the weakness of the labour movement, Podemos has assumed many elements of hegemonic discourse and has avoided conflicting issues in terms of class. This option was electorally profitable but runs the risk of perpetuating the dominance

> of middle-class politics, especially since most of the leadership of Podemos has that social background. Without the political articulation of the popular classes and the reactivation of the labour movement, the making of a 'plebeian' historical bloc is fatally flawed. (Rendueles and Sola, 2018, p. 44)

The term 'middle-class politics' was first coined for the purposes of analysing contemporary Spain by the sociologist Emmanuel Rodríguez López, who reduced 'the followers of the new "populism"' to the 'the social origin of the professional middle-class, and even the old socialist caste' (2016, pp. 107–108). Now, having reviewed the most significant interpretations of Podemos' internal conflicts, we think that each of these analyses – the ideological, the political and the class-based – has a certain *moment of truth*, but they all share a common denominator, which is *the almost complete neglect of temporality in politics in general and in populism in particular*. We will now thus proceed to explore this pathway. Our most general and initial hypothesis is that *Podemos' diremption into three different groups may coincide with a tearing-apart of (political) time itself*. Now, this hypothesis is not completely new or surprising – perhaps only in its application to politics – or at least it is part of a broader (modern) predicament. Indeed, in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, the Prince of Denmark cries at the end of the first act, after having sworn to his father's ghost that he will avenge the killing by his uncle Claudius: 'time is out of joint. O cursed spite / that ever I was born to set it right!' (Shakespeare, 2003, p. 52). Lacan interprets here that what distinguishes Hamlet from Oedipus – and thus modernity from antiquity – is that whereas the latter can act because he *does not know*, the former cannot act because he *already knows too much* (2013, p. 288). For Derrida, on the other hand, there must be something 'ontological' or, even better, *hauntological*, about the disjointed time that Hamlet experiences and suffers (2006, pp. 10, 20), since, as Laclau summarises in a brilliant review: 'anachronism is essential to spectrality: the spectre, interrupting all specularity, desynchonizes time' (2007a, p. 68). Lastly, despite the animosity that Derrida and Laclau share for Hegel, I will also be using here the terms *diremption* and *tearing-apart* – both applied to the populist political party and to temporality itself – in the very precise sense that Hegel, too, in a work of youth, identified them with the necessity to think and reflect. He writes: 'dichotomy is the source of the need of philosophy' (1977a, p. 89).

Now, if we assume that the tearing-apart of Podemos has something to do with a certain diremption of (political) temporality, and any kind of dichotomy of this sort expresses the need of philosophy, it logically follows that we need a *theoretical framework* about the effect of time in politics in general and in populism in particular. That we are not violently forcing this topic on our

particular case study finds its paramount justification at first glance in the figure of Íñigo Errejón. There is perhaps no other politician in recent Spanish history who has strategically thought so much in *temporal* expressions: when the elites, for instance, decided to place three different elections before the general ones, he called it a 'short and accelerated cycle'; he also named 'short track' the realm of political intervention, and 'long track' that of cultural transformation; following Bruce Ackermann, he characterised as 'hot moments' those when one can say *we the people*, and 'cold moments' when institutionalisation reigns (Errejón, 2016). One of the objectives of this chapter will be precisely to make *manifest* what is already *latent* in these temporal metaphors. However, we are in the dark beyond these diffuse appearances, since where should we even start to look for such a theoretical framework?

The argument of this chapter can be roughly summarised as follows. Famously, in his *Second Untimely Meditation. On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life*, Nietzsche distinguishes between three 'species of history': the antiquarian, the monumental and the critical (2004, p. 67). However, and as brilliant as this thought may sound, Nietzsche offers no justification for such a distinction. Moving forward, when Heidegger undertakes a revision of the history of ontology with temporality as the horizon for the question of Being, he will also discover the existential foundation of Nietzsche's triad. Indeed, in *Being and Time* it is said that 'the threefold character of historiology is adumbrated in the historicality of *Dasein*' (Heidegger, 2008, p. 448), which means that the tripartite distinction between the antiquarian, the monumental and the critical finds its ground in *Dasein*'s three ecstatic times: past, present and future (respectively). Should this radical thought be confined to the realms of 'historiology' or 'ontology', or would its application to *political theory* also offer us three different characters, depending on which ecstatic time is primary? We will call them the *nostalgic* (past), the *opportunist* (present) and the *utopian* (future). Through a detailed analysis of the Spanish left-populist party Podemos as a case study, we will propose that its internal conflict between the followers of Pablo Iglesias, Íñigo Errejón and the Anticapitalist Left may not only be explained by recourse to the traditional categories of ideology, politics and class, but also by attending to its temporal dimension, where the *pablistas* represented the primacy of the past (nostalgia), the *errejonistas*, the present (opportunity), and the *anticapitalistas*, the future (utopia). Since these three characters are equally one-sided if taken separately, we will end with an attempt at a reconciliation of the three ecstatic times in a political reformulation of being-as-a-whole-within-time-ness.

2. Nietzsche's *Second Untimely Meditation*: The Antiquarian, the Monumental and the Critical

As indicated, Nietzsche introduces the main argument of the *Second Untimely Meditation*[2] when he distinguishes between three 'species of history': the monumental, the antiquarian and the critical. Indeed, 'history pertains to the living man in three respects: it pertains to him as a being who acts and strives, as a being who preserves and reveres, as a being who suffers and seeks deliverance' (Nietzsche, 2004, p. 67). In his 'Introductory Study' to one of the Spanish collected works of Nietzsche, Germán Cano interprets that he is after a certain kind of *atmosphere* or *metabolism* in the appropriation of history so that it does not degenerate (2014, p. lxxiv), and therefore Nietzsche's analysis will attempt to show from now on at which point the *uses* and *advantages* that these three different kinds of history might have for life turn out to be *abuses* or *disadvantages*. To put it in the German philosopher's own botanical terms:

> Each of the three species of history which exist belongs to a certain soil and a certain climate and only to that: in any other it grows into a devastating weed. If the man who wants to do something great has need of the past at all, he appropriates it by means of monumental history; he, on the other hand, who likes to persist in the familiar and the revered of old, tends the past as an antiquarian historian; and only he who is oppressed by a present need, and who wants to throw off this burden at any cost, has need of critical history, that is to say a history that judges and condemns. Much mischiefs caused through the thoughtless transplantation of these plants: the critic without need, the antiquary without piety, the man who recognizes greatness but cannot himself do great things, are such plants, estranged from their mother soil and degenerated into weeds. (Nietzsche, 2004, p. 72)

Nietzsche first assures us that history belongs to the person who acts. The monumental sees history as a certain 'mountain range' or 'relay race' of great moments. Indeed, the monumental tries to impose the commandment that 'everything great must be immortal' upon a resigned society that, in apathetic routine, cries as a whole: 'No!' The only goal here is happiness – not one's own, but that of others – and there is no other salary than fame, honour or eternal glory. Whereas the masses just want to live at any price, the monumental historian knows that one lives best if one has no respect for existence. 'That the great moments in the struggle of the human individual constitute a chain, that this chain unites mankind across the millennia like a range of human mountain peaks, that the summit of such a long-ago moment shall be

for me still living, bright and great' (2004, p. 68) – this is the fundamental idea of monumental history. For Nietzsche, the advantage that this kind of history must have for the active personality is clear: 'he learns from it that the greatness that once existed was in any event once possible and may thus be possible again; he goes his way with a more cheerful step, for the doubt which assailed him in weaker moments, whether he was not perhaps desiring the impossible, has now been banished' (2004, p. 69). For the revolutionary, for instance, who reads about the French or the October Revolutions, this is no idle endeavour, since she needs models for her great struggle against resignation, and she cannot find them in the present. However, if this is the *use* that monumental history might have for life, what could be its *abuse*? Since history has now been reduced to a mountain range or a relay race, its disadvantage can be no other than that 'monumental history deceives by analogies' (2004, p. 71). To compare Germany in the nineteenth century with the Renaissance, for example, is more than just an inexact comparison: it erases all substantial differences to create a violent conformity, it only relates to approximations and generalities, and it makes what is dissimilar look similar. To add insult to injury, if these seductive analogies are used by an established power, they might become so distorted that one is incapable of distinguishing between a monumental past and a mythical fiction. That is why the veracity of history and the past itself are endangered by an excess of monumental history.

Secondly, history belongs to the person that 'preserves and reveres – to him who looks back to whence he has come, to where he came into being, with love and loyalty; with this piety he as it were gives thanks for his existence. By tending with care that which has existed from of old, he wants to preserve for those who shall come into existence after him the conditions under which he himself came into existence – and thus he serves life' (2004, pp. 72–73). Different from monumental history, which only relates to the past instrumentally for action in the present, the antiquarian serves the past for its own sake, and as such she does more justice to it. The goal here is to 'be at home in the whole' by reappropriating the history of the world spirit as one's own – all of which has clear Hegelian overtones (1977b, p. 277). It is not difficult to see what use or advantage this feeling of reconciliation might have for life, and it can be comprised in the relief that 'here we lived, he says to himself, for here we are living; and here we shall live, for we are tough and not to be ruined overnight' (Nietzsche, 2004, p. 73). Indeed, the antiquarian is after a kind of self-justification for her own existence, the reassurance that one is not wholly 'accidental and arbitrary', which is found through the 'flower and fruit' of a whole tradition. What could possibly be the *disadvantage* or *abuse* of this sigh of relief? Nietzsche is able to locate it in the fact that antiquarian history 'knows

only how to preserve life, not how to engender it' (2004, p. 75). Therefore, it tends to underestimate what still has to come into existence. Now, in this extremely restricted field of vision, there is no present criteria to distinguish between past events, so everything is considered equally worthy of reverence. But if everything is equally important, only magnitudes and degrees are left, which is the reason why there might be a lack of discrimination, of sense of proportion, in antiquarian history that renders it incapable of distinguishing between what is relevant in the past from what is not. Moreover, this insatiable thirst for antiquity can be problematic not only because it might lead to a blind and restless obsession for collecting, but even more importantly because it hinders the new and it paralyses action.

Finally, this twofold distinction would be incomplete if it did not have a third genre, *the critical*, which has 'the strength to break up and dissolve a part of the past: he does this by bringing it before the tribunal, scrupulously examining it and finally condemning it; every past, however, is worthy to be condemned –for that is the nature of human things' (2004, p. 75). Of course, Nietzsche himself, the greatest critic of morality that has ever been, does not believe this judging force to be *moralising*, but emerging from life itself. Finding recourse again in Goethe, the hero of this meditation, Nietzsche quotes his maxim 'for all that exists is worthy of perishing', although we could even find the first precedent of this thought in the first philosophical sentence uttered in the West, what is known as 'Anaximander's sentence', and which Nietzsche translated at an early age as follows: 'where existent things have their coming-to-be, thereto must they also perish, "according to necessity, for they must pay retribution and penalty for their injustices, in accordance with the assessment of time"' (Nietzsche, 2006, p. 33). The idea, coming from Anaximander up to Goethe, that life is inherently unjust and that hence it must perish is where Nietzsche locates the heart of the *critical* relationship towards history. However, he warns us that 'if we condemn these aberrations and regard ourselves as free of them, this does not alter the fact that we originate from them' since 'it is always a dangerous attempt because it is too hard to know the limit to denial of the past and because second natures are usually weaker than first' (2006, p 76) – that would be the *disadvantage* of the critical. Nevertheless, its *advantage* for life is still clear, 'that of knowing that this first nature was once a second nature and that every victorious second nature will become a first' (2006, p. 77).

To briefly recapitulate, then, the monumental sees history as a mountain range or relay race of great moments: its use for life is that it shows that greatness was once possible and thus it can be possible again, but in so doing it also deceives by analogies – that can be its abuse. Secondly, the antiquarian aims at

feeling at home in the world by preserving and revering the past, which has the advantage of showing that we can live here because here we have lived, but it also has the disadvantage that it only knows how to preserve life, not how to engender it. Thirdly, and finally, critical history knows that everything that has come to be must perish and it has the arrogance to propose a second nature, but it runs the risk of denying the past because condemning an aberration does not change the fact that we originated from it. These, therefore, are the uses and ab-uses, the advantages and dis-advantages, of history for life – according to Nietzsche.

As brilliant as this analysis may sound, something is still missing from it, perhaps what is most important even coming from a philosopher. What is lacking is not so much the *distinction* between the monumental, the antiquarian and the critical itself, but the *foundation* for such a distinction. Indeed, why should there only be three kinds of history? Why not five instead? Why not just one? Moreover, as commonsensical as the subdivision between uses and abuses, advantages and disadvantages may also sound, we could legitimately ask why this should be the best way to look at history. What is the *ground* for such a subdivision? This is characteristic of a great deal of Nietzsche's philosophical oeuvre which, like *lightning*, sometimes offers the most brilliant ideas without giving sufficient reasons for them. This trait not only relates to his suspicions about 'Reason' but also with his style resembling that of his old master Heraclitus, who said in a fragment 'lightning steers everything', and Heidegger interprets that it must be because it 'surveys and shines over the whole of beings in advance and permeates this whole preluminously in such a way that, in the blink of an eye, the whole joins itself, kindles itself' (Heidegger, 2018, p. 123). With Nietzsche's blink of an eye, then, *time begins to be conjointed*.

3. Heidegger's *Being and Time*: Past, Present and Future

So, can we explain this lightning? Can we find a justification for Nietzsche's brilliant but unfounded threefold distinction in the *Second Untimely Meditation*? As the last reference already anticipates, we will have to wait for Heidegger's *Being and Time* (1927) in order to suture this gap. Indeed, when Heidegger undertakes a revision of the history of ontology with temporality as the horizon for the question of Being, he will also discover the existential foundation of Nietzsche's triadic structure. At the end of the book, in the chapter on 'Temporality and Historicality', Heidegger also recognises that Nietzsche distinguishes between three kinds of history 'without explicitly pointing out the necessity of this triad or the ground of its unity' (2008, p. 448). At the same time, Heidegger also admits that 'Nietzsche's division is not accidental.

The beginning of his "study" allows us to suppose that he understood more than he has made known to us' (2008, p. 448). So, what is this missing ground? Heidegger writes: 'the threefold character of historiology is adumbrated in the historicality of *Dasein*' (2008, p. 448). What does this mean? What meaning is hidden behind all this 'ontological' phraseology? Simply put, it means that the tripartite distinction finds its ground in *Dasein*'s three ecstatic times: past, present and future (respectively). Indeed, the fact that time conforms the horizon for the question of Being or, even more succinctly, that *Being 'is' time* – and not just *the present* – implies that any question regarding temporality, such as Nietzsche's on historiology, has to be taken back to *Dasein*'s three ecstatic times. An important warning has to be made here which will also be relevant later: to state that the monumental standpoint *corresponds* with a certain *privileging* of the present, the antiquarian, of the past, and the critical, of the future, *does not mean* that each of these types of history is *solely and exclusively* focused on *just one* ecstatic time, *completely neglecting* the other two; rather, it means that the other two are 'disclosed' or 'opened up' from a time that in each case stands as *primary* or *privileged*. To put forward some examples: it is not the case that the antiquarian despises the present or the future, these are precisely what she wants to *preserve*, but what gives the criterium on what deserves to be preserved is the past. Similarly, the monumental is not inattentive towards the past and the future, they are precisely what constitute history as a mountain range of great moments, but her focus is still to act in the present. Thirdly, and finally, the critic does not forget the past and the present, since that is exactly what she wants to criticise, but the standpoint from which she can derive that criticism can only come from the future.

Moreover, Heidegger continues, 'the possibility that historiology in general can either be "used" "for one's life" or "abused" in it, is grounded on the fact that one's life is historical in the roots of its Being, and that therefore, as factically existing, one has in each case made one's decision for authentic or inauthentic historicality' (2008, p. 448). Here we encounter, besides the previous *temporal* distinction between past, present and future, the second most important *existential* distinction in *Being and Time*, which is the one drawn between *authenticity* and *inauthenticity*. The original neologism in German is pretty self-explanatory since *Eigentlighkeit* not only means 'genuine', but it also implies a sense of 'propriety'. 'Authentic', then, in *Being and Time*, designates that *Dasein* which, in its being-towards-death (the possibility of impossibility), has decided to choose-itself in contradistinction with the 'inauthenticity' characteristic of saying what 'They say', or thinking what 'One is supposed to think', where 'everyone is the other and no one is himself' (2008, p. 165).[3] It is at this precise moment that we are in disposition to recognise that Heidegger not only grounds Nietzsche's triadic distinction between the antiquarian, the

monumental and the critical in the threefold character of *Dasein*'s ecstatic temporality, but he is also able to find an explanation for the distinction between the *uses* and *abuses*, or the *advantages* and *disadvantages*, of history for life (which before might have seemed arbitrary) but now we realise that it is founded on the existential difference between *authenticity* and *in-authenticity*. Since we do not have the space here to go into the details on how the former *temporal* axis crosses with the latter *existential* one, we will use the table of one of the greatest experts on *Being and Time*, Reiner Schürmann, which summarises the fundamental intersections (2008, p. 110):

Table 4.1

Structure of care	Primary ecstasis	Inauthentic mode	Authentic mode
Attunement	Past	Forgetting	Retrieve
Falling	Present	Making-present	Instant
Understanding	Future	Awaiting	Anticipation

Another important warning has to be made here. Schürmann's table has the virtue of simplifying and clarifying the basic structures of *Being and Time* for our own purposes, but it also runs the risk of petrifying them into *dead* categories. That temporality is 'ecstasic' means, fundamentally, for Heidegger, that it is *outside-of-itself*, which implies that it *moves* from one time to the other, and nobody could better describe this movement in this case than Heidegger himself:[4]

> As historical, *Dasein* is possible only by reason of its temporality, and temporality temporalizes itself in the ecstatico-horizonal unity of its raptures. *Dasein* exists authentically as futural in resolutely disclosing a possibility which it has chosen. Coming back resolutely to itself, it is, by repetition, open for the 'monumental' possibilities of human existence. The historiology which arises from such historicality is 'monumental'. As in the process of having been, *Dasein* has been delivered over to its thrownness. When the possible is made one's own by repetition, there is adumbrated at the same time the possibility of reverently preserving the existence that has-been-there, in which the possibility seized upon has become manifest. Thus, authentic historiology, as monumental, is 'antiquarian' too. *Dasein* temporalizes itself in the way the future and having been are united in the Present. The Present discloses the 'today' authentically, and of course as the moment of vision. But in so far as this 'today' has been interpreted in terms of understanding a possibility of existence which has been seized

> upon – an understanding which is repetitive in a futural manner – authentic historiology becomes a way in which the 'today' gets deprived of its character as present; in other words, it becomes a way of painfully detaching oneself from the falling publicness of the 'today'. As authentic, the historiology which is both monumental and antiquarian is necessarily a critique of the 'Present'. Authentic historicality is the foundation for the possibility of uniting these three ways of historiology. But the ground on which authentic historiology is founded is temporality as the existential meaning of the Being of care. (Heidegger, 2008, pp. 448–449)

What is crucial to retain from this fragment is that Heidegger does not see 'authentic historiology' as the *priority* of either the antiquarian, the monumental or the critical *per se* – he regards each of these standpoints, considered by itself, as equally *one-sided* – but rather as the 'ecstatico-horizontal unity of its raptures'. This argument will come back by the end of this chapter, when we will also attempt to find a 'being-as-a-whole-with-in-time-ness' in politics.

4. Politics and Time: The Nostalgic, the Opportunist and the Utopian

Now we have a robust theoretical edifice and all the necessary instruments to pose the decisive question of this chapter: Should these reflections on temporality made by Nietzsche and Heidegger be restricted to the spheres of 'historiology' and 'ontology' respectively, or could they also be applied to political theory? As the *ontologisation* of the *Second Untimely Meditation* undertaken in *Being and Time* already suggests, there should be something *fundamental* and *constitutive* about the distinction between the antiquarian (past), the monumental (present) and the critical (future) that could be applied at least in principle to any particular *region* of Being, and therefore also to politics. However, we cannot just import Nietzsche's distinction to political theory as it is, since we cannot forget that it was originally thought in relation to history. And, although 'the monumental' and 'the critical' retain a certain degree of universality as categories, what would it mean to be 'antiquarian' in politics? It seems that there would not be a way to operationalise that particular concept in political theory that would not do violence both to politics and to Nietzsche's own reflection. So, I propose a *corresponding equivalent* to the distinction between the antiquarian, the monumental and the critical that would do justice to the political moment: one that we will call the *nostalgic*, the *opportunist* and the *utopian*. This threefold distinction should also correspond to the primacy of the past, the present and the future, respectively.

Another important note of caution should be signalled here. I have deliberately attempted to find in each case a word that would have a *double meaning*, with both 'good' and 'bad' connotations in order to follow Heidegger's thought that each standpoint, taken by itself, is equally *one-sided*. The 'opportunist' is clearly the term that has worse overtones but which, like Nietzsche and Heidegger's distinctions, it is not used conceptually here in a *moralising* way. It is true that in everyday language an 'opportunist' is usually someone who tries to take advantage or power in every given situation without thinking about the potential side effects, but it is equally undeniable that it refers to someone who is attentive to 'windows of opportunity' – a crucial concept as we will see later for the neo-Gramscian interpretation of the 'Podemos hypothesis'. Similarly, the etymology of the word 'nost-algia' takes us back to ancient Greek, where *nóstos*- means 'return' and -*àlgos* means 'pain', and the conjoined term was recuperated during Romanticism as a form of *melancholy*. 'Nostalgia' is clearly an ineradicable phenomenon (like Proust's madeleine); however, someone who is *solely and exclusively* 'nostalgic' is someone trapped in the past that cannot move on. Thirdly, and finally, the term 'utopia' also brings us back to the ancient Greek where it would literally mean a 'no-place' (*oú-tópos*), although it was actually coined by Thomas More (2003; see also: Fernández Buey, 2007, p. 73ff.). It is clear that a certain kind of 'utopianism' in the sense of *idealism* is necessary for any social transformation worthy of that name, but it is equally undeniable that, taken to the extreme, it leads to the same criticism that Marx and Engels once made of 'utopian socialism': 'personal inventive action' and 'fantastic conditions' (2010, p. 515). With such double meanings I have tried, then, at first glance, to replicate Nietzsche and Heidegger's own double gestures when they distinguish between uses and abuses, advantages and disadvantages, and authenticity from inauthenticity.

With this theoretical framework in mind, which should cross the *horizontal-temporal* distinction between the nostalgic, the opportunist and the utopian with the *vertical-existential* distinction between authenticity and inauthenticity, we will move now to the development of each and every one of these (six) political standpoints. But how should we proceed so that such an existential question regarding temporality in politics does not remain purely at the abstract level? Now we turn to Podemos as a case study. As the introduction hinted, Podemos represents a particularly illuminating example of the effect that time might have in politics in general and in populism in particular, since the three main currents in which the party was finally torn apart – *Pablistas*, *Errejonistas* and *Anticapitalistas* – can be said to correspond, *mutatis mutandis*, with the three political modes of the nostalgic, the opportunist and the utopian.

With the birth of Podemos in January 2014 both Iglesias and Errejón shared the same *opportunist* outlook in the very precise sense that we have defined here; that is, they gave pre-eminence to the demands of the *present* over those of the past and the future. We have to begin to use here everything that we have learnt before from Nietzsche and Heidegger, since it is obvious that what we are calling now 'opportunism' in relation to politics is clearly reminiscent of what Nietzsche understood under the banner of the 'monumental' with regards to history. Now, the monumental view of history proper to the person who wants to act in the present stands as diametrically opposed to what Nietzsche names as the *supra-historical*, characteristic of an Heraclitus or a Hegel with such a strong plastic power as to simply lean back and assimilate all the dialectical movements of the past, while being wholly incapable of moving a finger in the present. This is because they lack the 'blindness and injustice in the soul of that who acts' (Nietzsche, 2004, p. 65). Nietzsche perhaps best summarises the whole spirit of this moment in the *Second Untimely Meditation* when he claims: 'not respect for history; instead, you should have the courage to *make* history!' (1995, p. 180). Already we can acknowledge the first analogy between our Nietzschean reflection and Podemos' own story. Indeed, in the years that led up to the formation of the party after the 15M Indignados Movement (2011–2014) the left seemed to be well-established in a 'supra-historical' outlook that contrasted with the highest peak in social mobilisations in the last few decades (Portos, 2019, p. 49, figure 1). Either the 'objective conditions' were not ready yet from a Marxist point of view, or 'we should go slowly because we are going far away' from an autonomist logic of *accumulation* of forces; in each case, the question of *power* (both as potency and seizure) was constantly deferred. This is reminiscent of what Žižek says about the obsessional neurotic, who is 'frantically active in order to prevent the real thing from happening' (2006, p. 26). By contrast, once Podemos started walking by itself, Errejón kept repeating that any political revolution takes place 'without handbooks' (Errejón and Mouffe, 2016, p. 78) – repeating Gramsci's move in 'The Revolution against *Capital*' (1988, pp. 32–36) – and Iglesias famously proclaimed Marx's expression of 'storming heaven' in the first General Assembly at Vistalegre (2010, p. 132). These two gestures can be seen in the Nietzschean struggle to *make* history, perhaps blindly and unjustly, against any supra-historical point of view: 'then we will gladly acknowledge that the supra-historical outlook possesses more wisdom than we do, provided we can only be sure that we possess more life' (Nietzsche, 2004, p. 66).

So, at the very beginning both Iglesias and Errejón shared the same opportunist-monumental viewpoint, whereas Izquierda Anticapitalista seemed

to only accept this general outlook as a tactical concession for the time being, since its more futural anticapitalist demands could not be completely accommodated in the present. Paraphrasing Napoleon's famous dictum, quoted by Lenin, one could say that they thought 'we run for the elections, and then we see' [*on s'engage et puis … on voit*] (1965, p. 480). For Iglesias and Errejón, however, at least at this moment in time, opportunism was a much more *authentic* decision: they both saw, and intended to develop and expand, what they called the *window of opportunity* in the party system, and so running in the elections was not just an *instrumental* means that necessarily had to be exchanged at the end of the day by social capital. As Knott already pointed out in the introduction: 'populism does not emerge within a vacuum but, rather, within a very specific context: the context of crisis' (Knott 2024, p. 8). As Mazzolini and Borriello point out, 'another crucial difference lies in the fact that the radical left treated elections as simply mirroring the political capital accumulated in the social sphere; conversely, Podemos thought of elections as moments of "political acceleration", thus displaying a talent for engineering explosive and successful electoral campaigns' (2021, pp. 5–6). The *temporal* conflict signalled here between elections as *accumulation* and as *acceleration* is in its turn the expression of a more fundamental difference between authentic and inauthentic opportunism. Indeed, now we can clearly see that to live the present authentically in politics means to seize the 'window of opportunity', as opposed to merely seeing it as an *instrumental cost-benefit calculus*. This is an attempt to translate to the sphere of politics Heidegger's distinction between inauthentic and authentic presents as *making-present* and *instant* (see Table 4.1 above). As a matter of fact, when the present is lived inauthentically it is experienced as a series of 'nows' – therefore paving the way towards *instrumental rationality* – whereas, to quote *Being and Time*, 'that Present which is held in authentic temporality and which thus is authentic itself, we call it the "moment of vision". (…) It means the resolute rapture with which *Dasein* is carried away to whatever possibilities and circumstances are encountered in the Situation as possible objects of concern' (Heidegger, 2008, p. 367). So, the inauthentic 'making-present' is *closed* in the 'now', whereas the authentic 'instant' is open to the possibilities of the situation. As Knott also pointed out in his own analysis of Heidegger: 'populism entails the announcement of the end of a political "now-time", and the entry of reflections on significance by growing sectors of the public' (Knott 2024, p. 8). Another word for the latter is 'moment of vision' [*Augenblick*], a term that Heidegger extracts from Kierkegaard (2009), but more importantly for our argument is its resemblance to the 'window of opportunity'. Let us see one of the clearest examples of this 'blink of an eye' [*Augenblick*] in politics:

> This is only possible in *exceptional* situations, such as the one we are now in. It demands a specific strategy to identify the frameworks that could define this *new setting*, as well as the discourse to *project* it in the media sphere. When we insist on talking about *evictions, corruption and inequality*, for example, and resist getting dragged into debates on the form of the *state (monarchy or republic), historical memory or prison policy*, it doesn't mean that we don't have a stance on those issues or that we've 'moderated' our position. Rather, we assume that, without the machinery of institutional power, *it makes no sense at this point to focus on zones of struggle that would alienate us from the majority*, who are not 'on the left'. *And without being a majority, it is not possible to get access to the administrative machinery that would allow us to fight these discursive battles in other conditions*. (Iglesias, 2015, p. 16, my italics).

Now, this short fragment from 'Understanding Podemos' is an absolute manifesto of the *opportunist* kind in the precise sense that we are using it here, since it has all the ingredients characteristic of the *authentic present*. To begin with, the present is not seen as a series of 'nows' (*chronos*), therefore paving the way to an instrumental cost-benefit calculus (inauthentically), but as an 'exceptional moment' (*kairós*). Thus, in the 'blink of an eye', the present shows itself as open to the possibilities of the situation – or what Iglesias calls here the 'projection' of a 'new setting'. Perhaps what is most interesting for our purposes here is how this authentic opportunism leads to *prioritising the demands of the present* (evictions, corruption and inequality) above those that in Spain are usually associated to the past (state form and historical memory), although they should not necessarily have to, and the future (prison policy). Iglesias' justification is opportunist in our sense through and through: it makes no sense to focus on demands (*past or future*) that would alienate us from what the majority is *in the present*, since it does not make any sense either to raise demands (*in the present*) for which we do not have the power to resolve (*in the present*). Now, such an opportunist justification is precisely what was untenable for a party like Izquierda Anticapitalista which, at some point, would like to, understandably and legitimately, raise some demands that are more systemic and far-reaching – that is, 'utopian' (*utopian* here is not used in the colloquial sense of 'unrealistically fantasising', but in the precise temporal sense of prioritising the demands of the future over the past and the present). Our new theoretical framework, then, is able to explain, by virtue of the temporal dimension *alone*, why there was a certain inevitability in the conflict between the present-populists Iglesias and Errejón with the futurist-Marxists of Izquierda Anticapitalista.

This is the reason why in Vistalegre 1 in 2014, the dispute between the former, under 'Claro que Podemos' [*Of Course We Can*], and the latter, called

'Sumando Podemos' [*Adding Podemos*], was not raised so much in ideological or political principles but, most interestingly for our argument, in *temporal* ones. The question, which the registered members of the party had to resolve in open primaries, was in fact raised in the following *temporal* terms: What is the best model for a new and young party that has to face three elections in less than a year with a strategy that was called *Blitzkrieg* [War of Manoeuvre or Frontal Attack], in contradistinction to a longer-term 'war of position' – which is defined by Gramsci, for instance, as 'demanding enormous sacrifices by enormous infinite masses of people (… so that it is) concentrated, difficult and requires exceptional qualities of patience and inventiveness' (Gramsci, 1988, p. 230)? No wonder that the present of an 'electoral war machine' won with 80 per cent, although the anticapitalists had their *moment of truth* in pointing out the necessary measures for renewal: their proposal 'established the creation of a citizen's counsel elected via direct vote to individual candidates, which should have guaranteed its plurality and representativity, the election by lottery of a 20% of its members and the creation of a coordination team elected by the counsel and at least three spokespeople' (Rodríguez López, 2016, p. 94). As we can also see in this case, *utopianism*, in the exact sense of a prevalence of the future above the rest of time, also has both an authentic (it establishes a *horizon*) and an inauthentic mode (a mere *resolutive fiction*). Again, 'horizon' and 'resolutive fiction' designate here our attempt to transpose to the sphere of politics the Heideggerian distinction between authentic and inauthentic future: *anticipatory resoluteness* and *awaiting* – see Table 4.1. In effect, politicians are *utopian* in an *inauthentic* mode when they talk about *the future* by uttering empty promises such as 'we have to move forward, not backward'; however, one can also reappropriate the future in an *authentic* way by setting up a *horizon*, thereby reintroducing meaning and purpose into what is to come. This difference also coincides with the distinction in French between *futur* (future) and *a-venir* (to-come) that Derrida introduces to democracy (2006, p. 81). 'Resolutive fiction' as inauthentic future was proposed by Pablo Bustinduy and Jorge Lago – two members of Podemos' original Citizen's Counsel, one responsible for international relations and the other for culture – who define it as 'the attempt to narratively resolve something that would otherwise be experienced as a present and untenable social contradiction (...) a way of representing social conflict as something that has already been resolved or is in the process of being resolved' (2023, p. 6, my translation). The anticapalists did not get deceived by such resolutive fictions, and they authentically and conflictually proposed a horizon for the democratisation of Podemos. At this precise instant they had their moment of truth, but they lost, overwhelmed by the urgencies of the present.

Now, in order to move from Vistalegre 1 in 2014 to Vistalegre 2 in 2017, and therefore also from the *utopian* to the *nostalgic*, we have to ask what is the problem with the *present opportunist*? This question is crucial since it will explain why Iglesias adopted a nostalgic point of view, leaving Errejón alone in the 'window of opportunity'. Our proposal is that, in the present experienced authentically, as much as it opens up possibilities in the situation, it also produces a feeling of existential *Angst* if it remains completely one-sided. Indeed, by following any *new* demands just by the fact that they are accepted by the majority *in the present*, there is the risk of falling into what Heidegger calls *curiosity*: 'the possibility of understanding everything without previously making the thing one's own', at which point, '*Dasein* gets entangled in itself' (Heidegger, 2008, pp. 213, 223). I have tried to develop elsewhere why the concept of 'emptiness' is the most central and radical category in Laclau's theory of populism (Porta Caballé, 2021); for now, it suffices to say that it might also be the most *anxious* if there is not enough 'plastic power' in a political group in order to constantly maintain *open* the 'chain of equivalences'. The introduction highlighted the different readings of Laclau by Iglesias and Errejón and entailed the former interpreting it as *tactical* (subordinated to the objective of winning the first general election) whereas the latter understood it as *strategic* (the construction of 'a people' as a long-term process). Now, in the general election of December 2015 Podemos achieved 5 million votes, which would have been an outstanding success if it were not that the expectation was *to win*. This defeat in expectations necessarily recalibrated the *benefits* of the opportunist outlook, which had come at the great *cost* of breaking with tradition. As Chazel and Fernández Vázquez point out:

> Martin (2000), leaning on the work of Mancur Olson, showed that the split within a party can emerge for two reasons: (1) if the cost–benefit ratio is not beneficial anymore (in Podemos' case, Errejón considered the party had reached its glass ceiling by making an alliance with IU in the Unidos Podemos coalition); (2) because the 'individual aspirations grow over time' (Errejón thought the strategy with IU condemned Podemos to be an opposition force) (…) Electoral disappointments will develop 'intra-party disagreement' (Greene & Haber, 2016). (…) Errejón blamed Iglesias for defending an alliance with IU (leaving aside the broad-appeal strategy); while Iglesias started to see the limits of the 'transversal' strategy firstly defended by Errejón. (Chazel and Vázquez, 2019, p. 3)

This is the reason why, I want to argue, there is a retreat to a *nostalgic* point of view, epitomised in the *Pablista* return to the 'traditional left' in the aftermath

of 2015, as a certain guarantee of stability, certainty and tradition, in contra-distinction with the *Errejonistas*, who were left alone in the 'window of opportunity'. Such a retreat can be said to have culminated in the last meeting of the electoral repetition campaign before 26 June 2016, when Iglesias said that 'even more important than Podemos is the historical encounter with the traditional left' (La Sexta, 2016). Such a primacy of the past in politics is absolutely understandable and legitimate, and it can even be praised for its authentic *retrieving* of tradition beyond any inauthentic *forgetting* – see Table 4.1 – but it is equally undeniable that it moved away from the 'populist hypothesis' with its focus on present demands. In our attempt to translate Nietzsche and Heidegger's temporal categories to politics, note that the original 'Podemos hypothesis' did not merely and inauthentically *forget* the past; it understood it as more than a *sedimented tradition* (with its unchangeable symbols, fetishist words and flags), but also as an authentic *reactivation* of the conflict that originated that same tradition. It is important to remember, for instance, that the Bolsheviks did not name themselves as communists until Lenin *decided* to change the name from the original 'Social-democracy' in 1919, after the insurmountable betrayal of the SPD during the First World War. Sometimes one has to break with tradition precisely in order to remain *faithful* to the *truth-content* of that same tradition, and perhaps that is what Laclau is after when he borrows from the idea that 'Husserl called the routinization and forgetting of origins "sedimentation", and the recovery of the constitutive activity of thought "reactivation"' (1990, p. 34). In this last sense, Javier Franzé brilliantly summarises how Podemos originally attempted to reactivate the past:

> The Podemos discourse, therefore, principally associates the Transition with the old, those from above and the oligarchy. The past is no longer seen as the fratricidal spirit of the Second Republic and Franco's dictatorship as in the transition discourse; it is resignified in the light of the democracy/the people–oligarchy/the caste dichotomy. With democracy in this leading role, the historical context of the Transition discourse is diluted by another: that framed by the interests of those from below or those from above. The Second Republic is reclaimed as a time when popular-democratic politics has come to the fore, while the Transition is linked more to the Civil War in terms of the defeat of the people and the hijacking of democracy. This resignifying of the Second Republic, which links democracy with the empowerment of those from below rather than with anti-monarchism, denotes another defining characteristic of the Podemos discourse during this phase: the way in which it distances itself – in the light of 15M – from the traditional Spanish Left, with its strong attachment to the Left–Right

> dichotomy and, at the same time, from the monarchy versus republic, secularism versus confessionalism, and proletariat versus bourgeoisie debates. (Franzé, 2018, pp. 55–56).

However, once Iglesias realised that what was most important was 'the historical encounter with the traditional left', Podemos was finally torn apart into the three ecstatic times – *Pablistas* (past), *Errejonistas* (present) and *Anticapitalistas* (future) – whose symbiotic synergy used to be the source of its original unity and force, and we may consider the 'populist hypothesis' to have ended in Spain (2014–2016). Note that Iglesias had not only been the General Secretary of Podemos, but also the leader (face and voice) of all the historic bloc that had attempted to 'turn outrage into political change' since 2011, and so his personal retreat into nostalgia had profound effects on Spanish political culture more broadly. Podemos had always said that the 15M Indignados Movement had been the best 'vaccine' against any kind of fascist reaction to the economic crisis, and Podemos' national-popular strategy surely continued to help contain that possibility; but once the 'window of opportunity' was left unattended due to a relapse into nostalgia, alongside the increasing Catalan conflict in 2017, the far-right party VOX began to rise into that void. 'Behind every fascism there is a failed revolution', as Žižek echoes Benjamin, and so the movement from privileging the present to putting the past first also implied a change of mood in the Spanish left itself, which had moved from outrage to hope, from hope to frustration, and now from frustration to *resentment*. This displacement enthroned the nostalgic paradigm as hegemonic in Spanish politics as a whole but also in the left in particular and turned *ressentiment* into the general category that can explain and illuminate the new cycle. *Ressentiment* quite literally means to 'feel again' a harm or damage caused *in the past*, by projecting onto the outside its blame or guilt in a moralising way as a result of one's own weakness or impotence *in the present* (Nietzsche, 1989, 36ff.). Now, the fall of 'the people' as an empty signifier capable of uniting the different *present* demands in a chain of equivalences against 'the caste' turned this hatred inward onto the left itself, fragmenting those same struggles and forcing them to compete with each other on who was to blame for the 'failed revolution' in the *past*. The obsession for finding 'when exactly did it all go wrong in the past' has produced, for instance, brilliant Proustian analyses such as Eduardo Maura's *The 90s*, which locates in this decade the origin of the simultaneous 'fear and euphoria', 'violence and consensus', which becomes constitutive of the 'Spanish democratic modernisation' (2018, pp. 12–13, 16). But the retreat into nostalgia has also found a series of more political 'returns', such as the usual 'return to Marx' undertaken by a certain revival of workerism, or the

return to traditional values like 'the family' or Catholicism led by a new red-brown cultural sector. Although both of these movements are opposed politically, we think that our theoretical framework developed here can explain, by virtue of the *temporal* dimension *alone*, why a general tendency towards *nostalgia* in Spanish politics appeared, as a reaction to the fall of Podemos's exclusive focus onto *the present*.

Clearly, our analysis cannot claim to be fully *objective* since, like any other, it emerges from a *situated* point of view. But we have at least attempted to be *equable* by recognising that each of the three temporal positions is equally *one-sided* if taken separately; at the same time that each of them has its own *moment of truth*. And we are now able to summarise the results of our investigation in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

History (Nietzsche)	**Antiquarian**	**Monumental**	**Critical**
	It feels at home in the world by preserving and revering the past	It sees history as a mountain range or relay race of great moments	It knows that everything that has come to be must perish
Abuse/ Disadvantage	It only knows how to preserve life, not how to engender it	It deceives by analogies	It forgets that condemning an aberration does not change the fact that we originated from it
Use/ Advantage	It shows that we can live here because here we have lived	It shows that greatness was once possible and thus it can be possible again	It has the arrogance to propose a second nature
Time (Heidegger)	**Past**	**Present**	**Future**
Inauthentic	Forgetting	Instant	Awaiting
Authentic	Retrieving	Moment of vision	Anticipatory resoluteness
Politics	**Nostalgic**	**Opportunist**	**Utopian**
Inauthentic	Sedimented tradition	Instrumental rationality	Resolutive fiction
Authentic	Reactivation	Window of opportunity	Horizon

5. Conclusion: Being-as-a-whole-within-time-ness in Politics

In the end, we are finally in a position to ask a crucial question: Are our results restricted to populism in particular, and even specially to our case study, Podemos in Spain (2014–2016), or could they also be extrapolated to political theory in general? Against the background of Arditi's well-known criticism that Laclau sometimes confounds 'populism' with 'the political' (2003), if one takes the position of Biglieri and Cadahia, there might be a productive 'mutual contamination' rather than just a mere 'semantic overlap' (2021, p. 16). It should come as no surprise that if populism stands effectively as the 'royal road' to the political (Laclau, 2007b, p. 67), then the categories developed here with regards to the case of Podemos could be easily operationalised for the purposes of political theory in general. Is not Marxism, for instance, also divided into three souls: the nostalgic (historical materialism), the opportunist (theory of revolution) and the utopian (communism)?

Finally, what is the most general conclusion that we can extract from our concrete temporal journey? That, *at least in the Spanish case, there was a strong correlation between populism and the present, so that, when the latter prevailed as the primary temporality, the former also followed as its most adequate political form; and, conversely, when the priority of the present collapsed, populism also faded away*. Whether this is a general law that could apply to populism itself would require a broader comparison with other contemporaneous case studies – the 'pink tide' in Latin America, Syriza, La France Insoumise, Jeremy Corbyn and Bernie Sanders. However, if this were to be the case more broadly, a work should be done in order to study the profound link that might be binding the 'metaphysics of presence' of the Derridean type with the 'instrumental rationality' that the Frankfurt School so fiercely criticises – and which we have used here as the defining factor of the *inauthentic opportunist*. How these two apparently opposed schools could work together in favour of a critique of *presentism* (in politics, in our case) is not a completely unexplored terrain, and some work has been done recently in this direction (Macdonald & Ziarek, 2007).

This chapter has demonstrated four theses. Firstly, time is not just an object that is *presently* 'there', but it *temporalises itself* in the 'unity of its ecstases', which necessarily include the past and the future. Secondly, for this very reason, politics is not, and it can never be, merely 'what goes on *now*', the decisions taken by political actors *in the present*, but it is also the *inheritances* and *expectations* that these actors hold at the instant of taking them. Thirdly, the existential decision between inauthenticity and authenticity traverses the whole relationship that politics establishes with time in each case. An inauthentic politician, for instance, resignedly negotiates with the symbols of the past

(*sedimented tradition*), makes a cost/benefit calculus in the present (*instrumental rationality*), and utters empty promises with regards to the future (*resolutive fiction*). By contrast, an authentic politics that is still *to come* would require to reappropriate the truth-content and the original conflict within the past (*reactivation*), see the exceptional possibilities that open in a situation in order to act in the present (*window of opportunity*), and project a new setting of meaning and purpose into the future (*horizon*). Fourthly, and lastly, we hope to have sufficiently shown that each of the three temporal figures that constitute the political – the nostalgic, the opportunist and the utopian – are equally one-sided if taken separately in-and-for-itself, and that an authentic politics would require being-as-a-whole-within-time-ness by integrating the past, the present and the future with an equal weight. Only then will populism be able to cry, like Hamlet, 'time is out of joint. O cursed spite / that ever I was born to set it right!' (Shakespeare, 2003, p. 52).

Notes

1. An embryonic part of this essay was presented at the 6th Populist Specialist Group (PSA) Workshop at the University of Brighton 22–23 September 2022 under the title 'Politics and Time: The Nostalgic, the Opportunist and the Utopian. The Case of Podemos'. I would like to thank especially Andy Knott, Giorgos Venizelos, Emmy Eklundh, Lazaros Karavasilis, Óscar García Agustín and Nicolás Ortiz Ruiz for their insightful comments, suggestions and criticisms, without which this essay would not have looked the same. This essay could not have been possible either without the umbrella offered by the research project 'Post-foundational Contemporary Thought: Theoretical-Critical Analysis of Contemporary Ontologies of Negativity and the Question of the Violence of the Foundation' (PID2020-117069GB-I00), funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation, and with Laura Llevadot as Leading Researcher at the University of Barcelona.
2. We could ask ourselves at this point: Why are these meditations 'un-timely'? *Unzeitgemässe* perhaps is one of the most difficult Nietzschean terms to translate into English. In this case, it does not mean 'eternal' or 'out-dated', in the sense of being '*out* of [its] time'. Actually, if one takes a look at the other *Untimely Meditations* one realises that Nietzsche is not uninterested in his *own* time, the present: *David Strauss: The Confessor and the Writer* [1873], *Schopenhauer* as Educator [1874] and Richard Wagner in Bayreuth [1876]. In fact, Nietzsche's deliberate intention in each and every one of these meditations is to ruthlessly criticise a certain fashion or trend that has achieved fame or success in modern culture – particularly German culture – and to

show that their importance vanishes when they are looked upon from a certain *distance*. We have thus clarified that 'un-timely' does not mean completely 'out of time', but rather to look at the present from a certain distance. Now, from *what* distance does Nietzsche intend to look at the present of modern German culture? It is not only a *geographical* distance, considering the fact that Nietzsche had just had to renounce to his Prussian citizenship in order to accept the offer of a full Professorship at the University of Basel in Switzerland at twenty-four. Rather, his *exile* is more profound than that of a simply stateless person because he already had been *estranged* first by the study of classical philology. Nietzsche then compares his own time with that of Greece, more than any other epoch, and he starts to get in a bad mood. And there is no other reason as to why he then moves to ruthlessly attacking his own education (historicism), his master (Schopenhauer) and his friend (Wagner). This (self-)criticism is what the *Untimely Meditations* are meant to accomplish. No wonder that when Nietzsche reflects upon them in his autobiography, Ecce Homo, he appropriates the maxim of his dear Stendhal: 'always enter into society with a duel' (1989, p. 280). No wonder either that when he began to brandish the sword in his Unpublished Writings against his first enemy, David Strauss, he presented his attacks as a series of 'letters from a foreigner' (Nietzsche, 1995, pp. 155, 159, 162, 173). So, to begin with, we have thus clarified that Nietzsche's *Meditations* are *untimely* not in the sense of being 'in-actual' but rather in the sense of having become estranged or exiled from their *own* time, by 'an-*other* time' (that of Greece, especially) (Llinares, 2018, pp. 9–13). In this chapter we will also attempt to look at politics in an *untimely* fashion, as a 'foreigner' of the present, since politics is not just what 'goes on now', the decisions taken by political actors, but also the *inheritances* and *expectations* that these actors hold at the instant of making them.

3. After Lucien Goldmann's pathbreaking work *Lukacs and Heidegger: Towards a New Philosophy* (2009), it is difficult not to recognise that Heidegger's conception of 'inauthenticity' in *Being and Time* [1927] is nothing more than a copy of Lukacs' use of 'alienation' or 'reification' in *History and Class Consciousnes*, published only four years before ([1923] 1971). If we have decided to maintain Heidegger's terms in this chapter in the end it is only for two reasons: (1) because it is Heidegger in *Being and Time* who most explicitly links (in-)authenticity with *temporality* (which is the main topic of this essay), whereas in Lukacs it still remains restricted to a great extent to the economy of work and production; and (2) because it is Heidegger who explicitly draws the link with Nietzsche's *Second Untimely Meditation* (which serves as the base for the present chapter). Nonetheless, the reader should

keep in mind that, from a left-Heideggerian point of view, 'authentic' time is just the same as 'non-alienated' time, to the extent that the definitive hegemony of the 'time of the clock' as a series of now-moments also corresponds with the peak of the capitalist Industrial Revolution. To the four kinds of alienation defined by Marx in the *Philosophical and Economic Manuscripts*, then, one is tempted to add a fifth one: the worker's alienation from time itself.

4. For a longer, more developed and detailed reading of this, Heidegger dedicates volume 46 of his *Gesamtausgabe* exclusively to the *Interpretation of Nietzsche's Second Untimely Meditation* (2016).

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