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CHAPTER 12: ENTREPRENEURIAL POPULISM AND THE RADICAL CENTRE: EXAMPLES FROM AUSTRIA AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Reinhard Heinisch and
Steven Saxonberg

ENTREPRENEURIAL POPULISM A....

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Preface

Reinhard Heinisch, Christina Holtz-Bacha, and Oscar Mazzoleni

This handbook is part of a series of works devoted to the study of political populism published by Nomos in cooperation with Bloomsbury. The three editors of this volume also share overall responsibility for the entire series and view this new handbook as a conceptual introduction to the different topics related to populism featured in this programme. We opted specifically for the title ‘political populism’ to demarcate the subject matter of this handbook from literature devoted to the study of cultural manifestations of populism, including popular religious beliefs. Thus, many of the concepts, issues and empirical cases analysed in this work should be viewed as calls for further research and, more broadly, an invitation to engage in scholarship on populism as it relates to political actors, political mobilisation, political institutions, as well as political discourse and style.

A project of this magnitude and range necessitated the collaboration of scholars from different disciplines—most notably political scientists, scholars of communication, historians and sociologists. In all cases, the authors were asked to bear the following points in mind when approaching their respective contributions:

- 1) The authors were expected to use their own expertise and judgement to identify the pivotal issues, controversies and new directions in their respective areas of scholarship. Thus, contributors had considerable freedom to present their particular approaches. However, they were also asked to reflect on the core idea that populism can be conceived as a response to a crisis of conventional politics or, more precisely, a crisis of legitimacy that established institutions, mainstream political actors and the business of politics as usual have encountered.
- 2) Due to the diversity of disciplines and research traditions involved, it was clear that the handbook would not present a uniform conceptualisation of and perspective on populism. Instead, the fundamental purpose of a handbook such as this was to introduce readers to a range of ideas. However, all contributors were expected to focus on current debates, discuss the dominant approach and most prominent conceptualisation, and present shortcomings and criticisms.

While this handbook included chapters coming from different disciplines, it mainly focuses on core aspects in political science and in communication sciences. These are arguably two disciplines whose insights into the study of political populism are central to understanding the phenomenon and whose respective works most complement one another. Scholars in political science are keenly aware that media and communication play an outsize role in the process of understanding populism’s appeal and impact, but political scientists often lack the analytical tools to examine populism’s dimensions in terms of communication. By the same token, much of the rapidly increasing political science literature on populism still remains to have an impact on communication and media studies. Although we are aware that these subfields are often divided as a consequence of increasing specialisation in the social sciences in general, we think that it is nevertheless necessary for scholars in different fields to also talk to each other and

draw on each other's ideas. Thus, one of the aims of this book was to foster a closer relationship between these two strands of scholarship.

Another goal of this handbook was to focus both on empirical scholarship and current issues. As such, we did not want to present populism as a settled concept, but instead wanted to show the tension between different approaches and also present the controversies and new directions that characterise activity in this research community. At the same time, we hoped to prevent the handbook from becoming too eclectic and also avoid the often-heard lament that populism is an inscrutable concept. As a result, the authors of this volume discuss several of the most widely used conceptualisations at present but also highlight their respective shortcomings. Within this context, we also introduce a conceptually novel approach designed to address crucial problems within existing ideas and propose a way to bridge divisions between the current frameworks.

The Challenges and Opportunities of Populism Research

Scholarship on populism has made substantial progress and is, according to Mudde (2016), poised to move into a new, fourth wave of populism research. After mostly historical and descriptive work from 1945 to the 1980s, which was focused on the historical continuity, the 1990s saw an infusion of social science theories in the study of populism. Subsequently after 2000 scholars began to focus on supply-side aspects of radical right-wing populist politics and more clearly on the populist party, its organisation, operation and membership. As far as contemporary research is concerned, Mudde encourages new work to go beyond the narrow themes and policy issues, such as immigration, that have often characterised publications on populism and embrace the phenomenon in its entire complexity, especially when presented in manifestations and located in areas that have, thus far, been under researched.

The enormous attention populism now receives in the media, among the public and within the social science community presents scholars of populism with numerous opportunities but also new pitfalls. As research on populism has moved from the margins to the scientific mainstream, it has become easier to secure project funding and present relevant research in public fora. At the same time, the term populism is almost universally employed to describe a large number of different political phenomena, political actors, policy decisions and regimes that often have little more in common than the label alone. The surge of populism has also increased the pressure on social scientists to come up with clear and easily communicable answers that satisfy the curiosity of people trying to understand the political changes unfolding from the Americas to Europe and beyond.

The renewed interest in populism is drawing in new scholars who have not been part of this previously close-knit research community, whose members have been used to labouring in the margins of social science networks. This development is hugely welcome as it incorporates fresh perspectives and new insights. However, it also means that several ideas about populism that were once believed to be settled are now being called into question once again, renewing the impression that little has been learned thus far. At the same time, other scholars, for whom the question of conceptualisation is indeed settled, have embarked on the next phase of scholarship by no longer treating populism as an outsider or protest phenomenon but as one that

has become mainstream in the sense that it has taken hold in the centres of political power. As a result, several scholars are increasingly engaging in the study of the impact of populism on government, party systems and policy-making (see, for example, Akkerman et al. 2016, Wolinetz and Zaslove 2017).

Despite the clearly global nature of political populism at the present time, research communities are still fairly segregated and remain reluctant to take issue with each other's approaches or draw on each other's insights and conceptualisations. For a long time, the Western European research community all but ignored decades' worth of works on Latin American populism, although recently scholars have begun to work more comparatively (see, for example, Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012). These different ways of approaching the subject matter were also rooted in different research cultures and epistemologies. In fact, even within the European context, it is desirable, to achieve a more successful integration of the scholarship on populism in Western Europe, the Nordic countries, Central and Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans, and the Mediterranean. An even bigger challenge has been the effort to overcome disciplinary boundaries, such as those that exist between political science, history, sociology and communication.

It is with these challenges and opportunities in mind that we approached the design of this handbook. It is intended to present a snapshot of social science scholarship on populism, which is both on the verge of embarking on new research agendas and is in need of greater transdisciplinary and international cooperation.

Our Objectives

By their nature, handbooks seek to be as comprehensive as possible. While we agree that such a work needs to reflect a substantial number of different issues and geographic areas, selectivity and focus also matter: First of all, a handbook is not an encyclopaedia but should rather point to those areas of research and discussions in the field that are most promising or most controversial. Thus, we have asked our authors to show why their respective topics matter within the overall debate and to identify the major controversies in their areas of research. Our contributors were also invited to demonstrate directions of progress and suggest where scholarship in their different areas might turn next. This was important as we also conceived this handbook to be something according to which scholars just entering the populism research field could orient themselves.

Second, the book is subdivided into three parts and 24 chapters covering in Part I the foundation and conceptualisation of populism, in Part II populist manifestations in Europe and the Americas and in Part III emerging conceptual challenges and new research agendas. Throughout the handbook, the focus is placed on empirical research, and thus the conceptualisations and theoretical accounts introduced in the first part are intended to provide the tools for empirical analysis either for cross-national comparisons or individual case studies in the subsequent chapters.

Third, the handbook is selective not only in its concentration on theory and empirical application but also in its focus on contemporary expressions of the phenomenon. Thus, party-based populism in Europe in its various aspects forms the core of the analysis, but there are also ex-

tensive sections devoted to populism in the Americas and other novel manifestations of populism.

Fourth, an important editorial decision was made to cultivate a deliberate focus on communication and to bridge scholarship between communication and political science. Following the rise of populist parties in Western Europe and the Nordic countries, communication researchers have only recently taken up the topic. This coincided with the emergence of the Internet and social media networks, which provide political actors with direct access to the electorate, thus shaking up the political communication process and the role of the traditional mass media. To stress the interconnected nature of political science and communication in understanding populism, the book does not have separate parts devoted to these two fields but presents the different types of analysis alongside each other in the same conceptual context.

We, the editors, hope that the readers of this handbook will take away a deeper understanding of the complexities and challenges of research on populism. We also believe that they will appreciate our intention not to convey definitive answers but rather to maintain a degree of openness towards different theoretical approaches that are each elaborated with their respective strengths and weaknesses. We believe that it is not for us, the editors, but rather the readers to decide for themselves which ideas seem most persuasive and, thus, for a new generation of researchers to determine what frameworks to employ and avenues of enquiry to pursue. We hope that this handbook will make a significant contribution to this process.

Acknowledgements

A handbook is, by definition, a collaborative endeavour and we, the editors, want to thank the many contributing authors for their dedication and commitment to the project. Apart from the editors and authors, there are many other individuals without whom this project would not have come to fruition. We are especially indebted to Vanessa Marent, a doctoral fellow at the University of Salzburg, for corresponding with the authors and managing the texts during their various stages of development and review. We want to thank Christina Anderer, Fabian Habersack and Markus Schwaiger from the University of Salzburg and Maxime Bottel from the University of Lausanne for their assistance with final editing. We must also acknowledge the generous financial support we received from the University of Lausanne to assist with index development, translation and language editing. We also wish to thank our many colleagues whose counsel and helpful comments on various chapters have helped improve them and have enriched this handbook's content.

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Introduction

Reinhard Heinisch, Christina Holtz-Bacha, and Oscar Mazzoleni

Living in a Populist Era

From Brexit and the presidency of Donald Trump to elections in Poland, Spain and Austria, from referenda in Greece, Switzerland and Italy to radical political change in the Philippines, international headlines point to one common factor: populism. It is a term that has become synonymous both with the rejection of unpopular out-of-touch elites and the descent of politics into demagoguery and irrational discourse. Along with a similar emphasis in other publications, *The Washington Post* called 2016 ‘the year of populism’¹. The large and growing number of scholarly publications devoted to this phenomenon attests that this is not just media hyperbole. As a research area, the study of populism has long since moved from the margins to the centre of attention in the community of researchers.

The growth and spread of populism, along with associated developments, have been nothing short of stunning. In the elections for the European Parliament in 2014, right-wing populist and Eurosceptic parties made significant gains in 21 of the 28 EU member states, winning between about 20 and 28 per cent of the vote in Austria, Denmark, France, Italy and the United Kingdom. Major referenda in Switzerland, the UK and Italy have favoured populist opposition movements, representing a resounding rejection of the political mainstream. There are now no longer countries that can be considered ‘safe’ from populism and populist parties. Whereas previously Germany was thought to be relatively immune to far right populism because of its history, and the UK was thought to have a barrier against resurgent third parties in the form of its first-past-the-post electoral system, these expectations clearly no longer apply. The Alternative for Germany (AfD) had been making strong gains in the recent elections and was poised to enter the German parliament as these lines were written. The United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) was not only the major force behind the Brexit vote, in which the tepid Remain campaign was ultimately overcome, but they have ambitions to succeed Labour as the country’s second major party. Even the Nordic countries—often admired for their efficient and transparent political systems, corruption-free governments, and extensive welfare states that have protected their populations from the effects of globalisation—have each developed formidable populist parties. In Denmark and Norway, these parties have either already entered public office or supported conservative governments. Southern Europe, which had long been bypassed by the populist wave, has in recent years seen the emergence of new left-wing populist protest parties in Greece and Spain. In Italy, two different populist parties, one older—the Northern League (LN)—and one newer—the Five Star Movement—are competing with each other.

Although the main causes of populist protest in Europe are often seen as related to the impacts of globalisation, fears of a European superstate eroding national sovereignty or public corrup-

¹ Adam Taylor, ‘The global wave of populism that turned 2016 upside down,’ *The Washington Post*, 19 December 2016.

tion, one struggles to explain how two of Europe's most prosperous and, by reputation, well-governed countries, Switzerland and Norway, which are not even members of the European Union, each have their own right-wing populist party. Populism is not only attributed to a complex set of factors and conditions, but it is also not limited to the far right or the far left. In fact, it can be found in different parts of the political spectrum. In Eastern Europe and elsewhere, we have seen business tycoons enter the electoral arena with personalised parties and promises of radical change but who fit neither left-wing nor right-wing political models. The Czech billionaire Andrej Babiš and his newly founded party ANO 2011, which achieved almost 18 per cent of the vote in their first parliamentary election in 2011, is probably the best example within the EU.

The year 2016 also reminded us that populism is not limited to Europe but is indeed a global phenomenon, as reflected in the elections of Donald Trump and the new Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, in addition to the various populist regimes in Latin America, most notably in Venezuela, Bolivia, and Ecuador.

The growing success of populists points to the wholesale repudiation of conventional politics and the political establishment in many democracies. This attests to a fundamental crisis of representation by existing political institutions and representatives. In a sense, we are witnessing the breakdown of established political distinctions and the reconfiguration of fault lines, as a result of which previous conceptions of left and right are difficult to maintain. The campaigns of Donald Trump and various right-wing European populists, such as the French National Front (FN), have disseminated mixed messages that echo leftist positions in their rejection of free trade, liberal markets, and economic integration, while at the same time campaigning on religious, ethno-nationalist, racist, and authoritarian ideas typically championed by the far right. Populists have injected emotion, spectacle, and demagoguery into politics to an extent unprecedented in the West since the end of the Second World War.

These political changes are bolstered by a rapidly transforming media and communication environment in which established institutions are losing control over information and its distribution. What critics consider to be the echo chambers of social media and the ability of populists to gain unfiltered access not only to their activist base but much larger receptive audiences have been clearly on display in recent elections and referendum campaigns. Fake news accounts, calculated provocations, manufactured outrage and false claims were factors in elections in 2016. For example, in both the US and Austria, the candidates running for office had to fend off internet campaigns claiming they were suffering from fatal diseases. A bizarre conspiracy theory circulated through social media that Hillary Clinton was supposedly running a child pornography ring out of a suburban Washington pizzeria. The story was pushed by someone associated with the Trump camp and even led to a shootout between the police and a disturbed individual who took the story to be true. 'Post-truth' politics, declared by Oxford Dictionaries' 2016 Word of the Year, has been particularly associated with events like the Brexit campaign and the 2016 presidential election in the US. In these and other cases, the principal problem has not only been the patently untrue nature of the populists' claims and blatant demagoguery but frequently the denial by populist politicians and activists that a common factual basis even exists. As a result, on issues ranging from the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and economic predictions about the consequences of Brexit to climate science and US intelligence briefings on Russian interference in the US elections, experts whose findings conflicted with ideological assumptions and popular claims found them-

selves derided or under attack. In a televised debate during the Brexit campaign, the UK's Secretary of State for Justice Michael Gove famously stated that 'people in this country have had enough of experts,'² while falsely claiming that Britain was sending £350 million (€408 million) to the EU every week.³

Populism in its various manifestations represents a rejection of societal and political elites. The central argument in this book is that political populism is largely a response to a fundamental crisis of legitimacy of political institutions and actors. However, as will become clear, the underlying explanations neither have singular causes nor are they simple. Moreover, not every form of protest nor every electoral success of a far left or far right party is attributable to populism. In fact, one can make problematic oversimplifications when all manners of unconventional or unexpected political events and developments are subsumed under the label of 'populism'. There are two dangers one has to guard against in particular here: First, the term populism may refer to entirely different frames of reference that need to be distinguished. For example, a conservative Bavarian politician choosing colourful language and emotive expressions to connect with 'ordinary' voters in his home district may be engaging in populist style or rhetoric. Likewise, a Green Party billboard campaign using provocative imagery and exaggerated claims against the dangers posed by TTIP may be employing a populist strategy. Yet, in neither case are the political actors and their respective parties 'populist' in an ideational sense, which is the way populism is understood by many authors in this handbook.

By ideational populism, we mean the construction of a dichotomy comprising, on the one hand, an amorphous people, generally seen to be virtuous and hardworking and, on the other hand, a sinister elite or out-group whose interests and actions pose harm. Populists claim that the sovereignty of the people is subverted and betrayed by the elites, who are often depicted as conspiring with outside agents. In their campaigns, populists typically promise radical change and a return to some idealised previous state of the community in which people will feel protected and to which they have an emotional connection.

The other major danger when working with the concept of populism is to mistake all ideologically motivated protest for populism. People rejecting the EU or 'Washington politics,' or politicians invoking Islamophobia, racist ideas, and appeals to traditionalism may in fact be Eurosceptics, right-wing conservatives or far right radicals but not populists. Being populist implies a degree of ambivalence and opportunism in the interest of maximising votes, which is less common among hard right-wing parties more beholden to political principle and programmatic ideology. An example of such adaptation, with the intent of maximising voter support and abandoning previously held ideological positions, was undertaken by the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ), arguably one of the oldest and most successful populist parties in Europe. It has transformed itself over the past 20 years from a pro-European, anti-clerical, anti-Semitic, German-nationalist, economically liberal, middle-class party into a Eurosceptic, Austro-patriotic, pro-Israeli but anti-Islamic, economically protectionist body that appeals especially to blue-collar voters and presents itself as the defender of European Christendom.

2 Henry Mance, 'Britain has had enough of experts, says Gove', *Financial Times*, 3 June 2016, <https://www.ft.com/content/3be49734-29cb-11e6-83e4-abc22d5d108c> (accessed 12 December 2016).

3 Sam Ashworth-Hayes, 'Why Vote Leave's use of £350m figure is a lie', *InFacts*, 27 May 2016, <https://infacts.org/vote-leave-lying-saying-send-eu-350-million-week/> (accessed 12 December 2016); 'EU referendum: The claims that won it for Brexit, fact checked', *The Telegraph*, 29 June 2016, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/06/22/eu-referendum-fact-checking-the-big-claims/> (accessed 12 December 2016).

Surveying the Phenomenon: Precursors and Regional Variation

Nearly as ubiquitous as articles and commentaries on populism is the assertion that it is a contested concept and difficult to define. Accordingly, populism is believed to have a complicated history and to be closely connected to various belief systems. In relation to this, Damir Skenderovic discusses the etymology and history of the term in Chapter 1, and Dietmar Loch writes about ‘Conceptualising the Relationship between Populism and the Radical Right’ in Chapter 3, where he discusses the party families to which radical right-wing populist parties belong. His contribution also focuses on their core agenda of advocating nativist protectionism in a globalised world.

Indeed, in the field of populism research there have been numerous conceptualisations, which are themselves derived from several fundamental approaches that differ, as has already been mentioned, in their ideas on whether populism is primarily ideational, discursive, stylistic, or strategic in nature. While the details of this debate, along with a more nuanced conceptualisation, will be discussed throughout this book, it is important to understand that these differences in approach have much to do with the way populism has been concretely experienced in distinct historical, political and social contexts. The variation in the way populism has been perceived at different stages and in different locations has shaped how it is understood by the public and also by scholars. This applies as much to the use of the term ‘populism’ and its political connotations as it does to its scientific classification as a social phenomenon. Therefore, before we tackle the question of defining and conceptualising populism, we need to undertake an initial survey of the phenomenon, briefly tracing its evolution and geographic spread as a complement to how populism will be covered in this handbook.

Origins

When populism surfaced as a broader trend in Western Europe some three decades ago, it was initially perceived as a new phenomenon despite political precursors such as *Qualunquismo* in Italy in the 1940s and Poujadism in France in the 1950s. In the Americas, by comparison, populism has had a long tradition and rather different ideological associations.

The term populism is inseparably linked to the word *populus*—the people—from which it partly derives its meaning. It is also closely connected to the adjective ‘popular’, with which it shares an operative logic. Populists must first and foremost remain popular to maintain credibility and legitimacy. Like the *Populares*, pre-imperial Roman senators who stood in opposition to the *Optimates*, the senatorial aristocracy, populists may be politically self-serving, but they need to be perceived as serving above all the interests of ordinary people. Similarly to ancient Rome, where these populist senators were associated with the plebs, the unsophisticated ‘common folk’, the populists of today tend to find their voters especially among the ranks of blue-collar workers, those without university level education, and people from small towns and rural areas. Although it is easy to observe and even measure the sections of the population that support populism, the ‘people,’ as evoked in populist rhetoric and imagery, are often vague and ill-defined. ‘What people?’ Alfio Mastropaolo asks in Chapter 2 on populist representation, since populism often chooses to be purposefully ambivalent about the people it wants to represent. Throughout its history, populism has been associated both with class divi-

sions and a centre-periphery dialectic. Its provenance is the ‘heartland,’ a euphemism for the hinterland, where people feel imposed upon by far-off elites in the central cities.

The etymology of the term populism in Anglo-Saxon and Western European usage, as Damir Skenderovic suggests in Chapter 1, is closely associated with the history of populism in the US, which arguably began with the ‘Jacksonian revolution’. In the early part of the nineteenth century, Andrew Jackson styled himself as the advocate of the yeoman farmers, the simple homesteaders, and frontiersmen, whose support carried the outsider Jackson into the presidency. His followers had lost patience with the policies and posturing of the coastal elites and wanted to wrest power away from big business and the Jeffersonian ‘aristocracy’ in office in Washington.

Nativism and Rural Populism: The United States and Elsewhere

From early on, American populism has also been strongly connected with nativism, which was vividly on display in Donald Trump’s campaign rhetoric and is a common feature of populist parties’ discourse from Austria to Bolivia. As Hans-Georg Betz writes in Chapter 22, nativism contains strands of nationalism, xenophobia, ethnocentrism, and racism, and has been predominantly centred around demands to protect domestic labour against competition from migrant workers. In extreme cases, it is directed against every kind of immigrant and even refuses to recognise native-born minorities. American populism has frequently mobilised the native population against especially poor immigrants, such as the Irish and, later, Jews, Eastern Europeans and Italians, as well as, more recently, Latin Americans and Asians.

Both early and more contemporary forms of populism in the US succeeded in connecting common sensibilities to big political ideas to suggest a new direction for the country. The populism that in the contemporary US of Donald Trump finds expression in the wall on the border to Mexico or the ‘tearing up’ of free trade agreements and the associated order of liberal internationalism, was expressed in Jackson’s time through the idea of a free land grab, supported by ‘manifest destiny,’ running all the way to the Pacific coast. Not unlike Trump’s supporters, who relish the idea of ‘draining the swamp’ in Washington, the Jacksonians also wanted to curb the power of the central state in favour of greater local control. The urban modernisation propagated by American business and supported politically by the Whigs remained anathema to Jackson and his support base (Benson 1961; Decker 2000: 139). In the end, Jackson, who was a polarising figure like Trump and sought to communicate with people directly in a straightforward manner, reshaped America by expanding the power of the presidency and turning the nationalism of southwestern frontiersman into the central ideational framework that has defined the country ever since. Whereas the founding fathers appeared to be more like accidental revolutionaries who otherwise resembled English country gentlemen and were treated in popular narratives as an exalted and saintly group, the heroes in Jacksonian and post-Jacksonian America were different: the new mythology celebrated rugged individualism and the ‘common man’ doing uncommon things. It is this radical break with the elites and the positioning of the common person at the centre of America’s story that makes Jackson the precursor to populism in the US, as the man who laid the foundations of its positive future image.

Following the Civil War, the US underwent yet another period of tumultuous societal and economic change to which—not unlike today—the established political system failed to respond

adequately. The increasing concentration of economic wealth, the growing power of industry, the economic decline of rural populations, especially in the South and the enormous influx of immigrants crowding into urban areas led to the formation of political movements that embraced a common man ethos. Often these movements were strongly xenophobic and, especially in the South, overtly racist. In urban and industrial areas, similar pressures resulted in the emergence of radical leftist political currents with syndicalist and anarchist tendencies. Common to both was the idea that simple hardworking people were threatened by a conspiracy of powerful elites and their economic interests. These elites were said to have betrayed the foundational ideals of the US, which is reminiscent of Donald Trump's theme that America needs to be taken 'back' to an earlier, better place.

The idea of conspiracies and backroom deal-making by unaccountable insiders permeates populist discourse the world over. It is this very notion that, in the eyes of populists, has given representative democracy a bad name as it is often associated with trading off general interests for special interests and, thus, making undue compromises and engaging in deception behind the people's back. Frustrations with the political order in the US culminated in the foundation of the Populist Party (1892–6), which sought to establish itself as a third force in politics. The central figure at the time was William Jennings Bryan (1860–1925), an advocate of small-scale farmers against big industry. Ultimately, the Populist Party did not survive the political embrace by the Democrats, who offered Bryan the opportunity to run as their joint presidential candidate in 1896 and 1900. However, the memory of the Jacksonian revolution, the Populist Party and the Progressive Era that followed these phenomena has given populism a more positive image in the US—even President Obama referred to himself at one point as a populist—than it attracts in other countries, where populists generally reject the label.

Although populism in the US has largely remained a third-party phenomenon, such as in the case of Henry Agard Wallace and Ross Perot, who ran for the presidency as third-party candidates in 1948 (Wallace) and 1992 as well as 1996 (Perot) respectively, the Republican Donald Trump is undoubtedly the most important political figure in recent history to be widely labelled as a populist. His ascent to the White House shows, as Chapter 14 by Sandra Vergari explains, how an established party was taken over by what was once thought to be an outsider phenomenon.

If we take populism to be a rural answer to capitalist modernisation and industrialisation, as has been suggested by the historian John B. Allcock (1971), then the Russian *Narodniki* also deserve a mention, who, as approximate contemporaries of the American populists, organised themselves in traditional village communities in the pursuit of an idealised, simple rural life. However, the futility of the Russian populists' efforts to change society persuaded other radicals to pursue another direction. For the Marxists, it was not the rural villagers but the industrial proletariat who was to become the agent of transformation.

Presidentialism and Social Mobilisation: Latin American Populism

Whereas in Europe, the United States and Russia, populism remained at the margins of politics for a long time, it has often been at the centre of political change in Latin American history. In fact, when Europeans began grappling with what they considered to be a novel phenomenon, Latin America was already moving from its second wave of populism, also known as neo-lib-

eral populism, to a third associated with the leftist regimes of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela and Evo Morales in Bolivia. Latin America's presidentialised political systems have been far more receptive to personalities and leader figures who purport to be the saviours of the people than the parliamentary and party-based systems that prevail in Western Europe. Representing a tradition going back to the colourful strongmen or *caudillos* in the nineteenth century, these figures have shown disdain for established and often corrupt elites, styling themselves as men of action on behalf of ordinary people. María Esperanza Casullo and Flavia Freidenberg show in their Chapters (16 and 17) how in the twentieth century spurts of modernisation resulted in political mass mobilisation. However, under conditions in which the political institutions were insufficiently developed, such movements could often not be channelled in order to implement the necessary political changes. As a result, charismatic leaders, like the Argentine president Juan Perón, sought to bypass traditional politics and institutions by turning directly to the masses to push for political reforms. Whenever economic developments brought about popular mobilisation that could no longer be absorbed and directed by the existing political system, a new wave of populist leaders rose to prominence such as Juan and Eva Perón, Carlos Menem and Néstor and Cristina (Fernández de) Kirchner in Argentina, Getúlio Vargas in Brazil, Lázaro Cárdenas and Andrés M. López Obrador in Mexico, as well as Juan Velasco Alvarado, Alberto Fujimori and Alan García in Peru.

In recent decades, Hugo Chávez and Nicolas Maduro in Venezuela, Evo Morales in Bolivia, Rafael Correa in Ecuador and Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua, among others, have become the leading exponents of leftist populism. What this latest group of populist politicians share with their predecessors is the presentation of themselves as charismatic agents of change who want to deliver, especially for poorer people, the kinds of political achievements the previous system could not. Right-wing and left-wing populists the world over now share a disdain for liberal internationalism and globalisation in favour of national autonomy. The claim of being able to deliver for the poorer strata of Latin American society rests on the argument that populism has boosted the representation of the lower classes in the institutions of governments, thus creating a more inclusive and also more democratic model of society. Chapter 15 by Saskia Ruth and Kirk Hawkins tackles this question, and they find that indeed populism does better in terms of descriptive representation, such as in the inclusion of ethnic minorities, than other forms of representation.

The Western European Populist Right: From Protest Politics to Migration and Identity

In Western Europe, populism resurfaced in the 1970s and 1980s in the form of political protest. In 1972, the former Danish lawyer Mogens Glistrup founded the Progress Party [*Fremskrittspartiet*] to protest against his country's high taxes. Its enormous popularity soon made his party the second largest in Denmark and spawned a sister party in Norway. Whereas taxes and an overbearing (welfare) state were fuelling sentiments of protest in Scandinavia, excessive forms of insider politics and *partitocrazia* were stoking the anger of citizens in parts of continental Europe, such as Austria, France, and Italy. The perception that mainstream parties had a monopoly on power, were engaging in extensive clientelism, and were often implicated in high-profile cases of political corruption prepared the ground for political outsiders and new bodies to take on the political establishment. The FN in France and the FPÖ are two early

examples. In other instances, populist parties sprang up in the context of secessionist protests against ‘corrupt’ or ‘non-responsive’ national governments, such as the Flemish Block (VB) in Belgium and the LN in Italy. Protests against the erosion of national sovereignty through accession to the European Union was another factor in the rise of populist protest, as exemplified by the Swiss People’s Party (SVP), an early champion of the anti-European cause, which led several referendum campaigns that contributed to keep Switzerland outside the EU. Another motivating factor for anti-European populists in the richer Western European and Nordic member states was the accession to the EU of poor countries from Eastern Europe and the Balkans, given that this required significant subsidies from the wealthier members and caused substantial labour migration across Europe.

Initially, Western European populism came to be associated with ‘charismatic’ leadership because of its manifestations in France, Italy and Austria: three of the earliest cases of radical right-wing populism in Europe had individuals like Jean-Marie Le Pen, Umberto Bossi and Jörg Haider who represented a departure from traditional politicians. While the term charismatic has been subject to much debate in populism research (cf. McDonnell 2015), these leaders were clearly politicians of a new type. Using hyperbole and sharply polarising messages, breaking regularly with political conventions and understanding their audience’s desire to be entertained and enthralled by political spectacle, all three party leaders created political templates for other parties to follow. However, as European political systems are—with the notable exception of France—party-based, European populist formations were less beholden to the success and duration of the leadership of single individuals than the more presidentialised and personalised political systems elsewhere. As a result, party-based populism was able to pass power on from one generation of leaders to the next, as long as the new leaders were able to follow the same winning formulas (Heinisch and Mazzoleni 2016).

As the populist parties mutated from middle-class protest parties into parties for voters who felt threatened by modernisation and internationalisation, especially men with lower levels of education in traditional and non-professional occupations, populists adapted their agenda accordingly. The fact that radical right-wing populist parties were less dogmatic than other far right bodies, which were more attached to their ideological principles, was an advantage in the electoral marketplace. The current strength of populist parties in Europe raises the question of its electoral basis, which is examined by Gilles Ivaldi in Chapter 8, which probes the motivations of voters in supporting such formations.

The politics of identity, anti-immigration positions, Euroscepticism, the criticism of globalisation and free trade, as well as law and order became fixtures in the programmes of nearly all populist parties across the continent (cf. Minkenberg 2001; Mudde 2007: 158–98; Van Spanje 2010; but: Rooduijn et al. 2014). The European financial and economic crisis only deepened these sentiments. However, no agenda has been more important to populists in recent years than the issue of refugees, migration, security, and also Islam, which has resonated across Europe but has been especially salient in Austria, Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Italy, Denmark, Switzerland, and Norway (see, for example, Marzouki et al. 2016).

As stated earlier, a country long considered ‘safe’ from populism was the United Kingdom, since it was thought to be not only too liberal for nativism, but its first-past-the-post election system was viewed as an effective curb on the power of third parties. Nonetheless, strong anti-European sentiments and different rules in European elections contributed to the success of

UKIP, which subsequently entered the European Parliament and used it as a platform for attacking the EU and its policies (Ford et al. 2012; Tournier-Sol 2015). The party's leader and principal spokesman Nigel Farage became a household name who, along with much of the right-wing and conservative media, as well as the large Eurosceptic wing of a bitterly divided Conservative Party, gradually prepared the ground for Brexit. In a closely contested referendum in 2016, which by all accounts was influenced by misinformation, exaggerated claims and bitter recriminations, the Leave campaign prevailed. As these lines are being written, Europe is headed into a period of great uncertainty brought about by populism in its different manifestations. How Brexit is to unfold remains as unclear as the policies towards Europe that will be pursued by the new Trump administration. With elections in France, Germany, the Netherlands and subsequently Italy—Eurosceptic and populist parties are expected to do well in all of them—the political consequences of the populist phenomenon can hardly be overstated. As 2016 drew to a close, only the presidential elections in Austria did not result in a populist victory after the largely expected triumph of the right-wing populist candidate of the FPÖ, Norbert Hofer, was averted. However, this 'defeat' of the FPÖ candidate still delivered over 46 per cent of the votes to Hofer, representing arguably the biggest triumph for a right-wing populist party in a national election anywhere in Western Europe up until 2016.⁴

The most recent transformation of populism in Western Europe is its increasing role in public office either by supporting minority governments or entering government office outright. However, government participation always exposes populist parties to mainstreaming and potential change. The complex effects of this step on the parties themselves and on policy are examined in Chapter 9 on 'Populist Parties in Power and Their Impact on Liberal Democracies in Western Europe' by Tjitske Akkerman. Nonetheless, the clearly defined pattern of populist outsider opposition versus insider mainstream government may be breaking down as a result of these developments, something that has already happened in Eastern European countries.

Identity Politics in Post-transition Societies: Populism in Central and Eastern Europe

In Central and Eastern Europe, as well as in the Balkans, populism, as discussed by Sergiu Gherghina, Sergiu Miscoiu, and Sorina Soare in Chapter 11, seems to be ubiquitous. In these regions, it is not merely an oppositional phenomenon, as is mostly the case in Western Europe, but appears to be an attribute of the major parties and even some governments. Bulgaria, Poland, Slovakia and Hungary are most often associated with it and each have competing groups with similarly radical right-wing and populist programmes. However, the chameleon-like nature of far right and populist parties (Taggart 2000), along with the fluid character of the political systems across the region, also makes it more difficult to identify and classify political actors as being clearly populist. As a result, there has been much debate about whether political leaders like the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and his party Fidesz should be labelled as populist or simply conservative nationalist. The same can be said of the various Polish governments controlled by the Law and Justice party (PiS). In Chapter 10, Vlastimil Havlík and Miroslav Mareš discuss sociocultural legacies in post-transition societies and the

⁴ Jean-Marie Le Pen also achieved impressive success by making it into the second round of the 2002 French presidential elections. However, in the final count he received 'only' 17.8 per cent of the total vote.

emergence of a ‘crowded’ world of populist politics’, (Heinisch 2008: 29) in which populist actors need to differentiate themselves from each other by adopting a variety of positions.

An essential difference to populism in Western Europe is the fact that all parties in post-communist societies stand in some relation to the previous regime or the transition and its effects. This forms a subtext in which populist agenda items such as anti-capitalism, anti-Western rants and ethnocultural identity politics (for example, the Slavophile devotion to Russia, as is the case for the Ataka party in Bulgaria) on the one hand and anti-communism on the other take on a different meaning compared to Western Europe, where such past experiences are absent.

A history of distrust of the state and its officials, a long tradition of insider politics, and rampant corruption all reward political outsiders who appear decisive and promise to deliver change. Instead of appealing to liberal political traditions and the new democracy—a system more often viewed as flawed than is the case in Western Europe—, appeals to ‘the nation’ or ‘the people’ and its destiny as a grand historical project are the more common approach and also provide an emotional glue that connects populist leaders and their supporters. Whereas Western European populists want to recover a supposedly purer version of the political system—hence, slogans such as taking the country back to its truer form and promoting forms of direct democracy—, Eastern European populists often aim to take the country in a new direction based on some claim of historical destiny (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). This is because most countries in the area cannot connect to a previous system as they were (parts of) communist, fascist or imperial states.

Moreover, many Western populist parties have descended from libertarian economic and anti-dirigiste roots, which often leads to contradictory policy positions when protectionism, welfare chauvinism, and anti-globalisation rhetoric is mixed with liberal economic positions and criticism of regulations. In Central and Eastern Europe, radical populism seems to have ceded this liberal economic agenda to the mainstream parties, which, in response, have also begun mobilising their supporters around protectionism and identity. The fact that Central and Eastern Europe has long been dominated by outside empires and only became fully independent after the end of the Cold War makes these countries especially wary of external influences. At the same time, their integration into the Western economic system, along with their transformation and modernisation, has brought to the surface repressed or dormant sociocultural divisions that can be readily exploited by new political parties. Thus, fears of outside domination, unresolved ethnic conflicts and competing claims of victimhood can be easily used for political gain (Heinisch 2017).

Another factor in the surge of populism in Central and Eastern Europe is the generally low level of political trust citizens place in domestic elites. This has contributed to a political environment in which anti-establishment parties have flourished more than in Western Europe. As a result, established parties have also moved to embrace populist, ethnocratic, and authoritarian positions in an effort to avoid being associated with liberal internationalism or to be seen as standing up to Brussels and Western member states. Finally, national populism in the Balkans adds another aspect to the mix in that ethnicity is often not a question of language or custom but of religion and religious denominations. In this context, the formal adherence of often secular populations to religions is used by political actors to construct conceptions of ‘good people’ worthy of protection against its enemies and unwanted outsiders.

Protest Movements and Mediterranean Populism

The social roots and repertoires of populist actions may be understood as variations of protest movements, as Carlo Ruzza suggests in Chapter 4. Also, from this point of view, contemporary populism in the Mediterranean countries of Greece and Spain appears to have similarities to manifestations of populism in Latin America, as they share some ideological traits in their leftist ideological orientation and the ways in which they take issue with liberal internationalism and global capitalism. This Southern European form of populism strongly favours national autonomy in economic decision-making, pursues a redistributive agenda and rejects the interference of European and global institutions and international corporations in national policymaking. Its rather recent emergence is clearly linked to the economic and financial crisis in Europe, but it is also a consequence of the decline of domestic party systems, especially of the traditional left, which has seen its support erode (in Spain) or plummet (in Greece). Leftist Mediterranean populism is not only the most recent addition to the populist ‘family’ in Europe, but it is also distinct in its emergence out of protest movements.

The Italian Five Star Movement [*Movimento 5 Stelle*] is also descended from a protest movement and is a populist party founded and led by the comedian Beppe Grillo. It shares a strong disdain for the country’s economic dependence on European institutions with Greek and Spanish leftist populism and thus rejects outside interference in domestic affairs, especially in formulating economic policy. The strength of Grillo’s movement is also a reflection of the low credibility of Italian political institutions and parties. As such, the Five Star Movement (M5S) mobilises its supporters against national and European elites, which it considers to be corrupt and incompetent. From the beginning, it has been difficult to pinpoint the party’s ideological orientation as it does not fully fit the profile of either a right-wing or left-wing party. However, Grillo’s party often comes across as being on the right, and it has also formed a loose alliance with other right-wing populist parties in the European Parliament. In Chapter 13, titled ‘New Populism’, Maria Elisabetta Lanzone analyses new populist parties in detail, such as Syriza, Podemos, and M5S, which have emerged from social movements and protest groups.

Variation in the Manifestation and Perception of Populism

This short overview of the different manifestations of populism helps to explain why understandings of populism in the European and American traditions have been different. This has also influenced debates in scholarship about whether populism should be seen as a style, strategy, discourse, ideology, frame, or related concept (Weyland 2001; Madrid 2006; Roberts 2006; Subramanian 2007; Madrid 2008; Stanley 2008; Barr 2009; Hawkins 2010; Jansen 2011; Aslanidis 2015).

However, the variability of populism also means that in relatively stable party systems, new populist parties can suddenly appear and thrive, as Reinhard Heinisch and Steven Saxonberg show in their Chapter 12 on a novel phenomenon which they consider to be a centrist form of populism. In fact, populist actors may neither be clearly right-wing nor left-wing but instead position themselves as centrist change agents. In their account, titled ‘Entrepreneurial Populism and the Radical Centre’, Heinisch and Saxonberg empirically examine two such cases in Austria and the Czech Republic. What is puzzling here is that the electorate supports business-

people and their personalised parties but often exhibits social and economic policy preferences that run counter to the programmatic pronouncements of the entrepreneurial populist leaders. The chapter also shows some of the difficulty of fitting centrist populism within the larger dichotomous framework defined by radical leftists or rightist populists and mainstream centrists.

Notwithstanding the recent election of Donald Trump, who may not really fit the mould of the centrist business tycoon turned populist, the American business leader and erstwhile third-party candidate, Ross Perot, is a better example of what one might call the radical centre, which has, in part, affected the perception of populism in North America. As a result of North America's inherent egalitarianism, and concomitant strong anti-elitist bias, a certain degree of populism, especially during political campaigning, is not only always tolerated but even welcome as an antidote to elitism. Consequently, populism has come to be regarded in the US as more of a style, strategy, or ethos designed to reach ordinary people, appeal to commonly held beliefs, and convey anti-Washington sentiments. But it has rarely been seen as an ideology in itself.

In Latin America, where there has been a long tradition of popular strongmen promising political change and where personalised presidential political systems have dominated, populism is often seen to express itself through the rhetoric leaders employ to reach the people (Weyland 2001; Madrid 2008; Hawkins 2009; Levitsky and Roberts 2011). Populism has also been regarded as a discourse designed to attract and channel the sentiments of politically orphaned classes or societal groups mobilised by economic modernisation (Filc 2010). This notion of discursive populism also seems to fit well with the perception of populism in Eastern Europe (Minkenberg 2010). Charismatic figures, either those already in government or in opposition, employ discursive strategies designed to appeal to voters through appeals to nativism and nationalist narratives. Both the Latin American and Eastern European models suggest that populism occurs along a continuum where political actors engage to varying extents in making populist claims.

In Western Europe, where typically one populist outsider party confronts the entire political mainstream, the perception of populism is more black and white. Accordingly, the conceptualisation of populism that has emerged in Western European scholarship takes a dichotomous approach, viewing populists as being clearly distinct from mainstream parties. Because ideologies and programmes are central to political parties, European scholarship has understood populism not only as a style or mode of discourse but, crucially, also as a (thin) ideology, pitting the (virtuous) people against sinister elites and outsiders (Norris 2005; Carter 2005; Ivars-flaten 2008; Mudde 2007; Art 2011; Berezin 2013).

Another influential factor in the European academic reception of populism was that in major research communities, such as those in the UK, the Netherlands, Scandinavia and Germany, attention was paid to populist parties of the right rather than the left. As a result, there was initially a significant debate in academic literature on the topic as to what extent these new parties were in fact populist rather than merely being new forms of the old far right (Betz 1994; Kitschelt and McGann 1995; Ignazi 1996; Koopmans 1996; Betz and Immerfall 1998).

Populism as a Theoretical Problem: Towards a New Conceptualisation?

To suggest that different approaches to populism should be attributed equal weight would be a mischaracterisation, as we have seen that some theories became more dominant than others in terms of their impact. The previously widespread understanding of populism as a form of discourse, following the arguments of Laclau (2005; see also Panizza 2005; Filc 2010), has come under increasing criticism for having normative Marxist roots, a high degree of theoretical abstraction and a lack of empirical applicability. It was also criticised for equating political discourse with political practice (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012). Therefore, the emergence of the idea of populism as a thin-centred ideology, proposed especially by Cas Mudde (2000; 2004), was something of a breakthrough for it provided a means of identifying populism and populist manifestations more unambiguously. Whether based on actual conviction or mere pragmatism and a long-lasting search for an appropriate model, a sizeable share of the populism research community has adopted this approach, which appropriates Michael Freeden's (1996; 2003) idea that some ideologies have a thin centre, and applied it to populism.

However, as populism has continued to proliferate, penetrating new political systems and attaching itself to different parties and host ideologies in different contexts, its very hybridity and diversity continues to pose enormous empirical challenges. The essentialist Muddean approach based on dichotomous criteria and categorical classifications is seen to have significant limitations of its own on account of the range of populist manifestations that are in evidence. This has led to growing criticism of the model, especially by scholars working on populist actors outside the 'classical' cases of Western European right-wing populist parties (for a full discussion, see Aslanidis 2015). In fact, in a keynote address at the Prague conference on populism in 2016, Freeden (2016) distanced himself from the notion that populism is a thin-centred ideology because, in his view, it is 'too thin' to be meaningfully conceived as an ideology. As a result, the triadic approach to populism as an ideology, a discursive style and a form of political mobilisation (see also Pauwels 2011; Moffitt and Tormey 2013) still dominates the discussion.

Building on these approaches and criticism of the 'dominant paradigm,' in Chapter 5 Reinhard Heinisch and Oscar Mazzoleni introduce a more finely grained conceptualisation that can be employed in empirical research and bridges existing conceptualisations in political science and communication by arguing that populism is not dichotomous but exists along a spectrum. As such, it needs to be conceived both as discourse and practice.

In fact, this new approach holds that populism can be heuristically defined as a series of intrinsically ambivalent claims diffused by individual and collective actors to challenge the status quo in favour of people's empowerment and elite change. Ambivalence is taken to be a multi-dimensional phenomenon, which involves both a discursive frame and a relationship between discourse and practice. The ambivalent claims that define populism are made about people, elites/out-groups, democracy, the state, society, the economy, women and so on. While these claims are often connected to host ideologies, the underlying concepts (that is 'the people,' 'the heartland,' 'real democracy' and so on) remain purposefully vague and flexible. These dimensions can be empirically measured based on the extent of the claims themselves and the ambivalence expressed therein. For example, populist actors attack female emancipation as an elitist agenda having gone too far while at the same time defending the status of liberated women

when criticising Islam. Thus, the intensity and direction of such a claim can be measured and correlated to other claims and variables. Frames have also been employed in communication research to study populism (Jagers and Walgrave 2006), and it is in this area that a frame-based approach can be connected to communication.

Populism as an Empirical Phenomenon

As much as both populism itself and the reasons for its emergence present us with important theoretical challenges with respect to its conceptualisation and hypothetical causes, populism poses important empirical questions that need to be measured and analysed using comparative data. Chapter 6 by Teun Pauwels presents methods of operationalising and measuring populism empirically and thus creates a link to the second part of the handbook in which the empirical dimension of populism is examined.

Empirical Challenges and New Research Agendas

A frequently mentioned but empirically still not fully explored question asks to what extent the conditions that give rise to contemporary populism are grounded in a distinct socio-economic situation. This approach reminds us that populism is also a sociological phenomenon. Wolfgang Aschauer tackles this question from a sociological perspective in Chapter 18, titled 'Societal Malaise in Turbulent Times', in which he seeks to understand how globalisation and unresponsive political systems have contributed to precarious economic conditions and increased people's fear of declining social standards and diminishing economic opportunities.

Many more empirically unresolved puzzles concern 'The Gender Dimension of Populism'. These are identified in Chapter 20 by Sarah C. Dingler, Zoe Lefkofridi, and Vanessa Marent, who discuss populist parties' ideology, leaders, candidates, members and electoral support from a comparative empirical perspective.

In the past, a great deal of scholarship focused on populism as a dependent variable and was thus dedicated to understanding its underlying causes. The most recent wave of populism research is centred more closely around its effects and consequences. Populism itself and the emergence of populist actors as influential political figures are shaping national and international politics in profound but uncertain ways. This calls into question, first and foremost, the nature of liberal democratic systems, since populist regimes seem to question key principles of liberal and representative democracy in the sense that the 'popular will' is held to be above criticism and thus beyond any third-party constraint. Instead of accepting checks and balances, these actors seem to favour majoritarian voting and/or plebiscitary forms of political decision-making, which are better suited to the mass mobilisation strategies in which populists excel. Left-wing and right-wing populists alike promote political views that are both anti-pluralist and anti-political.

Moreover, by suggesting that established parties are all alike, populists engage in de-differentiation (Schedler 1996) and deny the representative function of other parties. In populist rhetoric, the people are often portrayed as being uniform. Divisions are seen instead as the re-

sult of outsider meddling so that compromises designed to resolve differences are seen to serve the interests of outsiders and are often regarded as less than fully legitimate.

These debates have led to claims and counter claims about the role of populism and democracy. The strongest argument in favour of populism is its role in mitigating what many scholars have called a growing crisis of representation (Mair 2002; Taggart 2002; Kriesi 2014) in the sense that traditional governments have ceased to be representative. As populist parties succeed in breaking up sclerotic political structures and drawing previously marginalised or depoliticised population groups into the political process, populist mobilisation may in fact improve the quality of democracy. Few have tackled this question empirically on a large scale, especially by comparing Latin America and Europe. In this sense, Chapter 19 by Robert Huber and Christian H. Schimpf takes exception as they provide a comprehensive theoretical debate and detailed empirical analysis of the relationship between populism and democracy.

Populism may, of course, be a dependent and independent variable by strongly interacting with other phenomena. One of the most important is arguably the relationship between populism and Islam and Islamophobia. Right-wing populism in both Europe and the United States draws on, and promotes, Islamophobia. Especially in conjunction with the refugee crisis and the spread of international terrorism, the fear of Islam and Muslim immigrants has arguably become the most important stance of populist parties in many countries. In current electoral campaigns across France, Germany, the Netherlands and the US, the question of Islam is a central issue as it affects both the dimension of individual identity, national character and values, as well as personal security. The aforementioned Hans Georg Betz tackles this question in Chapter 22, titled 'Populism and Islamophobia'.

Populism and the Communication Dimension

Apart from political science, communication research has long neglected the impact of populism on political communication. This has changed with the rise and success of populist parties in Europe and, at about the same time, the emergence of a new media environment.

Communication has a constitutive role in the political field. The overall growing importance of the media in fostering understanding within society has also made politics more and more dependent on the media for addressing citizens and legitimising its decisions. This dependence, and the attempt to nevertheless keep the power of agenda setting and framing the discourse, has led to an increasing mediatisation of politics, in the sense that the political arena has continuously adapted to the logic of the media. The development of the internet, and social-networking sites in particular, has thoroughly redrawn the communicative map and opened new ways for political actors to speak to citizens directly without the uncomfortable interference of journalists.

From a communication point of view, populism primarily presents itself as a specific communicative style. On this basis, Jagers and Walgrave (2007) developed a concept that can be applied to all kinds of political actors and all forms of populism. At the core of it lies a 'thin definition' that considers populism to be "*a political communication style of political actors that refers to the people*" (Jagers and Walgrave 2007: 322, original emphasis). Appealing to the people, identifying with the people and purporting to speak in their name is the 'master

frame' (Jagers and Walgrave 2007: 322) that underlies and constitutes populist discourse. Thin populism becomes thick populism if appeals to the people combine with an anti-establishment/anti-elitist position against vertical distinction, instead promoting a homogeneous/exclusive position for horizontal differentiation (Jagers and Walgrave 2007: 323–5). Reinemann et al. (2017) point to the fact that anti-elitist and anti-out-group messages are functional equivalents inherent in references and appeals to the people and thus strengthen social identity.

As Franca Roncarolo shows in Chapter 23, increasing mediatisation has changed the relationship between the media and politics and has also attracted attention to the role of the media in the spread and growth of populism. Their coalescence and intertwined nature is reflected in terms such as 'telepopulism' (Peri 2004), 'télépopulistes' (Taguieff 1997) and 'media populism' (Mazzoleni 2003). In terms of media populism, Esser et al. (2017) distinguish between three perspectives: "populism by the media, populism through the media and populist citizen journalism" (Esser et al. 2017: 367). Populism by the media primarily builds upon an anti-establishment attitude towards political elites and, at the same time, attempts to align with and represent the common citizen. While the anti-elitist stance also derives from the control and criticism functions that the press has in democratic systems, the media inevitably, but mostly unwillingly, supports the cause of populism, establishing the paradoxes that are also elaborated by Benjamin Krämer in Chapter 24.

Populism through the media is exercised by creating "favourable opportunity structures for populist actors" (Esser et al. 2017: 370). These arise out of political and commercial interests, the dependencies of media owners and certain characteristics of media logic. The latter refers to the media's preference for conflict and strategic framing as well as personalisation. Frames are interpretative patterns of media reporting that emphasise certain aspects of an issue, attribute causes and responsibilities for problems and suggest solutions. Thus, frames can influence the interpretation of issues and events by the media audience and guide their attention to certain elements, direct the ways in which the news is processed and, in this way, may have an impact on the audience's attitudes. The term conflict framing identifies the media's use of a conflict perspective in the coverage of an issue. Strategic framing is employed to steer the audience in a desired direction, as is done, for instance, with poll reporting.

Populist citizen journalism (Esser et al. 2017: 371) involves the inclusion of comments by members of the audience in the established media, usually on their websites. If they are used for populist appeals, and even if the editorial content stands in contrast to citizens' comments, the media run the risk of furthering the populist cause.

Thus, in addition to structural reasons, the media's selection and production criteria tend to—mostly unintentionally—serve the interests of populist actors, who make the media their 'accomplices' (Esser et al. 2017: 371) in the spread of populism. Nevertheless, the mainstream media often draw criticism from populist movements and are attacked for putting populist actors at a disadvantage and for supporting the political establishment. They are seen as part of the political elite and therefore become the object of the populists' anti-elitist sentiments.

The recent development of new forms of communication, and the changes to the media environment that have ensued, have played out in favour of populism (see, for example, Engesser et al. 2015). Political newcomers and outsiders often face a barrier in the media to getting the visibility they need to address voters, climb in the polls and increase their electoral support. The internet and social networks allow political actors to circumvent the established media,

which is regarded as being close to, or even part of, the political elite and so therefore becomes the object of populist attacks. In Chapter 7, through reference to three sites of mediation, Lone Sorensen demonstrates the closeness of populism to the new communication technologies. In addition to the aforementioned possibility of speaking to citizens without journalistic interference, social networking sites align with populist appeals to emancipation, democracy and community.

When defined as a communication style, populism is by no means restricted to ‘populists’ and extends to all kinds of verbal, visual and non-verbal expressions. Elements of the populist style can be found in everyday populism in the media and the communication of political actors who are not deemed populist. Research from several countries, often in the form of case studies, has analysed the strategies of populist actors in self-representation and news management, and how they are reflected in media coverage (see, for example, Bos and Brandts 2014; Bos et al. 2010; Hawkins 2009; Jagers and Walgrave 2007; Roncarolo 2005). Wodak exposed the ‘politics of fear’ (2015) in the discourse of right-wing populists and how their strategies of provocation and scandalisation gain attention in the media. In Chapter 21, Paula Diehl argues that the body has a particular function in populism through its activation of emotions and as an object for identification. This also corresponds with Moffitt and Tormey’s (2014) concept of populism as a political style in which they focus on the performative features of populism and how it is represented.

Final Note

As has already been mentioned, this handbook consists of three parts, the first of which covers theories, approaches, conceptualisations and measurements in relation to political populism. The second part presents populist manifestations in Europe and the Americas and the third part focuses on emerging phenomena and new research agendas. Part three deals with emerging challenges and introduces new research agendas. In an effort to stress the interdisciplinary nature of populism research, this book is not organised by discipline, and, thus, chapters focusing on communication, sociology and political science appear next to each other and draw on each other’s findings. While it was not the book’s intention to provide a geographically comprehensive account of populism and its manifestations, an effort was made to cover as many different cases and variations of populism in Europe and the Americas as was possible within the constraints of this project. The chapters generally end with a consideration of as yet unanswered questions and new directions to provide guidance for new research into populism, which we hope to encourage with this work.

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PART I:
Defining and Analysing the Concept

CHAPTER 1:

POPULISM: A HISTORY OF THE CONCEPT

*Damir Skenderovic*¹

“There can at present be no doubt about the *importance* of populism. But no one is quite clear what it *is*,” write Ghita Ionesco and Ernest Gellner (1969b: 1; emphasis in original) in the introduction to the influential anthology, *Populism. Its Meanings and Characteristics*, which appeared in 1969. While the current relevance of populism has led to a revival of interest in the almost forgotten populist movements of the nineteenth century, as Ionesco and Gellner go on to state, the question arises as to whether ‘populism’ is “simply a word wrongly used in completely heterogeneous contexts” (Ionesco and Gellner 1969b: 3). More than forty years later, Cas Mudde and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser (2012a: 1) make a similar critique that, “one of the most used and abused terms inside and outside academia is undoubtedly populism,” and point out that there have been repeated calls to simply abandon the term and that the scientific debate is some distance away from reaching a minimal consensus on the definition and meaning of populism.

The history of the concept ‘populism’ has been accompanied by scepticism over its definition and reservations over its phenomenology, which have not only led to the stimulation of regular academic debates, but has also continually reflected strong concerns about the common and everyday political usage of the term. The lack of semantic precision and ambiguity with regard to content lead to it being used for very different phenomena and developments in politics and society, which results in doubt over its heuristic and explanatory value. In addition, the term ‘populism’ is normatively loaded in political and scientific language and thus always includes statements and findings on the state of democracy. Even the core idea of the term that populism speaks, as the etymology of the word implies, in the name of the people, rather than the elites, power blocks and privileged special interest groups, is rooted in normative dichotomies.

Conjuncture and Controversy in Politics and Science

Despite these substantial weaknesses, in the course of the last ten years, there has been a striking increase in the use of the concept of ‘populism’ in the public media as well as in the everyday political life of Europe, and particularly in the context of the increase and consolidation that has been seen in recent years among parties on the right-wing margin of the European party system. The expression ‘(right-wing) populist’ has established itself as the description for a number of parties, such as the Austrian Freedom Party, Alternative for Germany, the Swiss People’s Party, the National Front in France, Vlaams Belang in Belgium, Fidesz in Hungary or Ataka in Bulgaria. However, ‘populism’ is not only used specifically for parties, tendencies and

¹ This text is a revised and expanded version of the article entitled *Populisme*, which appeared in French in: Christin, Olivier (ed.) (2016) *Dictionnaire des concepts nomades en sciences humaines* (Paris: Éditions Métailié), p. 87-106.

politicians, but is also often used much more generally, whereby it is seen as a supposedly new way in which politicians and parties seek to woo their supporters and, in the process, to employ new means of communication and strategy. On the whole, the term ‘populism’ has been widely established in terms of language and the media, and for some it even seems to fulfil the claim of contributing to raising and nurturing awareness of various social and political developments at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

In the vocabulary of politicians and parties, too, ‘populism’ as a political catchword has experienced a pronounced boom. In its function as a negatively connoted battle cry, it is primarily used in politics to disavow the opponent, serving as a reproach and attack, as denunciation and accusation. With the use of the term ‘populist’ in political day-to-day events, it is suggested to the adversary that he or she responds to complex facts with phrases and simple formulas, and ultimately pursues the goal of polarising society in order to take advantage of instantaneous moods and make unscrupulous political capital. Something that also contributes to the pejorative understanding of the term is the long shadow cast by the plebiscitary mass politics, demagogic mobilisations and the invocation of the so-called ‘will of the people’ by leaders who have caused historical catastrophes in Europe. Basically, the political and public debates about populism are constantly concerned with the dangers it may pose to democracy and its cornerstones of freedom, plurality and representation (Decker 2006; Urbinati 2013).

In recent years, therefore, the controversy surrounding the issue has intensified in academic debates over the question of whether populism should be seen as a threat or a corrective to democracy and whether, alongside its negative impacts, it might also have positive influences on the function and legitimation of democracy (Canovan 2002; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012b). Many authors suggest that populism has an ambivalent relationship with democracy, which is built on the population participating as broadly as possible, but is also characterised by a complex, partially opaque decision-making system, which is associated with the representative and delegating character of (parliamentary) democracy. It is suggested that populists seek to exploit a lack of transparency and immediacy and the resulting dissatisfaction with political institutions in order to promote a return to ‘true’ democracy, which must be realised beyond intermediary institutional settings and political elites. It should not be forgotten, however, that populists do not reject the principle of representation, *per se*, but rather those who are, in their eyes, the wrong representatives. Consequently, there is no doubt that there can be “populism without participation” (Müller 2014). It is emphasised, furthermore, that populist actors insist on the indivisible power of the majority, thereby undermining not only liberal democratic principles, such as minority rights and the division of power, but also important democratic practices, such as the principle of checks and balances or the search for political consensus solutions.

There has also been a marked increase in interest in the subject of populism in empirical research. In countless social science studies, the wide variety of contemporary political movements and parties has been examined and their affiliation and organisational structure analysed, along with their parliamentary and programmatic work, their political and institutional opportunity structures, and their social framework conditions. There is also a lively debate over the question of the analytical and operational uses of the concept of ‘populism’. On the one hand, there is a group of authors who primarily seek to identify certain characteristics of movements and parties as conceptual criteria, while on the other, there are those who view stringing together characteristics as an insufficient means of working out a concise conceptual-

isation of ‘populism’, and therefore call for more generally valid core elements of the kind that are useful for a broader comparative analysis (Taguieff 2007a). In the root cause analysis, there has been a growth in explanatory approaches, in which many interpret the recent upswing of populism as a side effect of globalisation and Europeanisation, and the medialisation and personalisation of politics (Decker 2013). It is also often argued that the reasons behind the examples of successful populist mobilisation are a crisis of political legitimacy that the system of democratic representation created, and not least, as Theda Skocpol and Vanessa Williamson (2012) argue in connection with the Tea Party in the USA, that in the decline of traditional political participation, such as electoral turnout and party membership, populism is, as it were, a new form of political engagement. For many, it does not seem to be surprising that in times of an increased sense of crisis among parts of the population, there should be a call for the soothing and assuring responses of politics, to which populist actors respond with offers of interpretations and solutions in which community feeling, cohesion and orientation are central references.

In view of the inflationary, but often historically amnesic, use of ‘populism’, it is all the more important to cast a historical look at its scientific conceptualisation. As Federico Finchelstein (2014: 467-68) recently remarked, “at worst, populism appears as a concept without history” and this view reduces populism “to a transcendental (or trans-historical) metaphor of something else”. The study of continuities and changes in populist phenomena, as well as central moments in academic debates, makes it possible to show certain denominational characteristics and analytical categories that have proved to be sustainable in the definition of ‘populism’. In addition, the epistemic negotiations on concepts, meanings and definitions – and this is often forgotten today – involved representatives from a number of different disciplines, including history, social anthropology, economics, political science and sociology, with the result that meanings have also been generated on the basis of specific empirical foundations and methodological approaches. As a consequence, the conceptual history of ‘populism’ is strongly linked to the study of concrete historical phenomena and conditions; heuristic findings have resulted from the fact that structural analogies and functional equivalences have been produced, and different contexts and framework conditions considered. In a history of what is meant by ‘populism’, it is also a question of acknowledging the historicity of the concept, thus contributing to a historicisation of the scientific approaches and interpretations that accompany the historical development of an important key concept of political and academic language (Steinmetz 2011). To a certain extent this is how, at the forefront of theory formation, a mixture of linguistic and material history emerges, which is concerned with social and academic rules and seeks to expand the interpretative horizons of ongoing public and scientific debates that mainly focus on the present.

Lexical History of the Concept

A look at the dictionaries, lexicons and encyclopaedias that are important indicators of knowledge production and are among the central function carriers of knowledge transfer illustrates the relatively late onset of the problematisation of the concept of ‘populism’. Until the 1990s, the lemmata for ‘populism’ were concerned almost exclusively with concrete historical phenomena, without discussing ‘populism’ as a concept or establishing the content of its meaning.

The earliest entries deal with the political movements in Russia and the USA in the nineteenth century, with the People's Party and the *Narodniki*, both of which, despite being created in completely different contexts, were long regarded as the epitome of populism. Thus, in 1922, in the 26th volume of the Spanish language *Enciclopedia universal ilustrada europeo-americana* (1922: 451), at the time by far the most extensive reference work in the world, a brief entry describing the American movement was to be found under the heading '*populista*'. The *Encyclopedia Americana* (1919: 560-561), which was published three years earlier, also contained longer articles on the 'People's Party' and 'Populists', but contented itself with a brief presentation of the history of the party, like that which can be found in the most recent edition, published in 2000 (*The Encyclopedia Americana* 2000: 413-14).

In France, the term '*populisme*' was first introduced to French dictionaries in 1929, and denoted a literary trend based around Léon Lemonnier and André Thérive, which stood as a counter-current to the tendencies of the literature of the time, which was perceived as being bourgeois, exclusive and detached (Hermet 2001: 20). The authors were concerned with writing down-to-earth texts that were close to the everyday life of the simple man. Until the 1990s, the French language lexicons also limited themselves to naming historical examples in literature and politics, in which it is noticeable that significantly more space was dedicated to the Russian *Narodniki* than to the American farmers in the *Dictionnaire d'Histoire Universelle* (1986: 1706-1707), for example, or in the *Dictionnaire encyclopédique d'histoire* (1986: 3760), where talk was of the 'rather vague' ideology of the *Narodniki*, which was described as having "a messianic foundation, a belief in the privileged faith of the Russian people". It is also the case that under the keyword 'populism' in the German language *Brockhaus Enzyklopädie* (1972: 813), there are, until the 1980s, only brief references to the French literary movement, whose aim it was to portray 'the life of the common people'.

From the beginning of the 1990s, there is an accumulation of entries that give 'populism' both an analytical and a heuristic function. It seems that the change in the experience of contemporary politics and the strong journalistic interest led to a rise in the demand for explanatory and interpretational lexical knowledge, with the result that to a certain extent 'populism' grew from being a descriptive to an elucidating concept. Accordingly, an entry on '*populisme*' can be found in the ninth edition of the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* (published since 1992 and accessible online), which lists the usual historical examples, but also interprets the term in a broader context of political action. Populism is here described as an "often pejorative attitude, as the behaviour of a person or a political party, which, in opposition to the ruling elites, act as defender of the people and as a mouthpiece for its aspirations, putting forward ideas that are most often simplistic and demagogic". In the 19th edition of the *Brockhaus Enzyklopädie* (1992: 364), too, the definition of 'populism' is now extended and is briefly described as an "opportunistic, demagogic form of politics", which "seeks to win the approval of the masses (with regard to elections) by overstating the political situation", before being described in a longer entry in the last published edition (*Brockhaus Enzyklopädie* 2006: 75) as "a strategy used by political elites and individual leadership personalities to mobilise and secure consensus".

A similar development can be seen in the specialist social science lexicons, which reflect the exponential increase in the number of studies, articles and research projects on populism since the 1990s. In the meantime, substantial contributions on 'populism' have appeared in the important encyclopaedias of sociology and political science, which not only contain research

summaries, but also take a position on ongoing academic debates and thereby make a contribution to improving the conceptual awareness and analytical operability of the term (for example, *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* 2001; *Lexikon der Politikwissenschaft* 2005; *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology* 2007). This tendency is also reflected in the fact that renowned, sometimes controversial scholars in the field have acted as the authors of contributions, for example Torcuato S. Di Tella, who appeared in *The Encyclopedia of Democracy*, published by Seymour M. Lipset in 1995, Pierre-André Taguieff in the *Encyclopaedia Universalis*, which came out in 2008, or more recently Cas Mudde and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies*, which was edited by Michael Freeden and Marc Stears and published in 2013.

While, for example, *Das Politiklexikon* (Schubert and Klein 2016: 244) operates on the basis of the instrumentalisation thesis, and thereby postulates that populist politics use “the emotions, prejudices and fears of the population for its own purposes”, the contribution in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary Of Politics* (2009: 422) speaks more generally of ‘populist beliefs’ that involve a “defence of the (supposed) traditions of the little man against change seen as imposed by powerful outsiders, which might variously be governments, businesses, or trade unions”. On the whole, this broad entry into the specialist lexicons of knowledge transfer emphasises the boom in the reception and the use of the concept of ‘populism’ in academic research and in the social sciences in particular, while the respective explanations also show the fundamental difficulty that there is when it comes to meeting certain theoretical requirements and generalising about conceptual proposals for the analysis of populism as a political and social phenomenon. Accordingly, the detailed contribution on ‘populism’ in the *International Encyclopedia of Social & Behavioral Sciences* (2001: 11816) arrives at the somewhat sobering fact that the analysis of populist subtypes, with “their distinct logics and dynamics, may be more useful than an ultimately elusive effort to achieve a common overall conceptualisation of populism”.

The Founding Forms of Populism

The conceptual genesis of ‘populism’ is strongly influenced by the use of specific historical case studies which served as the subject for the diagnosis of populism and which were mainly researched by historians (Rioux 2007; Finchelstein 2014). Their focus lay above all on classic populism, or, as Guy Hermet (2001) called it, the “founding populisms”. By this he meant the American farmers’ movement with its party political arm, the People’s Party and the *Narodniki* in Russia, both of which were formed in the second half of the nineteenth century.

For Anglo-Saxon and Western European conceptions, dealing with the American *populists* was central. As neologisms ‘populism’ and ‘populist’ entered into the vernacular and everyday political circulation in the USA at the beginning of the 1890s (*The Oxford English Dictionary* 1989: 128). It was to a certain extent the birth of the political and journalistic debate on ‘populism’, in which the expression simultaneously found itself being used as the actors’ self-designation, a political slogan and an analytical concept, thus transgressing the boundaries between political and construal use. The starting point was the founding of the People’s Party in 1891, which was also known, significantly, as the Populist Party, and which developed out of a number of farmers’ alliances in the South and the Midwest of the USA over the course of the 1870s

and 1880s. Consisting mainly of farmers, the lower middle classes and agricultural workers, the party made financial and economic policy demands, such as the nationalisation of the railways, the abolition of the national banking system, a progressive income tax and increased money supply, on the one hand. While, on the other hand, it also demanded reform of the political system, including the direct election of senators, a limiting of the presidential term and the introduction of direct democratic means (Postel 2007).

The research history of the American farmers' movement illustrates in an exemplary way how controversial discussions have been when it comes to the assessment of *populists*, as well as to the content and meaning of the notion of populism, and how interpretation and conceptual understanding have changed over time within the field of the historical research. The central question in all of this was whether it was a reactionary, backward-looking and authoritarian movement, or whether it had a progressive, social-reformist and grassroots orientation (Canovan 1981: 46-51). The idea that long dominated the research on the People's Party and its agrarian precursor movement was that populism was to be seen as a democratising and socially progressive phenomenon, a point of view that was mostly inspired by the influential work *The Populist Revolt*, published in 1931 by the social historian John D. Hicks. In the book, Hicks presented the farmers' movement as the expression of an agrarian proletarian protest that had rightly drawn attention to the grievances of agrarian capitalism and the corruption in American politics. From this standpoint, populism is also mainly to be viewed in terms of its reformist effect on the political and economic system of the USA.

Such a positive use of the term 'populism' was increasingly questioned in the 1950s, to the point that it is possible to talk of a 'revisionist turn' in the American research debate. Not least against the backdrop of the emerging McCarthyism, which, with its paranoid, anti-intellectual and ostracising features, was seen by many contemporaries as a new form of American populism, US historians began to re-evaluate the farmers' movement, adding additional meaning to the concept of populism. While emphasising the ideological dimension of populism, Richard A. Hofstadter highlighted nativism, anti-Semitism and conspiracy theories as the hallmarks of the farmers' movement in his work *The Age of Reform* (1955). On the side of the sociologists, too, critics, such as Edward Shils (1956), who spoke of an 'ideology of resentments', or Wilhelm Kornhauser (1959), who, in his work on the so-called *Mass Society*, described populism as a rejection of social pluralism, and as the maintenance of uniformity in reaction to increasing levels of social differentiation.

A new twist in the interpretation of the term can be determined in the 1970s and can be seen in the context of the spread of radical participatory issues and the associated movements for grassroots democracy. Once again, 'populism' was now being given a positive connotation when linked with the broad forming of political opinion, direct participation in democratic decision-making processes and socially progressive ideas. Of particular influence was Lawrence Goodwyn's *Democratic Promise* (1976), which emphasised the direct experience of democratic politics and cooperative collaboration as being central to the farmers' movement. As he noted, it was crucial for the mobilisation of the time that "the Populists believed they could work together to be free individually" (Goodwyn 1976: 542). It was this combination of the individual and the collective, the fulfilment of the individual through collaboration in the movement that produced the movement's strength and solidarity. While Hofstadter had particularly emphasised the conspiracy theory elements in farmers' political and economic criticisms, Good-

wyn was now largely content to reproduce the movement's assessments, namely that the concentration of financial and economic power lay in the hands of a few large companies.

Essentially, according to Goodwyn's core statement, as critics and reformers, the populists pointed the way to a democratic organisation of industrial society, harking back to the 'democratic promise' of the founding fathers, Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson. For Goodwyn, it was also a question of broadening the notion of populism, rather than just being a party political phenomenon: "Self-evidently, the People's Party was a political institution. But it was also 'Populism' – that connotes something more than a party, something more closely resembling a mood or, more grandly, an ethos" (Goodwyn 1976: X). Until today, therefore, in American debates, populism is widely interpreted as a reaction to centralist Statism and the omnipotence of public officials and experts, and therefore stands as a symbol of federalism, local autonomy and direct democracy. To a certain extent, populism is also a part of a democracy's horizon of experience, and thus also stands as proof of democratic participation in politics. Such considerations have also recently been found among some voices decidedly critical of the President-elect Donald Trump, the latest powerful representation of American populism.

The Russian *Narodniki* constitute a second incarnation of the founding forms of populism. The movement consisted mainly of intellectuals and students who began to move from the cities to rural areas in the early 1870s – in some way 'going to the people' (*narod* = people) – in order to live with the peasant population and to carry out revolutionary educational work in the countryside. Inspired by pioneering thinkers such as Alexander Herzen and Nikolai Cernyševskij, they saw a social model capable of posing a challenge to emerging agricultural and industrial capitalism in the archaic Russian village community and its collective, cooperative traditions. In their romanticised notion of Russia's peasant population, the *Narodniki* firmly believed that there was revolutionary potential in the rural population and in the traditions of the Russian peasantry (Venturi 1960). From 1875, in an attempt to describe this current and its ideas, the term *narodničestvo* emerged, translated into English as 'populism' (Pipes 1964; Ionescu and Gellner 1969b: 2), while the terms *Volkstümlertum* and *Volkstümler* were to be found in German as translations for *Narodniki* (Breitling 1987: 28). In *narodničestvo*, a social revolutionary self-image was expressed, which was based on the idea that the revolution not only corresponded to the interests of the people, who became a revolutionary subject, but that the revolution was actually in direct accord with the will and the desire of the people. Among Marxist theorists, *narodničestvo* increasingly took on an economic significance because it showed the potential for realising a socialist order in Russian society without having to go through a phase of capitalism (Pipes 1964; Walicki 1969).

Among French historians, too – to a certain extent *ex post* – the founding forms of populism of the late nineteenth century also include *Boulangisme* among their number (Hermet 2001; Winock 2007). Thus *populisme* became, as it were, a kind of substitute term in French, replacing other terms such as *Césarisme* or *Bonapartisme*, which had been used by contemporaries as well as by historical literature for *Boulangisme*. The use of the notion of 'populism' is intended to help develop continuities in certain forms of thought and action in French politics. Factors that are seen as being indicative of the populist character of *Boulangisme* include its radical rejection of the ruling *classe politique*, the plebiscitary credo and the call for a strong president, but also the marked cult of personality, as well as the communicative and media marketing and self-presentation of the movement. These are also characteristics that were identified in a series of twentieth-century movements and parties, from the interwar *Ligues* to

Jean-Marie Le Pen's National Front. There are also contextual factors, such as the lack of reform of the Third Republic, and constitutional revision with little democratic improvement and rampant corruption, which led the *Boulangistes* to see themselves as a movement of the discontented, who were waiting for their saviour. Furthermore, *Boulangisme* cannot be filed away within the French political dualism of republicans and monarchists at that time, but was rather the expression of the opposition between oligarchs and democrats, and combined forces from both the left and the right (Hutton 1976; Garrigues 1992; Prochasson 1994).

It is noteworthy that this belated designation of *Boulangisme* as an early expression of populism took place in literature at a time when, in connection with the rise of the National Front, the term 'populism' experienced a remarkably increasing use in French scientific language (Dupuy 2002; Taguieff 2007b). Originally published in 1979, the book by the historian Pierre Birnbaum, *Le peuple et les gros*, can be taken as evidence of the presumably also profitable (for the publishing industry) use of the concept of 'populism', which appears in its 2012 reissue under the revised title: *Genèse du populisme. Le peuple et les gros*. While Birnbaum shows in his book how, since the end of the nineteenth century, the assumption that 'the good people' have been worn down by leading figures in economics and politics has had a striking continuity in the political life of France, his analysis does not deal with the concept of 'populism', despite what the new title might suggest. The same can be observed in the research on Pierre Poujade and his *Union de défense des commerçants et artisans* of the 1950s. In the classical study by Stanley Hoffmann (1956), the movement is by no means described as 'populist', yet it is declared some forty years later by Alexandre Dorna (1999: 75) as a "paradigm of French populism". This not only gives Poujadism a precursor role in post-war right-wing populism in Western Europe generally, and particularly in France, but highlights once again the effectiveness of using 'populism' as an analytical concept.

Transnational and Transdisciplinary Expansion

Despite the wide variety of application fields for 'populism' already described, it was relatively late on that the concept began to be discussed from a cross-national perspective. From the mid-1960s onwards, the use of the concept began to intensify across national and disciplinary boundaries and to circulate within the international scientific community. In the sense of Mieke Bal's (2002: 24) notion of a "travelling concept", 'populism' increasingly began to travel "between disciplines, between individual scholars, between historical periods, and between geographically dispersed academic communities". The question thereby arose as to whether there was a 'populist minimum' that would make it possible to capture past and present phenomena of populism and enable a journey through space and time with the concept. It was also shown that while it had previously been historians who were primarily interested in populist movements, they were increasingly being joined by social scientists, and issues concerned with the contemporary social and political framework were more and more the focus of research into their causes.

From the middle of the 1960s onwards, the entry of the concept of 'populism' into research on South American movements and regimes (Dix 1985; Conniff 1999; de la Torre 2000) can be seen as the first indicator of this transnationalisation and transdisciplinarity. Sociological studies, especially those of Gino Germani (for example 1955), on the respective regimes of Getúlio

Vargas in Brazil (1930-1945) and Juan Perón in Argentina (1946-1955) were the starting point. In an article published in 1965, it was Torcuato S. Di Tella—a sociologist and a student of Germani—who subsequently imported the concept of ‘populism’ when he first applied it against the background of the specific socioeconomic and political situation in South America. In contrast to Europe, neither liberal nor socialist currents had great influence here, which made the social and political space more open to populist movements. The specific nature of the Latin American variety of populism is also linked to the region’s late industrial modernisation and its subsequent economic crises. What is characteristic of populism in South America is, on the one hand, its anti-status quo agenda and its nationalist and anti-imperialist features. On the other hand, it was able to draw on relatively broad support among different social classes, and the subsequent lack of organisation proved beneficial for the installation of populist regimes (Di Tella 1965).

Ultimately, the marked influence of personalism played a much more central role in many Latin American examples of populism (Weyland 2001) than the historical examples of the *Narodniki* and the American farmers’ movement. The examples from South America have greatly contributed to the fact that questions over the structure of leadership as well as the style, appearance and personality of leader figures have been incorporated into the definitions of ‘populism’. The leadership of South American populist movements was highly individualised and personalised, and the connection between the leader and the supporters usually took place directly and immediately, without intermediary organisations. Leaders such as Perón and Vargas also exerted an authoritarian style of leadership, acting like peoples’ tribunes and casting themselves as representatives of the people and defenders of the popular will. To their followers, they were attributed – in the sense that Max Weber uses the term – with a charisma, which in turn decisively contributed to the cohesiveness of the supporters (Craig 1976; Conniff 1999; Roberts 2006).

A second caesura in recent populism research came in the form of an international conference staged at the London School of Economics in 1967 and organised by the journal *Government and Opposition*, and the resulting, aforementioned anthology, *Populism: Its Meanings and National Characteristics*, which was edited by Ghita Ionesco and Ernest Gellner (1969a), and which Paul Taggart describes as “the definitive collection on populism” (Taggart 2000: 15; emphasis in original). On the one hand, the conference, which was attended by political scientists, sociologists, historians, social anthropologists and economists, highlighted the strong interdisciplinary interest in the subject. On the other, there was the intention to subject ‘populism’ to a kind of conceptual and theoretical examination, and to test its reach as a comparative concept, with a broad scope of focus in terms of time and geography and encompassing a wide spectrum of example countries.

Although Isaiah Berlin was somewhat laconic in his concluding comment to the conference, saying that all the participants agreed “that the subject was much too vast not merely to be contained in one definition, but to be exhausted in one discussion” (Berlin et al. 1968: 179), he identified a range of characteristics and circumstances that had arisen from the case studies presented: a specific notion of community, or *Gemeinschaft*, as a coherent and unified society; speaking in the name of the majority; a basically apolitical stance, since society is favoured over the state; the transfer of values from the past to the present; the evocation of enemies and threats that menaces the united, integral group; the belief in an ideal, unbroken man who is

neither oppressed nor deceived by anyone; and the transitional edge of modernisation as the framework conditions favourable for populism (ibid.: 173-75).

These two important moments in the history of scholarship of populism were due not least to the academic interest in the ongoing processes of decolonisation and the strengthening of the liberation movements, which were accompanied by mobilisation or led to the establishment of regimes whose formation could be grasped with the analytical categories of 'populism'. They were also the starting point for a new methodological dynamic, which was characterised by globally comparative perspectives, but did not lose sight of the heterogeneity and contextuality of the phenomena investigated. Margaret Canovan made a significant contribution to this search for comparative, practicable criteria in her book *Populism* from 1981, when, on the basis of a typology, she designed a historically and spatially comprehensive outline of populism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Her aim was to sharpen the notion of 'populism' by detailing "different functions of the term as well as to the different phenomena to which it can refer" (Canovan 1981: 300). Proceeding phenomenologically, Canovan distinguished between two main types of populism, the agrarian and the political, whose central commonality was their appeal to the people and the mistrust of the elite.

Canovan subdivided agrarian populism into rural radicalism (with the Farmers' movement in the USA, the agrarian movement in Germany of the 1890s and the Canadian Social Credit Movement of the 1930s serving as examples), intellectual agrarian socialism (represented by the Russian *Narodniki* and various twentieth-century movements in Algeria, Tanzania and Bolivia), and the peasant movements in Eastern Europe of the early twentieth century. According to Canovan, populist dictatorships, such as the regime of Juan Perón, were also a part of political populism, as well as populist democracies, where the call for direct democratic means was particularly strong, as the impression prevailed that certain groups and interests were over-represented in the dominant representative democracy. In addition, there was reactionary populism, among whose ranks Canovan included the Governor of Alabama, George Wallace, with his segregated racial policy, the British politician, Enoch Powell, with his anti-immigration policy, and the so-called 'politicians' populism', which was, according to Canovan, characterised by the fact that it was built on a non-ideological coalition that came together by means of an appeal to the people.

Essentially, however, Margaret Canovan found it difficult to filter out a nucleus of populism, and she limited herself to create a taxonomy of populism by means of the case studies discussed. This is reminiscent of the understanding of 'populism' as a syndrome, as Peter Wiles (1969) described it when he identified a number of characteristics and factors whose common occurrence was essential to populism. Canovan (1982: 551) also conceded, therefore, that the types of populism she identified "do not really look like seven varieties of the same kind of thing; on the contrary, some of them seem quite unconnected with others".

Populism as a Strategy or Ideology?

A central discussion that continues to characterise definitions of 'populism' even now revolves around the question of whether, first and foremost, the concept encompasses the strategies and forms of politics of movements and parties, or whether it is more of an ideology, a worldview

(Aslanidis 2015). For example, Pierre-André Taguieff (2008: 457) insists that today a rigorous use of the term can only be a limited one, that ‘populism’ can only denote a dimension of “political action and discourse” and is not epitomised by a “defined type of political regime“, nor in “specific ideological content“.

In this understanding, populism is seen as a political method, a discursive means and a rhetorical style, and its appeal to the people is primarily about political communication and performative repertoires (Jagers and Walgrave 2007, Moffitt 2016). If populism is to be understood as a political strategy, then there is a need to examine the incentives for gaining support, the way in which it is positioned with respect to the political system, and the links between citizens and political actors. Depending on the context, populists use their rhetorical means to differentiate between different target groups, such as farmers or workers, while the anti-attitude towards the establishment remains constant (Barr 2009). All populist movements would therefore pursue a policy of negation, opposition and protest in keeping with their anti-elite self-understanding and anti-establishment attitude. So it is hardly surprising that the so-called ‘protest-voter thesis’ is particularly popular in electoral research on populist parties, as they see mistrust and resentment of the political and social elites and institutions as being the central voting motives for adherence to these parties (Bergh 2004; Schumacher and Rooduijn 2013).

Overall, the dominant conviction in these positions is that the notion of ‘populism’ primarily covers functional and strategic aspects and makes no kind of statement about ideological quality and content (Aslanidis 2015). This is also supported by the assessment that populist movements lack their own comprehensive, theoretically oriented programme, as well as by the fact that there are hardly any populist theorists (Betz 1994). Thus, Paul Taggart (2000: 4) writes of the ‘empty heart’ of populism, for since it contains no core values and no great visions, populism is marked by its ideologically empty interior. According to Karin Priester (2007: 13; emphasis in original), it is this kind of interpretation of the concept that has led to the fact that in recent literature on populism “there has been a lot of research into *how* populists act and communicate, but too little, by contrast, into *what* it is they actually have to say”.

On the other hand, there are authors who stress that the concept ‘populism’ is less an indication of strategic, instrumental aspects, but rather first and foremost a question of ideological dimensions (for example, MacRae 1969; Rensmann 2006). It is not so much about the way in which ideology is mediated and introduced into politics, but rather the content of the ideology and the ideas and perceptions that lie behind it. In the search for a ‘populist minimum’, the Manichaeic image of the world and of society, in which society is divided into two antagonistic and homogeneous groups, the ‘true people’ and the ‘dishonourable elite’ (Mudde 2004) comes to the fore. While ‘the people’ in populism is regarded, according to Daniele Albertazzi and Duncan McDonnell (2007: 6), as “a homogeneous and virtuous community”, and any divisions among the people are described as inappropriate, as something created and nurtured by the intellectual and political elite. In fact, these lines of conflict could easily be bridged, “as they are of less consequence than the people’s common ‘nature’ and identity” (ibid.). This also has the effect, as Jan-Werner Müller (2014: 487, emphasis in original) notes, that “according to the populist *Weltanschauung*, there can be no such thing as a legitimate opposition”.

Thus the populists, with their understanding of a homogenous ‘people’, end up in an ideological conflict with pluralistic conceptions that originate from a heterogeneous society con-

sisting of different groups, individuals and interests (Müller 2014). The populist base narrative is also continually determined by the same line of conflict that places the people in opposition to the elite. With this comes a fundamental scepticism towards representative democracy (Canovan 1999). Politics must, from a populist perspective, not only always be the expression of a *volonté générale*, but it is also crucial that the people are ultimately sovereign, as Jean-Jacques Rousseau emphasised, and that they themselves exercise their sovereignty without delegating it.

In order to fathom the conceptualisation of ‘populism’, the question also arises as to which notions of the ‘people’, the central reference value of the populists, are being used. Are there differences – not least because the notion of ‘the people’ is one that only appears in its respective equivalents in different national languages, and its conceptual history is therefore shaped in each case by a different interpretative culture (Koselleck 1992: 142)? For example, in Anglo-Saxon language usage, ‘the people’ can mean both singular individuals and a collection of individuals, a political collective, particularly in the sense of a sovereign people. It is therefore not surprising, according to Margaret Canovan (2005: 86), that “anglophone political discourse [...] makes it easy for populism and liberalism to share common ground”, because they can each bring different notions of people into play. This also explains the dissent in the American debate over the interpretation of populism. By contrast, in French language usage since the French Revolution, *peuple* has largely been intended to refer to the whole community of citizens, a collective as a whole, so to speak (Julliard 1992). In the conceptual tradition of continental Europe, the individual disappears into the communal to a much greater degree, especially in the French term *peuple* and in the German term *Volk*.

It is also clear that the semantic amalgamating of *Volk*, people, *peuple* or *narod* with the notion of the nation is central to populist movements from the right, for example, where the shift from *demos* to *ethnos* is decisive. In the ideology of right-wing populism, the emotionally charged and symbolically stylised image of the people is combined with the idea of a clearly definable homeland, or ‘heartland’ (Taggart 2000). Membership of the national community and absolute loyalty towards the people as a nation constitute the defining frame of reference for action in politics and society. According to Yves Mény and Yves Surel (2002: 6), this also illustrates how “classic democratic orthodoxy uses ‘the people’ as an abstract construction [...], while the populist ideology or rhetoric may add other dimensions and also perceive ‘the people’ as a community of blood, culture, race and so forth”.

Since populism can certainly not be considered one of the ‘big’ ideologies, such as liberalism, socialism and conservatism, and is too one-sided to approach it only on the strategic and rhetorical level, adopting the ‘thin ideology’ approach offers a kind of middle way for identifying the central aspects of the concept of ‘populism’. Following Michael Freeden (1998), from this perspective, populism is to be understood as a ‘thin-centred ideology’ because it has no elaborate, comprehensive doctrine at its disposal (Mudde 2004; Rovira Kaltwasser 2011). Or, as Ben Stanley (2008: 95) formulated it, “its thin nature means that it is unable to stand alone as a practical political ideology: it lacks the capacity to put forward a wide-ranging and coherent programme for the solution to crucial political questions”. Accordingly, populism needs additional ideological set pieces and connects effortlessly with other worldviews. The thin-ideology approach also proves fruitful in defining the populism of the right since the 1990s. It is a characteristic of right-wing populism that the anti-pluralist populist reference to “a normatively idealised and homogenised ‘people’ is directed not only, on the vertical level, towards the

‘corrupt’ elite (against ‘those above’), but also, explicitly, on the horizontal level, towards the outside” (Frölich-Steffen and Rensmann 2005: 7). In right-wing populism, therefore, the ‘anti-elitist (vertical) affect’, as it is generally found in populism, receives in addition a ‘xenophobic (horizontal) affect’ (Pelinka 2002: 284). Starting out from the assumption of a natural inequality among human beings, it is the exclusionist and anti-egalitarian elements of ideology that are predominantly determinant in right-wing populism. Through the attribution of national, ethnic and cultural characteristics, differences are marked and used as a legitimisation for inequality and exclusion. Thus, it is a characteristic of right-wing populist actors that nationalist and xenophobic attitudes are expressed in their agendas and politics.

Finally, in populism from the left, which, not least, received theoretical attention in the analyses of the Latin American cases conducted by Ernesto Laclau (1977; 2005) and was thereby presented as a driving force for democratisation processes, its claim to social egalitarianism and a criticism of power is at its forefront. In addition, it often has specific historically determined features, as is the case with the social revolutionary *Narodniki* in Russia or the radical reform movements in Latin America, where romanticised ideas of the peasantry or anti-imperialist ideas played an important role. In left-wing populism, the ‘corrupt elite’ is primarily associated with the social, economic and financial power of the bourgeoisie, while in the understanding of ‘people’, the classless society serves as a utopian vision (Priester 2012). Here, too, the constitutive populist element is that little space is set aside for dissent, opposition and pluralism, and it is ultimately assumed that something like a people exists as a central political subject. According to Yannis Stavrakakis (2014: 506), therefore, democratic politics can hardly be imagined without populism, that is, “without forms of political discourse that call upon and designate the people [...] as their nodal point, as a privileged political subject, as a legitimising basis and symbolic lever to further egalitarian demands”.

Conclusions

The history of the concept of ‘populism’ goes hand in hand with disagreements over its definition, methodological scepticism and lively academic debates. As a travelling concept, ‘populism’ represents a story of varying degrees of intensity in terms of intellectual interest and scientific output, of transfer between disciplines and changing spheres of academic communication, but above all of changes in the subject of investigation. Since the 1960s, it has constantly been a question of trying to enable a general conceptual application of ‘populism’, as well as a means of comparing concrete phenomena, in order to increase the analytical capacity and the empirical reach of the concept, that is, one which is not merely dedicated to describing populism’s phenomena, but also to achieving a certain degree of abstraction. These challenges lie, as it were, within the nature of any conceptualisation; they are a part of the work on concepts, terms and categories, and are inherent in the search for linguistic conceptualisations and generic concepts. In the case of ‘populism’, however, some aspects that play an important role in the intriguing history of the concept and the controversies that continue to persist today end up in the foreground.

It must be noted, first of all, that the concept of ‘populism’ is characterised by a marked degree of hybridity. This can be seen in the malleability and adaptability of its definition, and is reflected in its varied, often woolly semantic content, with the result that a multitude of histori-

cal phenomena and political movements are, as it were, absorbed within it. Semantic elasticity and changes also mean that in research language ‘populism’ regularly takes on a substitution function, as the case of *Boulangisme* has shown. The porous semantics, furthermore, make it tempting for various different phenomena to be equated with or, to a certain degree, explained as identical manifestations, which is the case with the example of right-wing populism and right-wing extremism, which is popular in contemporary academic and public debates. In addition, the desire for schematic analytical frameworks and functionalist models, which the social sciences are particularly fond of, also seems to lead to the fact that variability, changeability and historicity have appreciably been lost sight of, and approaches are preferred “that replace the theory and history of populism with a more quantitative descriptive, and self-proclaimedly pragmatic approach” (Finchelstein 2014: 472).

One of the most intriguing aspects in the debates about populism is the often normatively asked question of whether populism represents a threat or a corrective to democracy. According to this logic, when it comes to establishing the significance of the concept of ‘populism’, democratic ideals are always also considered and negotiated; populism is explained as a symptom of serious dysfunctions in democracy. Or, as Nadia Urbinati (1998: 116) puts it, “the debate over the meaning of populism turns out to be a debate over the interpretation of democracy”. While in public and political understanding, populism serves, to a certain extent, as a means of measuring the pulse of democracy, from a democratic theoretical perspective, it is seen as a gauge of democracy. One of the questions that then arise is whether the opportunity for individuals, for all individual citizens, to participate and engage is sufficiently guaranteed to ensure that democracy functions. Or is it not the actual engagement and participation of as many people as possible that determine a functioning democracy? From this perspective, participation and representation are seen as crucial elements of democracy and the emergence of populism is interpreted as a democratic warning sign, whereby the selective, opportunistic and ultimately contemptuous manner in which populists treat representative and participatory principles is seldom taken into consideration. So far as the homogenising understanding of the participating ‘people’ is concerned, with the suffix *-ism*, populism becomes an appellative form of exaggeration that also apparently underlines its fundamental contradiction with democracy. However, all these argumentations, which are mostly presented normatively, often fail to include the notion that, historically, it is possible for diverse ideas and interpretations of democracy to exist, as the difference between the American and European discussions on populism makes clear. In Europe, therefore, unlike in the USA, it is rare to find the view that populists can advocate participatory egalitarian democracy or represent a socially progressive, reformist agenda.

Considering these difficulties and uncertainties, one might follow Margaret Canovan’s (1981: 301) dictum that the concept of populism is “ambiguous” and that if “the notion of ‘populism’ did not exist, no social scientist would deliberately invent it”. At the same time, however, the fulminant rise and the progressive consolidation of a series of political parties and movements, all characterised by ‘principled anti-pluralism’ (Müller 2014), demand that these conceptual and analytical questions are dealt with and the historicity of populism is understood. A look into the history reveals that both political diversity and deliberative negotiations, as well as cultural and social plurality, play a part in the challenges and achievements of pluralist societies in the modern age, to which populism, with its dichotomy of friends and

foes, its nationalist fantasies, its identity politics and its exclusionist and discriminatory demands, is fundamentally opposed.

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CHAPTER 2:

POPULISM AND POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

Alfo Mastropaolo

Populist Parties, Representation and the Crisis of Representation

Despite its claims of transparency, nothing is simple in the world of populism. The same can be said about the relationship between populism and political representation, which is a matter of lively debate when one considers their rather problematic coexistence. In contemporary Europe at the beginning of the twenty-first century, there are valid reasons to believe that populist parties' success is symptomatic of a deep crisis in democratic representation. This is the first issue that this article aims to tackle. At the same time, there is a widespread belief that populism is the negation of representation. Populism is an extremely vague concept, which indicates very different phenomena (Canovan 1982). Nonetheless, populists claim to speak on behalf of someone else. Therefore, populism is also a form of representation, although a peculiar one. This will be our second issue. The third will be how its observers, critics and rivals represent populism and populist parties. This representation is no less important than that generated by populists themselves, as it becomes part of their representative actions.

According to several authors, the rise of populism is a symptom of a deep crisis of political representation (Taggart 2002). According to Peter Mair, one of the most insightful political scientists of our generation, who shares this view, the indicators of this crisis are a decline in voter turnout—even in democracies where the phenomenon was previously limited—a rise in electoral volatility and protest vote, an increase in discontent with mainstream parties and traditional institutions, and the success of populist parties. Recalling the theory of the 'cartel party', which he developed with Richard S. Katz (Katz and Mair 1995), Mair has provided an exemplary analysis of the current state of democratic representation (Mair 2000; Mair 2002; Mair 2013) by focusing on the atrophy of parties' fundamental function as a 'linkage' between state and society.

In the not too distant past, parties were large voluntary associations that voiced the needs of specific social groups. In contrast, twenty-first century parties identify themselves with government. Thus, they have abandoned their role as citizens' advocates. Due to the influence of the media, contemporary parties address an undifferentiated audience and, for the most part, are more interested in serving as brokers of different interests than in their traditional role as spokespeople. Consequently, the position of mainstream parties has become awkward. According to Katz and Mair's 'cartel party' theory, parties have defended themselves in various ways, but the discontent that they attract has not decreased. In actual fact, the task they face is rather difficult. On the one hand—and despite the fact that voters are offered only vague promises during electoral campaigns—, these parties tend to create high expectations around certain issues. On the other hand, they are urged on by interest groups to promote specific agendas that often arise out of the mainstream parties' conflict with voters' expectations and

their failure to meet them. Caught between Scylla and Charybdis, mainstream parties smash against the cliffs of electoral discontent, which are readily and fruitfully exploited through forms of protest on which populist parties capitalise. These parties sow even further discontent and perform the same representative function that mainstream parties have abandoned. According to Mair (2000; 2009), this dynamic has generated a peculiar division of labour in which mainstream parties dedicate themselves to government-related activities, while populist parties invest their resources in representation. At the same time, the rhetoric and symbolic acts populists employ and perform in campaigns cause significant damage to democratic life.

Hanspeter Kriesi (2014) is another well-known political scientist who has offered an alternative viewpoint on political representation. He criticises Mair by arguing that representation is not at all in crisis but rather that the traditional function of representation is no longer carried out by political parties. These parties have ceased to guarantee representation not because they are more interested in government, but because the world around them has changed. This is due to the fact that Western societies are now governed differently for several reasons, including multi-level governance and new techniques of media communication. Nevertheless, this does not mean that representation is in crisis if we consider that electoral representation has never been the only form of representation. Citizens can still make use of alternative channels to push their demands, protest movements have earned their political place, and the European Union and other international actors have “reinforced representation in the administrative channel to the detriment of the electoral channel” (Kriesi 2014: 365). Hence, according to Kriesi’s thesis, we do not see a crisis of representation leading to the success of populist parties but rather the opening up of a new structural cleavage in Western societies, which are now divided between the ‘losers’ and ‘winners’ of globalisation. The first are the social strata that have experienced the delocalisation of enterprise, deindustrialisation, unemployment and an inevitable decrease in welfare-state services, while they have limited abilities to adapt to change. The winners, we can assume by contrast, are the well-educated, creative, cosmopolitan and flexible individuals who have been able to rapidly adapt to these inescapable transformations brought about by technological progress and globalisation. Populist parties have mobilised the losers’ discontent and become their defenders. While claiming to protect national culture and traditions, right-wing populists oppose immigration regimes and refugee resettlement programmes. Moreover, these parties stand for a strong nation state and are against European integration. In contrast, left-wing populists oppose the liberalisation of financial markets, multinational corporations, deregulation policies and privatisation, and they mobilise the discontent of citizens, which has been generated by the downsizing of the welfare state.

According to Kriesi’s interpretation, not only do the ‘losers’ respond to populists’ anti-establishment appeal, but they are also culturally or socially conservative and incapable of adapting to change. A similar view is widely shared in both political and media debates. In considering the many comments made in political and media arenas concerning the United Kingdom’s EU membership referendum in 2016, alongside those related to the effects of France’s European Constitution referendum in 2005, we find that, according to such an interpretation, the more ‘traditional’ elements of British and French societies prevailed over the modern ones, thus giving both right-wing and left-wing populists a reason to rejoice. Also, the interpretation promoted by Mair is widely shared. The radical leftist critics of social democratic parties, who endorse the Third Way or similar positions, share his views. Nevertheless, the two interpretations

—the one promoted by Mair and the other suggested by Kriesi—are far from being as incompatible as it may seem at first sight.

According to Mair, once mainstream parties' representative function declines, populists fill the political void left by them. Kriesi rejects the idea of a crisis in representation in general, but acknowledges that populists play the role of advocates on behalf of the social strata that resist change *de facto* by supplying an alternative to the void left by mainstream parties. In any case, in both interpretations there is some political bias. Mair is critical of mainstream parties, while Kriesi interprets populists' success as a sign of the defensive reaction and anti-modern conservatism of the 'left behind'.

Representing the People: Which People?

According to a widely held viewpoint, populism and representation are incompatible. Populists formally respect democracy and its electoral practices but, at the same time, question the rules of political representation. In their rhetoric, the people are one, their unity must not be called into question by party political competition, and their voice should not be distorted by forms of pluralistic representation (Müller 2016). Thus, populists imagine a 'plebiscitary' democracy or a personal leadership-centred democracy (Urbinati 2014: 173), which they already practice within their own organisations. Nevertheless, populist parties are fully fledged representative agencies, depending, of course, on the definition of representation one is willing to accept.

If populism seems complicated, then political representation is even more so. The conventional view of representation suggests that the represented come before the representatives. The first are the principal and the second the agent (Pitkin 1967). But this view is not the only plausible one in the political domain, where the principals are made up of collective bodies. There are good reasons to believe that political representation works the other way around. The principal is represented, and even exists, only because someone provides representation by claiming to speak on their behalf (Bourdieu 1991; Saward 2010). Modern political representation came into being in seventeenth-century England when members of the new ruling political class who had entered parliament sought political legitimacy by proclaiming themselves to be representatives of the people. Ever since then, we have been able to perceive representatives as political entrepreneurs who engage in the struggle to claim power in order to represent somebody. Therefore, representation manifests itself, first of all, in a performative act. Through their discourses, political entrepreneurs identify, classify and categorise people. Furthermore, considering that from time to time the represented must be exhibited, political entrepreneurs organise and gather people into lasting or temporary collectives. Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan (1967), through their theory of cleavages, provided an exhaustive map of the social, cultural, religious and economic premises on which the modern activity of political representation has developed in Europe. Of course, if we consider that representation implies the complicated action of gathering people who usually do not even know that they have something in common, the actions of representatives necessarily also require a great deal of fabrication, manipulation and translation (Latour 2003).

As is usually the case in the analysis of populist parties, one of the first questions to be asked is: Whom do they represent? Who are their supporters and voters? This question is answered

—without total agreement among them—by electoral specialists who delineate in detail who votes for whom. In accordance with the different perspectives on representation summarised above, one can raise the question differently: How do ‘populist parties’ construct, define and represent those they claim to represent? And how do they define themselves as representatives? The representatives also have to invent and represent themselves. They must assume a role vis-à-vis those they claim to represent and play it out on the theatrical stage of representation.

The obvious answer is that populists claim to be representatives of the people. Perhaps this is the reason that they have been labelled populists. However, it is a very generic label that raises some serious doubts. Populist parties are neither the first, nor the only ones, to have championed the people. Democracy legitimises itself as ‘government of and by the people’. Since the invention of representative regimes, not a day has passed without someone invoking government of and by the people and declaring themselves a representative of the people. The parties that celebrate the people in their official names or define themselves as ‘popular’ are countless. Many confessional parties, of the Christian democratic kind, refer to themselves as ‘people’s parties’. At the present moment, all these formations are joining together (often with other parties) in the European Parliament to make up the European People’s Party group (EPP group). Moreover, this term has also been used by many left-wing parties. In the 1930s, parties participating in the Communist International called for political convergence with the socialists against fascism; the alliances that followed were called ‘popular fronts’. In France, the *Front Populaire* won the 1936 elections, while at the same time in Spain the *Frente Popular* opposed Francoist insurrections. In 1948, Italian socialists and communists joined together in the elections as the People’s Bloc.

Therefore, populists do not have a monopoly on the term ‘the people’, and no single conception of the people has ever existed. On the contrary, there are various ideas about what ‘the people’ signifies. These conceptions are inconsistent with each other and incoherent when placed together (Canovan 2005). What is, therefore, the populist perspective on the concept of the people? Traditional mass parties used to define the people as the *demos*, an ambivalent term that was not fully clear even to the ancient Greeks who coined it. The *demos* were both the citizens who took part in the democratic government of the polis and the lower classes. The same could be said of the concept of the people recognised in mass parties. In both cases, the underlying idea is very distant from that shared by right-wing populists and is rooted in radically different political beliefs. The populist idea of the people is that of *ethnos* (Portinaro 2013). Nonetheless, not many observers are willing to admit that this notion of the people is not so different from that promoted by the Nazis (*Volk*) and the Vichy regime (*peuple*).

The *ethnos* corresponds to a communitarian and undifferentiated image of the people, unified by blood, land, history, language and culture. Right-wing populists invoke ‘the people’ chiefly in cultural and racial terms, promising to keep this group safe by reviving its traditions. They do so, principally, to counter threats of cosmopolitanism, which promotes transnational policies, such as open markets and increased migration.

An instructive example of the people as *ethnos* is provided by arguably the forefather of all the current generation of right-wing populists: the French politician Jean-Marie Le Pen. A former paratrooper in Indochina who took part in the Battle of Suez, Le Pen entered politics by joining a right-wing party, which today would be labelled populist, led by Pierre Poujade. Later on, Le Pen left his seat in the French National Assembly and volunteered to fight in Algeria.

Finally, in 1972, he founded the *Front National* (National Front) by gathering Vichy veterans and veterans of the Algerian War, while emphasising the qualities of the French people within the terms of the *ethnos*. While addressing his ‘dear compatriots’, Le Pen had begun to stress the perilous issue of immigration by the early 1980s. His stance was based on three aspects: demographics, economics and culture. Immigrants, he asserted, had already been welcomed into France with excessive generosity, and were soon to alter French demography, considering their high birth rate. In addition, according to Le Pen, they were ‘polluting’ French culture and religious traditions. Le Pen also argued that they were too much of a financial burden since they increasingly took advantage of the French welfare system at the expense of French taxpayers, who, at that point, had been unjustly ‘abandoned’ by the state. Le Pen thus called for the rejection of immigrants. The second evil he denounced was the poor condition of French workers, taxpayers and national, especially small to medium-sized, enterprises. The people as *ethnos* were overtaxed and received inadequate and inefficient services from the state, namely poor education and insufficient healthcare. In Le Pen’s eyes, nobody defended the rights of new mothers or did anything to secure their children’s upbringing. Equally, nobody fought against crime, which was spiralling out of control. And nobody provided aid to French companies that were facing hardship on the international market. To combat all this, France, Le Pen concluded, had to be “strong, fraternal, French”.¹

Not too different issues were emphasised by Jörg Haider, the leader of the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) between 1986 and 2000 in his invocation of the ‘fatherland.’ The party’s mission is to defend values, culture, language, families and children against ‘multicultural experiments’ (Wodak and Pelinka 2002: 28). Such statements are similar to those made by the Italian *Lega Nord* (Northern League) too, which lumped immigrants together with Southern Italians (Diamanti 1993), and also to those of the UK Independence Party (UKIP). Its 2015 electoral manifesto stated that “UKIP celebrates Britain and will promote a unifying British culture. We will not condone the philosophy of multiculturalism because it has failed by emphasising separateness instead of unity”.²

Socialist parties used to divide the *demos* into classes, while confessional parties acknowledged the deep social cleavages within society but attempt to overcome them. In contrast, right-wing populists consider the people to be unitary. For them, any kind of division is strictly artificial. The *ethnos* consists of the ‘common’ and ‘small’ people (for example, small-scale entrepreneurs, tradesmen, craftsmen, farmers, blue-collar workers and so on), who are the ‘real’, authentic people. These people are the embodiment of morality, honesty and hard work, taxpayers who are in need of efficient hospitals, good schools, fair pension payments and so on. Nevertheless, if it is not divided, the *ethnos* has fierce enemies. The first category of enemies consists of the establishment, namely professional politicians, mainstream parties, trade unions, public bureaucracy, major corporations and international financiers, Eurocrats in Brussels and Frankfurt, who are corrupt and unjustly privileged. A second category within this perspective are immigrants (though rarely do official populist discourses and manifestos explicitly use xenophobic and racist language), particularly Muslims. The third category, coherent with the *ethnos* model, are drug addicts, homosexuals, unmarried mothers and other vulnerable categories of people assisted by welfare programmes. Right-wing populists differ

¹ (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x3q8_3CeaY8)

² (http://www.ukip.org/ukip_manifesto_summary)

among themselves only with regard to the EU. While Northern European populists criticise EU policies for being too generous towards Mediterranean Europe, populists from Southern Europe criticise Brussels for being mean-spirited and tight-fisted. Nonetheless, all populists advance the same strategy for standing against these adversaries: national sovereignty must be fully restored.

Concerned with the *ethnos*, the new far right parties have no objections to the market economy. Curiously, however, in their rhetoric they take advantage of, and profit from, the deteriorating socioeconomic situation of the middle and lower classes and social inequalities, which have intensified as a result of globalisation. This raises an interesting question regarding European populism in comparison to other experiences of populism, for instance the frequently cited Latin American one. According to Gino Germani (1978), the latter supplied a sense of identity to the lower classes and called for substantial redistributive policies that benefited them. In a significant difference, this doesn't seem to be a function European populists want to fulfil. In contrast, what do they want to do to reduce social inequality once they get into power? Their experience of taking part in coalition governments with right-centre and conservative parties teach us that no welfare policies were to be promoted but, au contraire, they supported policies aimed at cutting taxes and privatising public services should be pursued (Akkerman et al. 2016).

It is highly probable that populist parties learned from each other through tactical emulation. Le Pen's first achievement as leader of the French National Front (FN) dates back to 1984, when the party successfully passed the 10 percent threshold in the European Parliament election. Since then, political emulation has become evident. The FPÖ, which initially viewed itself as a nationalist and pan-German party—albeit with a large number of ex-Nazis among its ranks—and had even supported a social democratic government, became a right-wing populist party under the aegis of Haider. In the 1990s, Christoph Blocher took over the leadership of a moderate Swiss party—the traditionalist Schweizerische Volkspartei (Swiss People's Party/SVP)—transformed it into a far right populist party, led it to victory and turned it into the largest party in Switzerland within a ten-year time span. This model was then imported to both Scandinavia and the United Kingdom.

Certainly, there are plenty of variations to the aforementioned model. The family of right-wing populists has become crowded, and also includes some ethno-regionalist parties that divide the people into subnational categories: the Northern League in Italy, the Flemish *Vlaams Blok* in Belgium, which was replaced by *Vlaams Belang* (Flemish Interest) in 2004, and the *Lega dei Ticinesi* (Ticino League) in Switzerland. The Flemish party is overtly secessionist, whereas the Italian Northern League has now abandoned its separatist cause—though it continues to defend the rights of the 'Padanian people'; the party based in the canton of Ticino does not wish to let go of the rights they enjoy within the Swiss Confederation, but proudly defends the Italian-speaking people of the territory.

In addition, we face a true paradox in populist discourse. Right-wing populists negate representation but represent themselves as the people's spokesmen and spokeswomen, and there is no doubt that they represent something and somebody. Furthermore, they make great efforts to organise their people in the ways in which mainstream parties once did (Heinisch and Mazzoleni 2016). 'Narrating the people', which by itself does not really exist, is clearly a form of representation. What the populist parties do is balance their representative activity with a pe-

cular democratic fundamentalism. They usually appoint their leaders by acclamation, which implies, however, a heterodox form of representation. Populists give noteworthy preference to referenda, but this is after all a means of mischaracterising representation as direct democracy. This was the case with UKIP when it claimed that the referendum on British membership of the EU was “the opportunity for real change in our politics, rebalancing power from large corporations and big government institutions and putting it back into the hands of the people of this country”.³

Furthermore, populists add another distinct and rather disquieting feature to political representation. Their idea of democracy is anchored in their prejudice against pluralism (Müller 2016). Not only do they characterise the people in absolute terms as an inviolable collective totality, but they downsize, if not actually exclude, minority rights and any other fundamental rights protecting the single individual.

The tradition of European constitutionalism is based on the rule of law and a system of checks and balances. After the world had witnessed the manipulation of popular sovereignty and electoral democracy by fascism and Nazism, in the post-World War II era, these elements were reinforced by, among other things, the introduction of national constitutional courts. The point here, as argued by Yves Mény and Yves Surel, is that populism may simply be the other side of the democratic coin (Mény and Surel 2000). Following their view, we might argue that populism has currently been rediscovered, along with the spectres that accompany it: most significant here is the tyranny of the majority. According to populists, the people as *ethnos* exist due to their oneness, and they must have granted the right to unitarily rule themselves through identification with those who guide it. This is clearly not the most conventional or healthy way of conceiving representative and pluralistic democracy. Nevertheless, even if populists might not be fully aware of this fact, there is no doubt that they still ultimately find themselves in the realm of representation.

Western societies are, on average, more educated and better informed today than they were after World War II. Therefore, citizens are more inclined to criticise those who represent and govern them (Gaxie 2004: 152). This inclination is certainly one of the causes of what is commonly referred to as democratic discontent, which Mair (2000; 2002; 2013) identified when discussing the crisis of political representation. The reaction by mainstream parties has been to emphasise popular sovereignty and reinforce direct democracy through referenda, primaries, personalised leadership and the presidential turn of representative government (Poguntke and Webb 2005). Should we therefore consider this to be an indirect success for right-wing populist parties?

Contemporary democratic regimes have been defined as “output-oriented democracy” or “government for the people” (Scharpf 1999: 6). Traditional representative institutions, such as parliaments and parties, have been marginalised, while the executives have been upgraded. A part of governmental activity has also been displaced to technocrats, independent authorities and European Union institutions. In order to balance these changes and reduce voter discontent, mainstream parties increasingly support direct democratic practices, such as primaries, deliberative assemblies and referenda. Of course, this does incur a risk akin to the outcome of the UK referendum on EU membership and similar events with unexpected results. Democracy

3 (http://www.ukip.org/ukip_manifesto_summary).

itself has been redefined repeatedly. Mair suggests that it is becoming a “partyless democracy” (for example, a democracy against parties) and therefore a “populist democracy” (Mair 2002). Populist parties are, consequently, perfectly in tune with the spirit of the time that their action helped to create.

Right-wing populists claim to represent the people but only use this argument in line with their own understanding of the concept. Nonetheless, they are not the only ones to do so, as has already been mentioned. All political actors manufacture their own versions of ‘the people’, including those that someone defines ‘left-wing populists’ (Kriesi 2014: 362). The act of gathering together and representing the people, as executed by right-wing populists, is not a particularly intellectual achievement but little more than the improvised amalgamation of a collection of loose ideas. This points to a significant difference between today's populism and fascism, whose conceptual foundation was indebted to several important intellectuals, such as Giovanni Gentile, Carl Schmitt and Drieu La Rochelle. In comparison with its right-wing manifestation, left-wing populists, such as the Spanish party Podemos, which was created by a group of young academics at the Complutense University of Madrid, include members who are capable of making sophisticated theoretical arguments inspired by the writings of Antonio Gramsci and Ernesto Laclau.

Laclau taught in the UK for many years but never forgot his Argentinian roots. He developed a theory of the people that was explicitly inspired by constructivism. According to Laclau, in a global society the Marxian interpretative frame, that is, the idea of a society divided into different classes, is entirely obsolete. Contemporary societies are scattered and contradictory; populism is a political technique able to aggregate social demands (to be reconstructed later in more universal terms) with the aim of building political identity and groupings (Laclau 2005). The leadership of Podemos took these ideas very seriously. They are willing to mobilise and construct the “people” opposing it to the elites, and they suggest the end of the dichotomy of Right versus Left. Nevertheless, their system of dichotomous and antagonistic relations, such as lower/higher social classes, democracy/oligarchy, majority/elite, old/new politics and change/continuity (Cano 2015; Caruso 2017) is extremely different from the right-wing dichotomy between the pure ethnos and the corrupt cosmopolitan elite.

According to Podemos, one part consists of a popular majority, which is national, republican and loyal to the 1978 constitution: this is the people. The other part consists of “a minority of the privileged who systematically disregard the law” and “systematically live on the margins of the law because of their corruption and tax evasion activities”: this part consists of politicians, businessmen, bankers and financial speculators (Caruso 2017). However, it must be clear that Podemos understands the people to be a pluralistic and unrestricted *demos*. There is no prejudice against immigrants, and Podemos supports the politics of acceptance, while recognising social diversity. The party acknowledges the multinational character of Spain, and endorses the Catalan, Galician, Valencian, and Basque populations’ right to self-determination. Therefore, unlike other Spanish parties, Podemos has no objection to the Catalan referendum on the region’s independence. This kind of pluralism also exists within the party, where former activists from the Communist Party of Spain, protesters from the Indignados movement and Izquierda Anticapitalista supporters, as well as regionalist activists, have all found their place. Equally compatible with their pluralism is their endorsement of participatory and direct democracy, even when exercised online. But the latter is practiced to strengthen democratic representation and not to replace it. Despite this, there is no trace of plebiscitary or

‘populist’ democracy within Podemos. It promises to fully uphold Spanish constitutionalism, which must be based on the separation of powers and on a system of effective checks and balances. Finally: could the *demos* Podemos means to represent be more different from the *ethnos* right-wing populists call upon?

Representing the Populist Parties

As it turns out, political representation is more complex than first expected. The represented exist because they are represented by the representatives. Nevertheless, the performative act of representation is not unilateral in all cases but rather relational. Representation is also a product of elaborate acts of representation by other political agents, who are neither disinterested nor indifferent. Representation happens in a competitive sphere, crowded with numerous actors—competitors and observers of more or less sympathetic inclination—who all comment, criticise and, above all, classify. This makes the act of representing a matter of contingency, above all things. No party, movement or ideology remains the same over time. Contingency is unavoidable; this is also the case for populist parties, which are only rarely aware of themselves being populist. It is here that we can trace one of populism’s major features. Political parties usually align themselves with a specific political family (Seiler 1980; Mair and Mudde 1998). Socialist parties belong to the socialist family and communist parties to the communist family. The same is equally true for liberal, confessional and fascist parties. This is to say that most parties from different countries are usually willing to share the same label when representing common ideological positions and thus adhere to a political family (most tangibly at the international institutional level). The European Parliament, for instance, has even institutionalised such political affiliation by grouping nationally elected parties under the same label. By contrast, the populist family is a complete invention by observers and political competitors. Populist parties have neither a clear international umbrella nor, for instance, a unique space in the current European Parliament. Consequently, the label populist is a paradoxical Nansen passport for homeless parties.

Who invented the populist family? Certainly not those who have been labelled populists (leaving aside the Russian and American populists who belong to a completely different time and political *modus operandi*). Contemporary European populists, as well those from Latin America, Africa and Asia, are not born with the populist label. When this term was first attributed to some parties and regimes in South America and post-colonial countries—where the masses were being mobilised as a political force—it was fairly residual and vague (Ionescu and Gellner 1969; Canovan 1981). The act of classifying Peronism, Nasserism, Nakrumah’s regime in Ghana and that of Sukarno in Indonesia, among others, was extremely difficult by Western standards. These were neither socialist nor fascist regimes. However, they were egalitarian and anti-imperialist. Therefore, observers made a choice to classify them as populist.

Not so different was the classification of a number of outsider parties that have emerged in Europe since the 1970s. They could not be clearly assigned to, and/or refused the right to belong to, any known political family. This probably explains why academic debate on the definition of populism has become so contested (Hubé and Truan 2017). The process of classifying such heterogeneous phenomena, which developed in markedly different circumstances, could not avoid a degree of inaccuracy. As a result, there is often the impression that each stu-

dent of populism has his or her own way of describing populism, which is variously defined as a political and communicative style, a kind of rhetoric, a discourse, an ideology (maybe just ‘thin’) or a peculiar way to occupy democratic institutions.

All classifications make simplifications to some extent. However, in this case the classification not only simplifies but is also far from being flattering (Collovald 2003; Collovald 2004). In addition, those labelled populists have only recently accepted this representation. It is, after all, a stigmatising classification. Nobody takes into account the tradition of North American populism. Accordingly, the attribution of the same label to a new generation of European parties and movements, hardly compared to the liberal idea of democracy, does not dignify them with sufficient status at all. The people of non-western populists were made of anonymous and formless masses and, therefore, the opposite of the social classes represented by European parties. And formless and frustrated popular strata seem to be the people for European populists, as observed and defined by some commentators who are far from being as generous as Laclau was. Equally ungenerous and unsympathetic is the label of ‘modernisation’s losers’, representing them as individually beaten by change and responsible for their own condition. After all, there are many good reasons to consider them victims of modernisation.

Is there any other label one could attribute to the populists? Calling them fascists would be too hasty. There are no traces, for instance, of scientific racism, although the former invariably draw on the most murky repertoire of the extreme right. The French National Front has an evident fascist ancestry, and previously invoked flagrant anti-Semitism. It even made use, albeit with minor changes, of the same symbol as the Italian neo-fascists. The origins of the Austrian FPÖ, Swedish Democrats and the Northern League in Italy are not so different. UKIP has some connection to the anti-immigration stances of Enoch Powell (Goodwin and Milazzo 2015). On the other side of the political spectrum, the attention paid to social inequality, injustice and exclusion, as well as the demand for more egalitarian policies and redistribution, reveals the ideological ancestries of both Podemos and Syriza. It is also possible to draw some conclusions from the parties’ leadership. Pablo Iglesias, the leader of Podemos, has mentioned his past record as an activist for the communist left. Syriza in Greece is an agglomeration of different left-wing groups, while its leader, Alexis Tsipras, comes from the ranks of the Greek Communist Party. Among the members and activists of UKIP, the FN and Alternative for Germany (AfD), there are many former activists from the British Conservative Party, the French Union for a Popular Movement (UMP) and the German Christian Democratic Union (CDU).

The question of who votes for right-wing populist parties is not at all clear. Commentators from different milieus (politics, the media and academia) compete against each other, while putting forward their own representations of populist voters. Let’s consider, for instance, the French case. According to some observers, the Front National’s success is the result of a dramatic shift to the right of many former leftist voters (Perrineau 2001). Others assume that even though a shift did occur, it was not dramatic (Lehingue 2003). On the one hand, it is a well-known fact that a significant share of right-wing voters has always come from the working class. On the other hand, nothing is more questionable than labelling those who support the SVP in Zurich, the Ticino League, Flemish Interest in Belgium or the Northern League in Italy as losers. Herbert Kitschelt and Andrew J. McGann (1995) argue that the supporters of populist parties are nothing but ‘welfare chauvinists’. In any case, if a considerable number of UKIP voters are indeed ‘left behind’, their political roots are to be found more in the Conser-

vative Party than in the Labour Party (Goodwin and Milazzo 2015). This is similar to the French National Front's voters (Crépon et al. 2015) and those of the Italian Northern League, who came mainly from the Christian Democracy Party. This has also been the case for Podemos and Syriza (from the other side of the political spectrum), both of which attracted many former voters from the mainstream left. On closer inspection, there are 'winners' and 'losers' everywhere. Therefore, the hypothesis regarding the radicalisation of former mainstream right-wing voters, including the working class, is as plausible as it is for the mainstream left. This would confirm Mair's hypothesis, but would also call into question underlying political loyalties. Have they really changed? Or is voting for populists simply a form of protest, perhaps transitory yet more vigorous than the traditional form of abstention?

Populist parties are also represented as (destructive) protest parties in contrast to the (constructive) programme-based parties. In fact, with the exception of some populist parties that do develop complex political programmes (in the case of the AfD and Podemos), the weakening of programmes is a general phenomenon, which Otto Kirchheimer, in his famous article on catch-all parties (1969), coupled with another general phenomenon: the personalisation of politics. Anti-intellectualism is another general typical addition to populist attributes. Nevertheless, if the level of intellectual development of post-World War II mainstream parties was very high, and their leaders were often well-known intellectuals, current party leaders are not. Moreover, we must acknowledge that the leadership of Podemos comprises a large number of academics from the Complutense University of Madrid and that of the German AfD was initially run by a serious economist.

A similar consideration concerns leadership itself. Charisma is often attributed to populist parties (Taggart 2004), and the cultivated elites are keen to consider the uncultivated masses to be particularly receptive to appeals to the emotions. There is no doubt that some populist parties also owe their initial success to the popularity of their leaders. Nonetheless, if we take into account the history of party politics, we would find this either new or remarkable. The appeal of the 'founding fathers,' whoever they may be, is not new to politics but rather the political norm. Kirchheimer, in his article on catch-all parties (1969), commented on how, in order to adapt to the new media (particularly television), the figure of the leader was becoming a symbolic shortcut on the way to making parties recognisable, while diminishing the relevance of controversial issues. By aiming to expand political reach through propaganda, personalised parties could appeal to a larger number of voters than had been previously possible. Personalisation is common to many parties nowadays, mainly because of the 'media logic' that seeks out attractive figures in order to increase audience share.

In addition, populists tend to employ simplistic, emotional, informal, provocative, coarse and even violent language (Canovan 1999: 5-6). But not all of them are the same, and they do not use the same language in all circumstances. Different leaders of the same party can speak very differently. Besides this, language is subject to constant change. Moreover, informal and emotional language has become much more common in current politics. It might reflect the need of an audience through the media. In the case of populist parties, it might even be considered a necessity. Let's not forget that they face an already crowded political marketplace with intense competition, where established parties have many more resources at their disposal, such as the possibility of making use of public policies. Populist 'start-ups' do not usually have public funding to hand.

Politics is always rich in paradox. Right-wing populists often make unacceptable statements. On formal occasions, they may moderate their tone, but they are used to preaching xenophobia and racism. More than half a century after fascist regimes collapsed, the success of populists highlights the difficult conditions that plague contemporary democracies. Yet, this does not stop mainstream parties from adopting an ambiguous attitude towards right-wing populists. On the one hand, mainstream parties deal with right-wing populists as if they were a threat to democratic life, considering them unworthy and unreliable. On the other hand, calling them populists is also a way, perhaps unconsciously, to play down that same threat to democracy without excluding the possibility of the political exploitation of populists by mainstream parties. The exploitation of right-wing populists has a long history. It was anticipated by the leader of the Socialist Party in France, François Mitterrand, who changed the French election law in 1981 to enable the National Front to win seats in parliament, which consequently made things difficult for mainstream right-wing parties. After it had already formed an alliance with the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP), the FPÖ joined the Austrian government in 1999. The Northern League has joined Italian governments several times, as has the Danish People's Party (DPP), and both of them deeply influenced immigration policies in their respective countries. At the same time in France, mainstream right-wing parties vigorously debated the option of joining forces with the National Front at the local level. It is too early to know whether the same treatment will be reserved for left-wing populists as well: at the end of 2016 in Spain, the Socialist Party preferred to support the Popular Party rather than joining with the alliance between Podemos and Izquierda Unida (Unidos Podemos).

Labelling right-wing parties populist is much less unfair than labelling them fascists or extremists. There might also be an argument for calling them anti-system parties (Sartori 1976: 132-33). After all, they undermine the legitimacy of representative democracy. What mainstream parties probably do not take into account is that the vague and rough classifications attributed to these parties might have helped the populists. Not only might this label have provided populists the opportunity to gain new voters, but it may also have indirectly normalised their political discourse. A 'populist' party does not seem as repulsive as a fascist one and thus does not discourage voters from voting for it (though many such voters tend to conceal their votes, as many surveys reveal). Meanwhile, racism and xenophobia seem to have become less illegitimate. This is not really surprising considering that established parties, which are dogged vote-seekers, sometimes endorse truly questionable policies regarding human rights.

It is very likely that populism will continue to challenge democratic regimes, and also social scientists, for many years to come. It is difficult to imagine a sudden decline in the appeal of populist parties. Let us not forget that political representation is an extraordinary invention by Western politics. For more than a century, the 'outsiders' who have crossed the threshold of political representation have, in many cases, if not all, been polished, tamed and, consequently, transformed. Can we imagine that the populists of today may go through the same process of political assimilation as those who preceded them? It is an argument that deserves great attention, and it is worthwhile observing carefully in terms of the future of populist parties. The state of political representation changes all the time. Political opportunities and circumstances influence political parties in many different ways. How do and will the so-called populist parties react to their success? Furthermore, populist parties are not all the same. They are different from one country to the next, and right-wing and left-wing populists are extremely different. Will they have different destinies? A second issue that needs to be studied is how these

parties manage their representative actions both at the local and national level. A third issue that deserves attention is how and to what extent the political agenda will be influenced by populist parties. Will mainstream parties become more sensitive to social problems, such as immigration and social inequality? A fourth issue that needs closer consideration concerns party organisation. In the past, mainstream parties represented the people by gathering their supporters not only symbolically but through organisation as well. Recently, these parties have largely abandoned their grassroots activities. What will populist parties do on the ground and within 'civil society'? Answering these crucial questions may help us to understand better what is happening and what may happen to democracy.

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CHAPTER 3:

CONCEPTUALISING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POPULISM AND THE RADICAL RIGHT

Dietmar Loch

Introduction

The rise of radical right populist parties began in the 1980s in Western Europe with the French *Front National* (FN), the Austrian *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs* (FPÖ), the Belgian *Vlaams Blok* (VB), the Norwegian *Fremskrittspartiet* (FrP), *Die Republikaner* in Germany, and others (Betz 1994). With the transformation of the Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) after 1989 and the subsequent enlargement of the European Union, political parties such as *Jobbik* in Hungary, the *SNS* in Slovakia, *Ataka* in Bulgaria or the *Liga Polskich Rodzin* (LPR) in Poland joined this family of parties with their specific regional profile (Minkenberg 2015). Initially interpreted as a product of post-industrial society in Western European politics (Ignazi 1992), the populist radical right has become a central research object in the context of party politics and globalisation, first in Western Europe (Kriesi 2008; Loch and Heitmeyer 2001) and then through the political impact of the economic and financial crisis of 2008 on all of Europe (Kriesi and Pappas 2015; Loch and Norocel 2015). This role underlined the electoral importance of so-called ‘globalisation losers’ during periods of modernisation and highlighted the issue of economic protectionism in the ideology of radical right parties. Yet, the subsequent ‘migration crisis’ shifted the focus of research again, directing the latter to the anti-immigration core of these parties. Finally, Brexit and the role played in it by Nigel Farage’s United Kingdom Independence Party drew special attention to these parties’ importance as Eurosceptical and Europhobic political actors, who have accelerated the crisis in the European Union and prepared the ground for Britain’s departure from the EU.

Meanwhile, radical right populist parties have established themselves in European party systems, achieving different rates of success. Gaining access to political power, they moved from a position of marginality to one of having the potential to blackmail larger parties and finally to full participation in subnational and national governments (Mudde 2016). Even a country like Germany, long considered a special case given its historical legacy (Loch 2001), now has a formidable radical right populist party in the form of the *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD).

In the following section, I will first provide a short *historical overview* of the rise of populism and the radical right to show how these two strands have converged into today’s populist radical right. Second, I will focus on *populism* by analysing the ideological limits of this concept. Third, in the main part of this section, I want to examine the ideological profile of the (*populist*) *radical right* and its links to economic, cultural and political globalisation more deeply by taking into consideration supply side and demand side explanations. This includes a contrasting analysis of the populist radical right at the end of this part in relation to other party

families and ideologemes—fundamental ideational elements on which ideologies and belief systems are based—such as nationalism and racism.

Populism and the Radical Right: A Historical Perspective

From the Extreme Right to the Contemporary Radical Right

Populism and the radical or extreme right have different historical, geographical and ideological origins. As a part of European history, the extreme right emerged at the end of the 19th century. From the beginning, nationalism and racism were its ideological pillars. Despite all the contextual differences between the 19th century and contemporary societies, both have been central in the ideology of the radical right up to this day: nationalism serves as protection against globalisation, and racism/Islamophobia calls for structural and systematic discrimination against migrants/Muslims. This kind of thinking was also present in European fascism, a unique and incomparable phenomenon which was nevertheless a violent expression of the extreme right in its aggressive and imperialistic pursuit of nationalism as well as its genocidal pursuit of racism and anti-Semitism respectively.

After World War II, the extreme right was morally and politically discredited. In the decades thereafter, its electoral successes were embedded in specific political contexts and types of society. In fact, during the thirty years of post-war economic growth in West European industrial societies, the extreme right was practically non-existent. The marginal *Sozialistische Reichspartei Deutschlands* (SRP) and the neo-fascist *Movimento Sociale Italiano* (MSI), which appeared immediately after the war, can be neglected as a political force. Even the short-term electoral success of the *Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (NPD) in West Germany has to be seen, from a sociological perspective, in the same light, namely as a sort of deviant behaviour in the context of normal politics. Thus, the extreme right was interpreted as a “normal pathology” in liberal industrial society (Scheuch and Klingemann 1967). This view began to change with the rise and establishment of the radical right after the 1980s.

Coinciding with the end of the post-war economic boom and full employment in the 1970s, the rise of the radical right fell into the period associated with the emergence of the post-industrial society (Wieviorka 2013: 17-24). In the 1980s, this produced an authoritarian “silent counter-revolution” (Ignazi 1992) in reaction to the libertarian and post-materialist values that had developed in the decade before as a “silent revolution” (Inglehart 1977), which refers to a quiet shift in middle-class values and orientation in the mass Western public. The polarisation between these libertarian and authoritarian values has reshaped West European party systems (Kitschelt and McGann 1995), resulting in stark opposition between Green parties, on the one hand, and those of the new radical right, on the other. This polarisation continued to develop and can be explained by cleavage theory as being a major contemporary societal split between those advocating ‘open’ cultural integration and promoting ‘closed’ cultural demarcation. We may conclude that the populist radical right is currently experiencing its electoral success by representing nativist protectionism against globalisation and denationalisation (Kriesi 2008; Zürn 1998).

From Populism in the World to “Neo” Populism in Europe

As already discussed in this book, the origins of populism—in contrast to the history of the radical right—lie in the *Narodniki* movement in Russia and the People’s Party in the United States. There, the leaders had, in the Russian case, revolutionary objectives and, in the US case, reformist ones against modernisation. From there, populism spread to other parts of the world, taking root especially in Latin America (Hermet 2001). It reached Europe mainly only after World War II, impacting first France, where the traditions of an identity and a protest populism gave way to *Poujadism*, a movement named after its leader, Pierre Poujade (Winock 1997), and then Denmark, where it manifested itself in the *Fremskrittspartiet* under Mogens Glistrup, an anti-tax crusader. The temporary success of both parties was due to an anti-taxation movement supported by the ‘old middle class’, merchants and craftsmen, whose mode of production was in decline due to modernisation in the decades after the Second World War. It was only in the 1980s that populism became a more common phenomenon in Europe, first on the right and then on the left. Thus, both tendencies—populism and the radical right—and the research about them converged in that decade with the result that some authors have called this new phenomenon *national-populism* (Taguieff 2007; 2012; 2015), while others refer to it as the populist radical right (Mudde 2007; Rydgren 2007; 2013).

Populism: More than a Thin Ideology?

Comparatively speaking, populism can be characterised by the differences with which it presents itself: these lie in the historical (country) and structural context (political system), the ideological tendency (right-wing, left-wing, religious, and so on) as well as the kind and degree of organisation and institutionalisation (‘charismatic’ personality, political party, political regime and so on). Given this multitude of differences, using the term populism has often been considered ‘concept stretching’ (Canovan 1981). However, there are at least three commonalities or similarities that may justify treating populism conceptually as belonging to its own category (see especially Mény and Surel 2000): first of all, there is the context of modernisation in which populism develops; second, there is the corrective function it can have in liberal democracy by representing ‘ordinary people’, which can hardly be qualified as ‘pathological’. Instead, it is characterised by demands for more plebiscitary democracy, more charismatic political leaders, and more emotion in politics. The third similarity is the political ease with which it aligns itself with various political ideologies. Although populism’s constant reference and appeal to ‘the people’ is its central defining characteristic, this, too, may be analytically subdivided into three connected spheres: economic populism (class people), cultural populism (nation people), and ‘political’ populism (sovereign people). Thus, we may conclude first that, based on its underlying similarities, “populism may be considered neither a political ideology nor a type of regime, but a political style based on the systematic use of the rhetoric of the appeal to the people and on the implementation of a kind of charismatic legitimation, the most appropriate to value the ‘change’” (Taguieff 2007: 9). Second, populism can have a mediatory function through plebiscitary democracy in times when the ‘intermediary institutions’ of representative democracy (political parties and so on) are in crisis.

In fact, the idea of populism as a *political style* and also as performing a *mediatory function* are widely accepted in research. By contrast, the main controversy concerns populism's ideological content as it is not based on a substantive core. Populism has no value system of its own, but is built on a concept of relationships to other phenomena (Priester 2012). For these reasons, it has been qualified as a *thin ideology* (Fieschi and Heywood 2004; Freedman 1996) such as nationalism, feminism, and the like, which depend on a *host ideology* such as liberalism or socialism. The thin centre of the ideology is based on four core ideas: the existence of two homogeneous groups, 'the people' (as distinct from the state) and 'the elite'; the antagonistic (and vertical) relationship between the two; the idea of popular sovereignty; and a 'Manichean outlook' that combines positive valorisation of 'the people' with the denigration of the 'elite' (Kriesi and Pappas 2015: 4). Research rarely treats populism as a 'thick' ideology, such as the attempt by Priester (2007: 9), who defines populism "(...) as a revolt against the modern state and a popular variation of conservative thinking which is situated in a triangle between anarchism, liberalism, and conservatism".

Populism's dilemma of incoherent form and substance also relates to the similarities and differences between right-wing and left-wing populism, as represented by *Syriza* in Greece, *Podemos* in Spain, and the *Parti de Gauche* of Jean-Luc Mélenchon in France. If both leftist and rightist populism use the same political style, then the differences that remain are ideological. In fact, both tend to invoke the dialectical form of inclusion and exclusion. But whereas *leftist populism* stands for the *inclusion* of *socially* disadvantaged groups ('class people'), *right-wing populism* stands for the *exclusion* of *culturally* different groups in favour of the autochthonous 'nation people'. Here again, the main difference lies in the opposite content of the host ideologies on which the various types of populism depend. To sum up, the fact that populism does not contain a sufficient ideological core is inadequate in yielding a satisfying definition. Thus, we have to shift our analytical focus to the radical right and its ideological content.

A New Party Family: Populist, Radical and Right-wing

Terminology, Ideology, Concepts

In the 'war of words' the *terminology* employed depends on various criteria: Linguistic preferences usually depend on national academic culture, such as the use of right-wing extremism or radical right in the Anglo-Saxon context, extreme right (*extrême droite*) in France, or right-wing extremism (*Rechtsextremismus*) in the German-speaking world. The choice of 'extreme' can also be based on a research interest in political attitudes and the objective to measure such positions methodologically along the left-right scale. Also, the theory of democracy contains, but for different reasons, the notion of 'extreme' in connection with the concept of totalitarianism. In fact, rightist and leftist political extremism often rejects the fundamental rights of liberal democracy. For this reason, political parties such as the German NPD and the *British National Party* (BNP) can be qualified as part of the extreme right. In ideological respects, this type of extreme rightism is akin to neo-fascism.

In contrast to this terminological choice and its legitimisation, we agree with Rydgren (2007) by defining the phenomenon by its substantial *political ideas* or *ideology*. This means, first of all, that radical right populist parties belong to the political *right*. They represent rightist values,

such as individual liberty, versus *leftist* values, such as equality, solidarity and social justice. Norberto Bobbio (1996) has shown that the fundamental values of the right and the left remain; only their significance varies in relation to social and political change. Second, these parties are *radical*, particularly with respect to their values, given that these formations reject individual and social equality (essentially on the basis of racism) and, thus, universalistic principles of liberal democracy. Third, all these formations apply a *populist* political style.

In order to define these parties, it is furthermore necessary to know their *organisational forms* (cf. Heinisch and Mazzoleni 2016) and their connection to the *intellectual 'new right'*, a discussion of which in its various forms would go beyond the scope of this chapter (cf. Camus and Lebourg 2015). Moreover, the political radical right goes beyond the idea of the party and can manifest itself in various forms: as a proper political party, a social movement or a subcultural phenomenon (for example, the often violent skinhead-milieu) (Minkenberg 1998). Normally, the social movement precedes the party, but populist parties generally maintain their movement's character. These radical right manifestations may attain different levels of prominence in different contexts: For example, the violent skinhead-milieu was quite important in Germany for a long time because then right-wing extremism had no political legitimacy in that country. Koopmans (1995) has shown the interactive effect between party and this milieu in terms of organisation when comparing France and Germany. The absence of extreme or radical right parties in Germany pushed the phenomenon onto the street, whereas in France, the strong party organisation of the *Front National* managed to absorb and integrate this milieu into its youth organisation. Of all these forms, the political party is the dominant one. This insight takes us to the concept of the party family, which is historically and sociologically based on cleavages and their effect.

Cleavage theory explains how basic and conflictual developments in society—such as industrialisation or the formation of the nation—have formed political conflicts and, with them, entire party systems. The cleavage structure of Lipset and Rokkan (1967) reflected the conflicts of the modern nation state in industrial society. However, ethnic conflicts did not exist in this 'frozen' cleavage structure and the extreme or radical right was not foreseen. More recently, Hanspeter Kriesi (2008) especially has given this factor new significance by showing the role of globalisation in cleavage formation. In terms of economic and cultural positions ranging from 'integration' to 'demarcation', radical right parties are seen as firmly positioned close to the end of the axis marking the demarcation pole. By contrast, in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, other cleavages have emerged, the most important of which is the one that pits the centre against the periphery (Bafoil 2006). This cleavage, which is related to globalisation, has also been conceptualised in terms of a polarisation between 'globalists' and 'plebeians' (Lang 2009) where the position of the radical right in CEECs is located on the side of the periphery and 'plebeians'.

Cleavages form and modify political parties, allowing us to regroup them into *party families*. Importantly, radical right populist parties constitute a new party family of their own. The concept of party families (Mair and Mudde 1998) includes, on the one hand, historical, geographical and cleavage-related sociological aspects and, on the other, more political aspects, such as ideas and programmatic positions. Employing the concept of cleavages allows us to discuss, in the economic, cultural and political sphere, first, the link between globalisation and the radical right populist parties, second, their respective positions, third, their electorate and, fourth, the corresponding explanations for (the absence of) their success.

Economic Protectionism: Class Politics for ‘Modernisation Losers’

The hypothetical link between economic globalisation and the electoral success of the populist radical right is plausible but difficult to verify. However, for the time following the economic and financial crisis of 2008, this effect has been shown by Kriesi and Pappas (2015), among others. Cleavage theory can provide us with important insights (Kriesi 2008): the economic cleavage between integration and demarcation tends to structure what is supplied politically by the populist parties and also shapes the alignment of the electorate. However, what radical right parties offer politically reveals an old ambiguity. “Socially, I am on the left, economically I am to the right, and nationally, I am from France,” said Jean-Marie Le Pen in the presidential campaign of 2002. This is the traditional ambiguity between the pro-capitalist and socio-ethnically (pseudo-)egalitarian positions of the extreme right.

In the 1980s, the radical right used to represent more liberal positions. However, since the 1990s there has been a shift towards economic protectionism. Radical right parties have become a ‘new type of working-class parties’, whose political discourse is particularly directed against globalisation and has received a boost since the economic and financial crisis of 2008. This prompts the question of whether the party’s positioning actually matches its electorate. Who votes for these parties? Indeed, the voters may be qualified as the ‘losers of globalisation’, meaning that they come from the lower classes and are less well educated than other parts of the electorate (Arzheimer 2008; Rydgren 2013; Werts et al 2013). If we asked where these voters tend to live in Europe, we would often find them in or near to urban areas characterised by the social impact of economic decline due to deindustrialisation. In contrast to such similarities, national particularities are more linked to specific regions with their corresponding political culture, such as the Alsace in France, Thurgovia in Switzerland, Carinthia in Austria, or partially in the former East Germany. Research on the French case has shown, for example, that FN voters often live in intermediary areas between the centre and the periphery (Fourquet 2014), and in the rural periphery itself, where they feel excluded and frustrated.

Finally, we need to ask why people vote for these parties. Here it is important to note that the voters in question are often considered an electorate of fear (de Vries and Hoffmann 2016). How can this be explained? For one, there has been a renewed focus on socio-structural causes (Rydgren 2013). Corresponding demand-side explanations have a long tradition and analyse the ‘breeding ground’ for populist party voters, so to speak. They are mostly based on modernisation theory and consist of two research streams offering the sociological approach of anomia and that of relative deprivation (status politics). The aim is to explain the radical right through modified social ties or/and with respect to social structure. For instance, the rise of the French *Front National* has been interpreted as “the political echo of urban anomia” (Perrineau 1988; 2014: 105-171). Yet, although anomia is not a recent phenomenon in the disintegrating working class milieu of the ‘red suburbs’, the success of the FN continues. Thus, status politics seems a more plausible explanation for the FN’s electoral success. In fact, status politics attracts voters who experience or face a real loss of their status. These individuals either find their aim of upward social mobility thwarted or fear losing their position. This can result in the experience of relative deprivation (Gurr 1970) because the goal to be achieved does not correspond to social reality. The ensuing frustration can then transform itself into political behaviour (such as voting for a xenophobic party) when the political party succeeds in providing a scapegoat in the form of immigrants who are blamed for people not achieving their goals. In

the context of status inconsistencies, the radical right is not only present at the margins of society, but even more so in the midst of it. This ‘extremism of the centre’ thesis (Lipset 1981) suggests that we may be seeing a shift from the “normal pathology” of industrial society (Scheuch and Klingemann 1967) to “pathological normalcy” in modern contemporary society, as expressed by the successes of the populist radical right (Mudde 2010). In fact, Mudde argues that this means a shift in the respect that previously marginalised radical right values are becoming mainstream. In sociological respects, research would then have to revise the use of the concept of ‘deviant’ behaviour for the radical right given that the radical right and its voters have become too important to be considered either marginal or deviant in their behaviour. To sum up, socio-structural explanations help us understand the relevance of socio-economic factors, but they are not sufficient to give us a full account of them.

Cultural protectionism: nationalism and Islamophobia

Cultural and political approaches can complete these explanations. Cultural issues are related to the cleavage positions of either cultural integration or cultural demarcation, which extends to the opposition between libertarian and authoritarian values. The latter largely overlaps with the ideology of the radical right. In fact, the very ideological core of the radical right consists of the ‘rejection of individual and social equality’.

The cornerstone and even legitimisation of this ideology is racism and (to a lesser extent) nationalism, which matters in the context of national identity in two ways: Internally, national identity relates to the relationship with immigrants, which, in turn, is affected by racism in two ways, as both inegalitarian (biological) and differentialist (cultural) claims (Taguieff 2012) are directed against migrants. As such, ‘immigration’ represents the main cause advocated by radical right parties. It defines their positions on migrants, refugees, multicultural society and other issues linked to migration. In Western Europe, such anti-immigration positions are increasingly turning against Muslims. Islamophobia can be considered a particular form of racism. By contrast, in Central and Eastern Europe, the functional equivalent of Islamophobia is Romophobia or anti-Tsiganism.

Externally, national identity refers to the relationship with ‘Europe’. Here, it is important to note that nationalism is *per se* not a contradiction to the cultural and political nature of Europe. In fact, nationalism has even become ‘polycentric’ as there are arguably many different variants of it on the continent. Moreover, even Europe as a whole is accepted and defended by the radical right on Christian and cultural grounds (“Europeanism”). However, ‘Europe’ also implies transnational community building, which causes a breakdown in the division between internal and external factors. In short, for the radical right, this means that the threat of ‘communitarianism’ is now coming from both directions, from the poor neighbourhoods and from abroad, and is thus raising the issue of ‘security’ or ‘crime’, two kinds of authoritarian solutions to which are proposed: internally, the radical right uses them to justify *law and order* positions, such as tougher criminal laws for delinquent immigrant youths. Externally, the fear of terrorism particularly is instrumentalised by radical right populist parties to broadly label Muslims as Jihadists and involved in international terrorism.

As for the voters of the populist radical right parties, they are characterised by “strong nativist opinions” and by a “strong emphasis on the nation state coupled with an aversion to strange

others, more precisely negative attitudes against immigrants” (Rooduijn 2016). Furthermore, voters with traditional values are closer to radical right populist parties than those of other parties (de Vries and Hoffmann 2016: 22). The case of the French *Front National* shows great consistency in that ‘immigration’ has been the important motivation for its voters over the years.

Cultural explanations, such as the “silent counter-revolution” (Ignazi 1992), also show very well how the radical right managed to profit from its resistance to the libertarian and post-materialist values that were then sweeping across European societies. For certain groups, the values of the liberal elites and the middle class appeared to be going too far (de Vries and Hoffmann 2016). Yet, this explicitly cultural approach has only limited historical depth. In light of the fact that ‘immigration’ is the central cultural core issue of the radical right, its effect may be explained specifically by two theories: the *ethnic competition thesis* explains voting for the radical right on the basis of the ethnicisation of social problems (for example, competition with migrants in the labour market). Then there is the *ethnic backlash thesis*, which refers to the regulation of cultural differences. The latter concerns the relationship between the political and cultural inclusion of immigrants. Since neither republican colour blindness nor multicultural identity politics seems effective in mitigating ethnic conflicts, the radical right has been able to benefit politically. As a result, these parties have proved to be successful both in republican France and in multicultural Britain. Finally, national models of citizenship formation do not work as well as in the past any more. As pragmatic approaches to conflict regulation have disappeared, urban riots based on economic dissatisfaction have ensued, as again both the French and the British cases show (Loch 2014). How can the radical right conceivably be countered when ethnic conflicts play such a prominent role in modern society?

Political culture plays an important role here. This is the concept to which we need to pay attention if we want to know whether the fascist past of a country may be a plausible historical explanation for the success (or its absence) of the radical right. Mudde (2007: 243-248) has shown that in more than half of the European countries he selected to examine this question, there was a systematic relationship between the existence/absence of a fascist past and the presence/absence of a radical right party. For the cases in which the fascist past is relevant, political culture has an impact on the extent to which the radical right is seen as a legitimate political actor (Winkler et al. 1996). In Germany, for instance, this threshold for the legitimisation of extreme right actors has always been high. This was a result of the student movement of May 1968, which publicly confronted the older generation and the students’ parents for their involvement with the Nazi regime, thus institutionalising a political culture that protected Germany from the extreme right. By contrast, in Austria this part of history was largely suppressed after 1945. There, the leader of the right-wing populist FPÖ, Jörg Haider, through his political activities, helped lower the threshold of accepting the far right (Betz 2004), thereby legitimising offensive speech and action before collective memory work could develop an appropriate public awareness and a corresponding political culture. Finally, in France, the political culture always succeeded in defeating fascist parties and movements. Yet, today, the threshold in Germany appears to be decreasing, as indicated by the moments of success of the AfD, while in France the growing power of the *Front National* is becoming a serious challenge to the country’s political culture.

If we want to summarise what role economic and cultural factors have played in the rise of the radical right, it is crucial to link both by asking why a worker or an employee would vote for

such parties. The evidence seems to suggest that even though socio-economic motivations have become stronger since the economic and financial crisis, the main motivation for these voters has been cultural: cultural issues can be considered a kind of identitarian filter for socio-economic problems (Rydgren 2013).

Finally, whereas the two cleavages discussed here represent the politicisation of the economic and cultural sphere in profound ways, there are narrower political issues and conflicts that matter as well. These relate to the political ideas the radical right holds about the institutions of the state and democracy, specifically about the sovereignty of the nation state and representative democracy.

Advocating Euroscepticism in Favour of National Sovereignty

Political globalisation does not seem to be an alternative to the nation state. By contrast, political denationalisation (Zürn 1998) in the form of European integration has become a real challenge to national autonomy. While the development of the EU has been shaped by federalist and supranational ideas, there is a renaissance of a Europe of nation states which destabilises the integration process all the way to Brexit. Populist radical right parties are the spearheads of Eurosceptical and Europhobic criticism of the supranational regime the EU represents. However, this does not mean that the radical right is fundamentally opposed to a political Europe, but according to them, it must be based on the idea of a *Europe of nation states*. Their demand for national sovereignty is based on the concept of a nation as defined by ethnically exclusive solidarity. The Europhobic positions of the radical right populist parties correspond to the negative attitudes of their voters, who believe that the integration process of the EU has undermined their country's popular sovereignty. For these reasons, there are calls for the process of integration to be decelerated; certain countries even intend to break away altogether (Werts et al. 2013). Whereas this Europhobic criticism can be interpreted as a nationalist reaction to political denationalisation, the situation is different in Central and Eastern Europe. There, national sovereignty was initially regained through democratic nationalism in the context of velvet revolutions. Many of these regimes became more authoritarian and ethnically exclusive only later.

A Populist Authoritarian Voice in Representative Democracy

In European nation states, political denationalisation can be interpreted as one of the external reasons for the 'crisis' of political representation. In fact, the decreasing congruence between these nations and democracy coupled with the partial denationalisation of the political and administrative elites have produced a lack of democratic legitimacy in these political systems. Individualisation, cultural differentiation and social inequality accompanied by urban segregation are some of the internal reasons for the 'crises' of representative democracy. Its indicators include "declining party membership and party identification, declining voter turnout, increasing volatility of the vote, and declining shares of voters who choose the mainstream parties" (Kriesi and Pappas 2015: 2). Yet, although the nation and democracy are no longer congruent, the elections at the national level remain the most important ones. This is the moment of tri-

umph for populism, for which the elites have become the main target. The paradox is that, by showing off movement characteristics, populism criticises political parties despite being itself a political party. The appeals made to the people reach voters who are dissatisfied with politics and for whom the populist radical right constitutes a credible alternative (for example, Arzheimer 2008; Rooduijn 2016). The main question is whether a vote for a populist party is ‘only’ political protest or, more deeply, one of political support? Finally, in this political process, the success of a populist party depends on several variables, such as the political opportunity structure, the role of the populist party as a political actor (Art 2011) and its position in its interaction with other political actors (cooperation or confrontation).

Enemies and Friends of the Radical Right

The interaction between radical right populist parties and other political actors leads to the question of how this party family can be distinguished from others. Who are their ideological enemies and who are their friends? Without doubt, differences exist, within the radical right populist party family and across party families. An internal differentiation can be made according to the position the parties take vis-à-vis the sovereignty of the nation state and in the context of globalisation and denationalisation (cf. Zürn 1998). In fact, in Western Europe, the party family of the populist radical right is characterised by national populist parties (FN, FPÖ, *Dansk Folkeparti*, and so on) as well as by regional separatist and populist parties (*Lega Nord*, *Vlaams Belang*, *Plataforma per Catalunya*, and so on). In Central and Eastern Europe, the positions are different and marked, as already described, by the cleavage between the centre and periphery.

A distinction to other right-wing parties can be made on ideological grounds, separating radical right populist parties from clearly neo-fascist and anti-constitutional extreme right parties, such as the former MSI in Italy, the BNP in Great Britain, the NPD in Germany and Golden Dawn in Greece. Moreover, these parties for the most part do not use the populist style. On the other hand, there are and have been populist parties with neo-liberal or conservative tendencies, such as Silvio Berlusconi’s *Forza Italia* and *Fidesz* in Hungary. This means that in contemporary European societies populism can ally itself with almost every set of ideas but has primarily manifested itself on the radical right. Furthermore, there are still other ‘thin ideologies’, such as nationalism, racism or Islamophobia and/or anti-Semitism (Taguieff 2015), which can also overlap with several party families and ‘host ideologies’. Nevertheless, the radical right seems to succeed best when bringing them together and propagating them in the public and political space.

Conclusion

The populist radical right has been analysed based on party typology and cleavage theory as an expression of nativist protectionism against globalisation in Europe. One of the core questions was to determine the relationship between the radical right and populism. If radical right parties are categorised conceptually as subordinate to populism, a terminological dilemma ensues because of the ‘thinness’ of the core concept and the absence of a common ideological de-

nominator. By contrast, if populism is subordinated to the radical right category, this allows for clear ideological definitions, but excludes, for example, populist neo-liberal and populist left-wing parties. For these reasons, the focus here has been an ideological one which provides a distinction between different populist parties or party families, such as the radical right and the neo-liberal one. This means that the radical right and populism are two different, but overlapping phenomena. This is similar to other ‘thin ideologies’, such as nationalism, which can also be found with left-wing parties.

With its position of defending nativist protectionism against globalisation, the populist radical right is very visible in Europe today. It represents social fears about globalisation as well as authoritarian values implied in nationalist, racist, and protest positions. In terms of the electorate, this means that the lower the levels of education and income and the older European voters are, the higher the probability is of them perceiving globalisation as a threat (de Vries and Hoffmann 2016). This corresponds to ‘closed’ positions along the economic and cultural cleavage defined by (open) integration and (closed) demarcation. Here, a political response would arguably be social and economic policies designed to address the fears of those who perceive themselves to be the losers of globalisation.

In ideological terms, the populist radical right supplies nativism, that is, nationalism and racism. Whether a response based on promoting universalistic and cosmopolitan values would serve as an effective counter-measure remains questionable. Be that as it may, the paradox of populism is that it is both conventional and unconventional. This continues to pose the risk of populism having a creeping, long-term negative impact on political culture.

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CHAPTER 4:

THE POPULIST RADICAL RIGHT AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Carlo Ruzza

Introduction: The Relation Between Parties and Social Movements

In recent years, substantial scholarly attention has been devoted to radical right populist parties (RRPPs). Scholars have particularly considered the role of such variables as electoral laws, coalition-building strategies of mainstream parties and other supply-side variables pertaining to the workings of party systems in different countries. Demand-side variables of an attitudinal nature have also been extensively considered.

However, the radical right as a political ideology also constitutes a fertile ground for social movements—for instance, the English Defence League in the UK—which are not parties but significant protest-oriented forms of political participation. These formations are prominent campaigners on several controversial issues; they interact with other RRPPs, sometimes forming broad coalitions; and they have large followings in several European countries. It will be argued that, without an understanding of the social roots, cultural significance and grievances of these movements, it is difficult to explain the appearance trajectory and sometimes institutionalisation of RRPPs. This is also because, in many contexts, parties and social movements of the radical right coexist with and complement each other. Yet the connections between movements and parties of this type are rarely explored. This chapter will consider these connections with particular reference to Europe. In doing so, it will connect two bodies of literature – the literature on social movements and the literature on RRPPs (Immerzeel and Pickup 2015; Mudde 2007; Zaslove 2009).

There are several reasons why the linkages between movements and parties of this type have not been sufficiently examined. First, movement specialists and party specialists do not often collaborate, and this particularly concerns studies of the radical right (Hutter and Kriesi 2013). While the multifaceted importance of movements in relation to parties has been demonstrated, the social movement research community has emerged and developed by studying different types of movements—typically the student movements of the 1970s, the new left-liberal movements of the 1980s, and the anti-globalisation movements of recent years. With some exceptions, this has almost invariably characterised the research agenda of social movements' scholars. Secondly, in addition to a relatively limited academic focus, many movement scholars encounter problems of access in studying the radical right because the socio-economic and cultural make-up of activists and cadres of the radical right is often foreign to them. Thirdly, processes whereby politics is decentred from representative institutions are taking place. Politics is moving to new arenas because of processes such as the growing dominance of executives over parliaments and related processes of personalisation of politics. Arenas such as the media redefine the sources of power of political agents. In these arenas, social movements become visible and accepted interlocutors and acquire new importance.

Fourthly, contemporary political culture increasingly redefines political legitimacy away from representative institutions and state bureaucracies and in favour of a conceptualisation of legitimacy that empowers a host of minorities as proper interlocutors in political debates (Rosanvallon 2011). As interpreters of self-perceived minorities, social movements acquire especial importance in contemporary political culture. Their role in relation to parties, particularly cartel parties, then becomes one of providers of legitimacy, which is increasingly needed in the recurring situation of discredited and corrupt politics. As right-wing populist movements increase in salience and are often prominent supporters of right-wing candidates in elections at all levels of government, neglecting their role is increasingly consequential in our limitations in explaining the success of RRPPs, despite their growing prominence.

Finally, the relation between radical right populist movements (RRPMs) and RRPPs is often under-theorised because the importance of movements is not always self-evident, especially if one mainly focuses on electoral arenas. However, as the resource mobilisation approach (RM) emphasised several decades ago, social movements are now often large organisations with professionalised personnel, a stable role in political systems, substantial resources and continuity over time (McCarthy and Zald 1973). Their size and stability has changed over time; it varies across different political systems and for different movements, but in Europe as well as in most Western societies they must be considered stable and important actors. Large movements, such as the environmental movement, at times, peace movements, feminist movements and increasingly RRPMs, coordinate efforts across national boundaries, mobilise large followings, exert advocacy at all levels of governance and have a stable presence in the public sphere. Their interaction with societies and their party systems is therefore a major source of mutual influence. This is also the case with movements related to the populist radical right. Like the new movements of the 1980s, this family of movements and parties has established strong social roots. They are then cultural as well as political phenomena with an ability to link the political and cultural sectors of societies, as evidenced, for instance, by their presence in the music industry, with a substantial level of internationalisation (Love 2016).

This chapter then argues that the role of political parties, as well as the formation and diffusion of populist attitudes, should be considered in relation to the milieu of organised social and cultural initiatives that might or might not lead to direct electoral consequences, but which are key to explaining long-term voting behaviour, particularly with reference to this family of parties. Emphasising the role of this milieu is an approach not often utilised by scholars of the radical right. More commonly, a direct linkage is assumed between political attitudes and socio-economic variables. By emphasising these socio-cultural factors, as well as movement-mediated organisational roots, this chapter innovates and broadens explanations of the populist radical right.

Integrating the Parties and Movements Approaches to the Radical Right

The literature on movements and parties benefits from a contextual examination for several reasons, most notably because similar variables often explain both forms of political participation and their frequent co-occurrence. Two main approaches seek to explain the success of RRPPs and RRPMs. One focuses on the grievances and expectations of voters, that is, on de-

mand-side variables. The second focuses on what political systems offer, that is, on supply-side variables. The literature that focuses on voting for RRPPs identifies specific socio-economic groups and their grievances, and it is equally relevant in explaining participation in social movements of this kind.

Demand-side approaches often explain voting for RRPPs in mainly economic terms. Their success is explained by connecting the electoral outcomes of the radical right to the changing economic situation of specific sectors of the population, such as the often mentioned ‘losers of globalisation’, that is, the unskilled sectors of the labour market that have been experiencing downward mobility as their jobs migrate elsewhere. Their changing economic prospects have then been linked to specific grievances and to the radical right populist vote as forms of electoral protest and as a demand for protectionist policy changes in labour markets (Norris 2005). Similar electoral choices have also been seen as the consequence of ethnic competition for jobs, which is a consequence of a globalisation-related increase in migratory flows.

A different but related argument has emphasised demand-side variables of a more cultural kind (Bornschieer 2010). In this case, a sense of cultural estrangement ensues from conflicts over cultural values and lifestyles as individuals react to changing features and notably to the changed ethnic composition of their communities. There is ample evidence to suggest that both these economic and cultural grievances are at work in RRPPs (Norris 2005). They are also found to occur together in several contexts (Inglehart and Norris 2016).

Supply-side explanations for the recent success of RRPPs typically cite the role of struggles over the saliency of issues and over issue position ownership (Mudde 2010). Structural supply-side explanations stress factors such as opportunity structures arising from realignment processes; convergence between established parties in political space; electoral systems and thresholds; the presence or absence of elite allies or, more specifically, the relationship with the established political parties within the party system (Rydgren 2007). Recent explanations stress the interaction between supply-side and demand-side factors (Golder 2016).

Similar variables are found in radical right populist movements (RRPMs). For instance, nativist cultural ideas are strongly represented in a movement like the English Defence League (Kassimeris and Jackson 2015). In the same movement, economic issues are key factors in support for the EDL (Goodwin et al. 2016). This is because, in several instances, the activist bases of RRPPs and RRPMs largely overlap. However, some additional considerations on the nature of social movements are necessary to interpret the outcomes of this intersection.

If one moves from demand-side to supply-side accounts, explanations of the success of RRPMs are well examined by the literature on them, but it is necessary to clarify the boundaries of a social movement because this is defined differently by different authors. The supply-side literature on movements—that is, accounts that do not focus on grievances and the psychological dynamics that contribute to their emergence—emphasises the distinctive impact of their unconventional repertoire of political action, their ability to mobilise networks of individuals, their framing activities, which often consist in selecting specific goals seen as politically relevant and congruent with preferred systems of ideas, and their ability to act in the public sphere. Thus, a movement typically has an agenda, a constituency, one or more organisations, a set of preferred forms of action and some continuity over time. It is different from a party because it does not seek to participate in elections.

Just like RRPPs, movements have often been studied using the concept of political opportunity – a concept that, in fact, has its origins in the study of protest events. Hence, a similar set of variables can be utilised to conceptualise the success and failure of both parties and movements, and can therefore be integrated into a single model.

The list of opportunities cited in the literature to explain movements is broader, however, because it encompasses societal dynamics wider than the opportunities considered in studying parties, and the concept has sometimes been criticised as overstretched (Meyer and Minkoff 2004). However, a broader concept of opportunity is better suited to studying the decentring of politics described above. Essentially, it is a concept utilised to identify the vulnerabilities of a political system, which constitute opportunities for challengers. The opportunities considered range from stable or relatively stable features of political systems, such as the state's openness to non-institutionalised actors, via their propensity for strong repression, electoral laws and constitutional arrangements, to contingent features. The latter include the availability of institutional allies that can channel resources to movements, specifically relevant policy issues on the political agenda, and patterns of interactions between movements and the media on specific issues.

We believe that, although the concept of political opportunity has indeed been used to cover a growing and possibly excessive number of opportunities, there are key opportunities that have been examined by movements' scholars but not considered by party analysts. A broader societal conceptualisation of opportunities aids understanding of RRPPs and their relation to RRPMS. We will focus on two key opportunities and show how they shape RRPPs' chances of success. The first is the specific relation between movements and counter-movements. The second is the relation between movements and the media. However, before we do this, we need to clarify the specific relation between RRPPs and RRPMS because we posit that the issue of the relation between parties and movements is of key importance in understanding how broad social factors affect not only movements but also parties.

Parties, Movements and the Populist Radical Right

The boundaries among a movement, a movement party, but also a movement sympathiser and a movement ally are differently conceptualised by different analysts, who often use different definitions of social movements. Here, we will refer to movements as forms of political participation that have a cognitive characterisation—a set of beliefs favouring fundamental policy changes (McCarthy and Zald 1977: 1217–18)—and actors' involvement in forms of protest action.

As a result of this approach, many party activists may also qualify as social movement participants if they share movements' cognitive frameworks and take part in movement sponsored protest events. This takes into account the fact that in many instances movement activists prefer not to be members of movement organisations but share their beliefs and occasionally participate in forms of action. This may be due to the limited attractiveness of movement organisations—these are often short-lived organisations, only or mainly concerned with a single issue, and fairly unorganised, as was the case with several new movements of the 1980s (Rucht and Neidhardt 2002).

Party activists, as well as members of the public, may also prefer not to be identified with a movement although they share its objectives and methods. This appears to be the case with several movements. For instance, European Commission personnel who support environmental movements or anti-racist movements may participate in protest events but prefer not to become formal members of organisations in order to safeguard the impression of impartiality that their role requires (Ruzza 2007). These considerations are particularly salient for RRPP supporters, given their prevalent anti-system image. In their case, the emergence of integrated political formations, which share some of the attributes of parties and some characteristics of movements, appears likely. In such a case, it would be beneficial to consider approaches to RRPPs and RRPMS contextually and integrate them. Specifically, we posit that the overlapping of RRPMS and parties is frequent and is indeed a characteristic of these formations and a foundation of their success.

The overlap of parties and movements in hybrid formations has been noted in several contexts before RRPPs and movements. The party literature acknowledges that some movements may become parties but never complete the transition or form stable alliances with some parties, as exemplified by the relationship between environmental movements and green parties. In such cases, they form or interact with hybrid formations, which the literature on this subject has characterised as movement parties (Kitschelt 2006; Bomberg 1993; Offe 1990).

However, relations between parties and movements are not always supportive. In some cases, movements may compete with parties for the time and energy of activists, or they may attempt to redefine or radicalise the policy agenda of ideologically like-minded parties. In order to frame these relations, it is useful to utilise the social movement category of ‘conflictual cooperation’ (Bozzini and Fella 2008). According to this perspective, like-minded parties and movements interact at various levels. They compete for the loyalty, time and energy of activists. They occupy different political sectors. Movements are members of the protest sector of society, whilst parties compete in the electoral arena. Convergences and cooperation can then occur in the support that each form of political participation can lend to the other in their reciprocal sphere. However, in some cases, endorsement can be counterproductive and may lead to conflict. These complex relations are also central to the dynamics between RRPMS and RRPPs.

It is useful to summarise potential relations according to a typology that categorises relations as described in the following subparagraphs:

Relations of Accepted and Consensual Interpenetration

Many RRPPs have solid roots in civil society and mobilise networks of activists that may or may not be closely connected to the party but constitute its milieu (Louis et al. 2016; Knoke 1994). Some of the party’s activist base—typically the more radical and often younger components—function as bridges between this cultural milieu and the party. On occasions, this cultural milieu expresses independent organised forms, which have some relations with the party but are distinct from it. Conversely, in some cases, the party emphasises, supports and sponsors, or even manufactures, these organisations. This is, for instance, evidenced by the case of the Italian Northern League, where a wide network of civil society organisations is utilised by the party to retain and solidify its roots in society. In the case of the Northern League, they

include hunters' associations, sports clubs and language protection associations, and they can be conceptualised as belonging and giving organisational form to a larger ethno-regionalist movement (Ruzza 2010). Thus, in these cases, parties see movements as ways to legitimate themselves with their anti-system constituents.

This role of movements is stressed by authors working on nationalist and right-wing parties—both those espousing nation state nationalism and those with an ethno-regionalist focus. This is often the case with regionalist parties, which are often seen as rooted in regionalist movements (see for instance: De Winter and Türsan 1998; Swenden 2006). Building on this theoretical and empirical background, social movement approaches have also been utilised to examine the social background of radical right populist parties (Caiani and Conti 2014; Ruzza and Fella 2009). All these studies illustrate particular aspects of the relation between parties and movements, and they focus on strategic interrelations between the two forms of political participation.

Movements may also powerfully influence sections of large parties and help them in internal conflicts. This is the case with all movements, not only RRPMs. For instance, at the EU level, the environmental movement has been a historical ally of DG Environment and the Environmental Committee of the European Parliament, taking their side in recurrent conflicts with less environmentally concerned parties, as well as with other branches of the EU's bureaucracy, such as DG Industry. In doing so, they often face industrial lobbies as opponents (Judge 1992; Ruzza 2007). Similarly, in several member states and at EU level, there are pockets of labour or socialist parties that support anti-racist, pro-migrant or feminist movements and try to instil similar values and movement-friendly policies into the rest of the party (Fella and Ruzza 2012). However, in the case of RRPPs, this interaction tends to concentrate on single issues. This is, for instance, the case with the populist Berlusconi party, which, even when it was in government, supported and participated in large events with names such as the 'Family Day' supported by pro-family and anti-abortion activist groups (Staff-Reporter 2007a). This amounts to a party strategy to integrate the benefits of the incumbent role with those of the opposition.

In some cases, parties create and sponsor more sectorial activist organisations, or accept and support activists who also engage in political protests. This is the case of movements mobilising on specific issues with the full support of the party and overlapping membership. An example is provided by northern Italian farmers' movements protesting against EU-enforced restrictions on milk production in the late 1990s and the following years. These protests utilised theatrical methods, such as pouring milk on motorways and street blockages, and they were fully supported by the League.

Relations in Which Party and Movement Memberships are Distinct and to Varying Extents Conflictual

This is, for instance, the case in relations between the 'English Defence League (EDL)' movement and UKIP. Many EDL voters vote for UKIP and display UKIP signs at their demonstrations, but this is frequently opposed by UKIP. For instance, former EDL members or activists are expressly forbidden from joining UKIP. Nigel Farage, the founder and ex-leader of UKIP has expressed 'grave disappointment' at the recurrent use of UKIP signs at EDL demonstra-

tions (Culbertson 2015). Similar dynamics take place when Italian extreme right activists belonging to organisations such as *Avanguardia Nazionale* (National Vanguard) infiltrate demonstrations by the Northern League and provoke reactions which have varied over the years. They have been tense in the past, although they have become more supportive in recent years (Staff-Reporter 2016).

Distinct but Generally Supportive Relations

This is, for instance, the case with the *Forconi* (Pitchforks) movement in Italy and its relations with the Italian Northern League. The *Forconi* movement emerged in 2013 as a set of populist protests unrelated to the League and with a repertoire of disruptive action, such as blocking streets. It continued with irregular protests in the following years (Davies 2013). The Northern League supports this movement, even if it is rather different in terms of geographical base and, to some extent, ideology. Support has, for instance, been expressed by the current League leader, Matteo Salvini, in a December 2015 radio interview reported about on the website of the Northern League (Salvini 2015).

Strong and reciprocal influences between parties and movements can take place regardless of size and the extent of their radicalism. For instance, a large party like the Republican Party in the US has solid and influential relations with the Christian Right movement, or there are equally strong relations between the Republican Party and the Tea Party movement (Green et al. 2001; Skocpol and Williamson 2013). These influences can take place due to overlapping membership, but also due to convergent pressure on the media, as a now classic body of literature on the relations between the media and movements clearly shows (Gamson 1993). The media need news with highly emotional and personalised content; and often theatrical and either alarming or supportive reporting on social movements provides this. These interactions make movements and the media mutually dependent and amplify the reach of movements (Gitlin 1980). It also makes them potentially useful to political parties. This clearly also concerns RRPPs and RRPMS (Burack and Snyder-Hall 2013). In most polities, there will be sectors of the media that oppose movements, but there will equally be sectors which espouse them and carry their message. The concerted efforts of RRPPs and RRPMS will then provide their framing strategies with additional strength and ideational materials. The media's/movements' reciprocal influences in relation to all political formations, but also specifically RRPPs and RRPMS, also increasingly involve new media (Van de Donk et al. 2004; Caiani and Parenti 2013).

In all these instances, it is useful to conceptualise relations between RRPMS and RRPPs by using insights from Resource Mobilisation theory (McCarthy and Zald 1977; McCarthy and Zald 2002). This conceptualises relations between movements as taking place in a broad social movement sector which comprises all the movements coexisting at a specific point in time and further organised into competing social movement families—a subsector of like-minded movements (Zald and McCarthy 1980). Families expand and differentiate according to the global opportunities available to their subsector. In recent years, mainly because of the demand-side factors previously outlined, the subsectors have grown and developed differently in terms of the radicalism of their action, their willingness to form coalitions, their ideological variations

and their strategies towards other political formations. For reasons of space, this chapter will concentrate on the first type: hybrid party-movement formations.

Civil Society, Movements, Counter-movements and PRPPs as Interacting Systems

If movement parties are a relatively general feature of contemporary European politics, it is necessary to ask the general question of why movement action repertoires are popular and even frequently adopted by parties. It will be argued that movement repertoires are adopted not only by PRPPs but also by movement parties of the left. The opposition between the two blocs, or the two 'industries' in the language of resource mobilisation theory, is important not only in the electoral arena but more broadly in a set of social arenas, which have, however, an impact on electoral dynamics. Such is the importance of this cleavage that it is played out in a number of social arenas as well, and it characterises movement-counter-movement relations. A process of venue shopping takes place with reference to arenas in which the two blocs compete for intermediation. Mayer and Staggenborg argue that 'the choice of arena is shaped by activists' ideologies and resources and by their perception of openings in a range of social and political institutions' (Mayer and Staggenborg 1996: 1648). A few additional clarifications are necessary on the nature of the competing movement party systems.

In this context, a relevant finding from social movement research is that successful movements often lead to the creation of counter-movements, which in turn shape and constrain their agenda, political opportunities and coalition behaviour. Over time, a relationship of competition emerges, which is played out in several arenas, such as the national parliamentary arena but also the media arena, the local politics and supranational arena and political spaces within intermediary institutions, such as the trade unions. This competition is often focused on the political opportunities offered by emerging contextual events. In the present European context, RPPMs and PRPPs are the insurgents. In response to them, a set of counter-movements has emerged in many EU countries, and the political opportunity that has arisen is a perceived need to regulate migration. Migration has then become the key signature issue that offers a distinct identity to PRPPs and that is an equal source of identity to anti-racist movements in many EU countries and at supranational level (Ruzza 2013). It has become a major cleavage in national and EU-level policy, and as such it permeates several areas of political life (Kriesi et al. 2008). It is now perceived as significantly structuring the EU political level, where PRPPs have made significant advances in recent elections. This emerging cleavage permeates the intermediary social and political institutions that mediate the emergence of these sentiments and their translation into voting behaviour.

The relationship between left-liberal views on migration and the movements that they inspire, on the one hand, and the views of PRPPs and RPPMs, on the other, is best described as a relationship between movements and counter-movements. Equally important are other political opportunity structures emphasised by movement scholars but neglected by party specialists. These notably include the role of repression. Action carried out by RPPMs and parties is often illegal. For instance, a frequent form of action taken by RPPMs is harassment of minorities.

A couple of examples from the Italian Northern League should suffice. These include the forceful destruction of Roma camps or the intentional humiliation of Muslim minorities by spreading pig excrement on sites where the building of mosques is planned (Staff-Reporter 2007b). These illegal acts can be repressed in different ways. To the extent that the state does not engage in forceful repression of these activities, RRPPs will engage in media-relevant activities such as these. However, the willingness of states to repress them is influenced, on the one hand, by the degree of institutionalisation of these formations, their coalition-building strategies and salience in party systems. On the other hand, repression will be influenced by relatively stable features such as states' effectiveness in controlling their territory, their propensity to use repression and the effectiveness of the penal system.

One has to add variables related to the positions of states in the system of international governance to state level variables. Thus, with reference to the previously mentioned attacks against Roma camps, Italy as a member of the EU has been investigated for condoning xenophobia by European and international organisations (OSCE 2009). For these reasons, the quality and quantity of repression is a key variable that mediates the visibility of radical right populist formations, which in turn is related to their chances of success. In addition, theatrical forms of action like the one mentioned are key to the success of these formations, not only in terms of media impact but also as means of rooting RRPPs in their cultural milieu.

In a period in which political discourse is dominated by the fears of the 'losers of globalisation', states are increasingly less willing to engage in repression. The populist political discourse of the 'losers of globalisation' is, in many contexts, vehemently nationalist and protectionist to such an extent that it threatens key assumptions of constitutional democracies and their upholding of human rights. However, the populist political discourse is now so central to important sectors of the media, so naturalised in wide strata of public opinion that a repressive stance would punish incumbents. Harsh repression of the acts of protest by populist formations might produce negative consequences for ruling coalitions. In this context, the advantages of engaging in action that is visible and helps movement parties to establish roots in civil society often outweigh the risks connected to repression. By engaging in action that relies on using a repertoire of 'politics of the enemy' to create solidarity, RRPPs are able to confront their counter-movements, and the re-establishment of civil society roots is crucial for all political formations in the present period.

Of course, attempts to establish and retain roots in civil society are not only made through disruptive forms of action. They also often take place through the creation of associative networks (Ruzza 2009). For instance, in addition to the previously mentioned networks of associations, they also include neighbourhood watch groups, which have been accused of harassing minorities. Thus identity-building action, service delivery action and media-relevant action are often integrated into complex action repertoires that cement loyalty to the party. They serve the purpose of anchoring political formations to a community, providing the latter with a sense of identity, agency and legitimacy. They are then means with which to rebuild processes of intermediation and to counter the disintermediating impact of recent economic changes and their impact on forms of social intermediation.

This process of community building is essential to ensure the success of issue definition and issue positioning by RRPPs, but it is typically opposed by other movement parties that pursue opposite strategies. Thus, there are frequent protests in favour of victimised minorities, in sup-

port of racialised groups and to voice values opposed to the nativism of RRP movement parties. A contest often emerges around the interpretation of conflicting forms of action. It is played out in the media and in a set of other intermediary institutions, such as workplace-related institutions, voluntary groups and religious institutions. Yet this movement-counter-movement dynamic has been neglected by the literature on RRPPs because of the under-thematization of the relationship between them and social movements. Nevertheless, this relationship is key to the literature on social movements (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996).

The literature on the relationship between movements and counter-movements has pointed out how they interact and the complex ways in which their struggles continue in electoral arenas, in media arenas and in intermediary institutions. They make rival claims in politics and in policy, often recruiting competing experts to support their views. The outcome of RRPPs is therefore strongly shaped by the presence, effectiveness and framing strategies of their counter-movements, which, as mentioned, often have a base in labour parties and other mainstream political actors that may well channel resources and legitimacy, and support their campaign initiatives.

In times of the mediatization of policy crises, the media themselves create counter-movements by seeking an alternative view and by personalising proposed policy solutions. Thus, typically, purportedly charismatic leadership is created by the media, which need to identify credible, outspoken and reliable spokespeople. The success of RRPPs is then often mediated by their political personnel and their ability to compete in a mediatized arena (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996: 1642). However, this competition also takes place in elected institutions.

For instance, at the EU level, anti-racist organisations and human rights groups, relevant members of the civil liberty committee of the European Parliament and sympathetic Commission officials collaborate in forming a nexus to provide legitimacy and research funds for activities that limit and marginalise any advancement of RRPPs in the Parliament. This contributes to creating a climate in which RRPPs remain isolated and ineffective at the EU level. They also provide information and foster relations among member state-based movements that oppose RRPPs. The likelihood of success of RRPPs is significantly shaped by these dynamics.

For instance, the European Network against Racism (ENAR), which describes itself as ‘the voice of the anti-racist movement in Europe’, is a well-funded, broadly accepted and influential organisation which regularly advances policy proposals, conducts social and political research and advocacy, utilises strategic litigation and supports protest events in member states. It interprets and reinterprets media and political events in an ongoing competition with RRPPs, their connected associations and their related movements. Without understanding this competition, one cannot make sense of the successes and defeats of RRPPs. This is because, at least to some extent, social and political elites have an impact on the formation of the prevalent political culture and thus on the coalition behaviour of parties and the related electoral outcomes. This is so even if, as widely acknowledged, the populist vote is often an expression of anti-elite sentiments.

In the competition between RRPMs and their opponents, a process of venue shopping takes place, whereby each movement seeks allies, often at different levels of government, which then constitute differentiated political opportunities. For instance, the success of a centre-right coalition at national level may relocate opposition to RRPMs to the supranational level. Evidence of this emerged during the Berlusconi centre-right governments in Italy, when pro-mi-

grant associations were often closed and their advocacy moved to EU level or even city level. Thus, additional levels of government provide RRPPs with different venues in which to advance their claims (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996: 1637). Clearly, a special role is played in this competition by what comes to be perceived as a policy crisis, such as an unexpected event that can be more easily exploited by one of the competing actors. This has typically been the case with events exploited by RRPPs, such as security concerns around issues of migration.

Conclusions and Further Steps of the Research Agenda

This chapter has argued that a dual process of disintermediation and of new and different re-intermediation is taking place, and that social movements are key actors in this process. Political socialisation experts have shown that, for several decades, institutions mediating the formation and transmission of political orientations, such as the family but also community institutions, have lost much of their effectiveness as the electorate has grown more fragmented and less anchored to positions and values emerging from the workplace. This process, and the related decline of traditional political subcultures, implies that parties find it much more difficult to ensure continuity, to establish grassroots allegiances and to staff the network of events, festivals and political rituals that anchored parties to social communities in the past. In this context, social movements and movement parties emerge as functional replacements for some of the functions previously performed by parties.

This role can be usefully framed by utilising some of the most prominent social movement theories and applying them to the relationship between RRPPs and RRPMS. Social movements' approaches, and particularly 'New Social Movement' theories, have explained the role of social movements in providing anchors for personal identities (Polletta and Jasper 2001) well. As the literature on this subject shows, social movements can act as alternative channels of formation and maintenance of political identities and can then integrate or substitute identity provision by parties. This applies to several political identities, but also, and distinctly, to the ethnic and national identities promoted by RRPPs and RRPMS. Participation in forms of movement action is then used to create cohesion and to support devotion of the time and energy needed by political formations of this kind (Johnston 1994).

This identity creating and maintaining role can also be usefully combined with the organisation-building capacity that social movements allow and that resource mobilisation theory has emphasised (Klandermans 1986). A strong identity is an organisational resource that movement organisations foster and strategically mobilise. In addition, the success of RRPPs and movements is often explained by their anti-system ethos, which translates into strong emotions by activists and voters and which in turn is utilised to create a climate of moral indignation, which RRPPs and movements use in their political communication. In this context, it is useful to consider the recent emphasis that social movement theory accords to emotions, their use by political organisations and their definition and redefinition during protest events (Flam 2005; Goodwin and Jasper 2004). More generally, it would be difficult to frame the success of RRPPs properly without reference to their distinctive culture of xenophobic nationalism, which survey analyses have often demonstrated, as in the case of UKIP in Great Britain in the run-up to the referendum on its EU membership (Inglehart and Norris 2016). Social movement theories have often reflected on the importance of culture in political decisions, and from

different perspectives they have interconnected the cultural and structural aspects of political action (McAdam 1994; Jasper 2007). Thus, this chapter has argued that a movement-centred approach is useful in several ways. By utilising key insights from social movement theory, the chapter has explained the recent successes of many RRPPs as the outcome of an articulated collaboration/competition between parties and movements of the radical right. This fruitful application of social movement theories could in the future be extended to other areas of party-movement relations on the populist right.

We will conclude with some examples of how to move the research agenda forward. At a general level, it is necessary to establish the level of network overlaps between movements and parties of the radical right. It would be important to document the electoral choices of movement activists and their changes over time as political opportunities evolve. In addition, institutional constraints play a different role in different types of party-movement interactions, which need to be classified and compared in terms of key variables, such as electoral laws, institutional arrangements and states' support of democratic procedures.

With reference to the typology of 'interpenetration' presented above, 'conflict-cooperation' and 'distant support', it is necessary to focus on framing strategies and the extent to which they are coordinated. The large literature on social movement framing can be employed usefully to study convergence or divergence between parties and movements and to relate these to media dynamics (Johnston and Noakes 2005). One can assume that framing convergence is taken for granted in cases of consensual interpenetration, or in cases in which an associational network is manufactured by a movement party, as argued in the case of the Northern League. However, even in this case, one needs to be cautious in assuming that parties, as more institutionalised and resourced structures, have greater power to shape agendas than social movements or, more generally, civil society associations. The organisational environment of parties includes interest groups and other organisations which may also be related to social movements, such as promotional, campaigning and public interest groups. They may not have the same access to state resources as parties, but they may well have the power to shape agendas due to their relations with the media, alternative sources of funding, etc.

Traditionally, relations between parties and intermediary bodies have varied from a situation in which mass parties belong to civil society and share ideologies and personnel with intermediary institutions, to a situation in which parties act as brokers between civil society and the state (Katz and Mair 1995). However, this brokering role is changing in a situation of a widespread anti-system, and specifically anti-party, ethos. This new situation can provide movements with legitimacy, and the direction of the brokering role may then be reversed. This is particularly the case of anti-system RRPPs whose voters are particularly disenchanted with their party system of reference, as research on several EU countries has shown (Ruzza 2009). These considerations suggest a research agenda which needs to focus on the relative power of different institutional structures in different arenas; a research agenda which has yet to be pursued.

Uneasy arrangements of mutual influence, competition for framing, and issue ownership are likely to develop in cases of conflict and cooperation between parties and movements. In such cases, the transnational and supranational dimension becomes important and needs to be examined. To return to the previously cited example of the relations between the EDL and UKIP, one notes that the Islamophobic discourse of the former may well have embarrassed the latter,

but it has a substantial impact on public opinion in the UK, giving the EDL essential framing autonomy and influencing power over UKIP. In addition, one might argue that the power of the EDL to shape agendas is fashioned and empowered by a pan-European network of like-minded organisations, which are actively communicating online and in person, and which, in several respects, are better connected among themselves than UKIP is with parties of the same family (Caiani and Parenti 2013). A study should therefore be carried out on the modes of communication and mutual influence of parties and movements across different levels of governance. It is also necessary to examine the presence and role of potential overlapping networks and potential strategies of infiltration between different radical right organisations.

The relationship between movements and parties that are organisationally unconnected but belong to the same radical right populist family is also complex and still under-thematised. The absence of interpersonal connections does not limit the overall impact of the global radical right bloc on the public sphere. Different organisations may unwittingly be perceived as part of a congruent ideological package and with their presence contribute to legitimising and incrementing the salience of radical right grievances and prospective solutions. For this reason, political communication approaches, which have been successfully employed in the study of social movements, need to be employed in studying the combined impact of different radical right populist movements and parties (Gamson 1992).

In addition, it is necessary to consider relations between the political discourse of the left-liberal nexus of movements and parties and the populist radical right. An important and still under-studied area of research would arise from a broader conceptualisation of relations between a RRPP bloc and a counter-movement bloc currently formed by a left-liberal ‘social movement industry’ as a whole (a key Resource Mobilisation concept), which is still important in several countries. Relations between the two have been studied in terms of mutual influences. For instance, a key area of interaction is the ideology of ethno-pluralism or ethno-differentialism, whereby the left-liberal discourse of defending the rights to one’s cultural differences is applied by the right to constructs such as ‘European civilisations’ and comes to be reinterpreted as a right to marginalise other cultures. A few decades ago, prominent right-wing intellectuals such as Alain de Benoist adopted typical left-wing constructs, such as the Gramscian concept of struggling for cultural hegemony, and reinterpreted them as key components of the programme of the radical right (de Benoist 2011; Spektorowski 2003). This adoption is now widespread in the political programmes of many formations of this party family.

Studying the interaction between contrasting ideologies is important for several reasons. One of them is that it yields better understanding of new formations that adopt a combination of RRPP frames and leftist frames. Such formations are becoming important actors in European politics. They include, for instance, the Italian Five Star Movement (M5S) and the Spanish *Ciudadanos* (Mosca 2014; Rodríguez Teruel and Barrio 2015). They are becoming powerful competitors in the protest market – that is, the entire domain of social protest as conceptualised by RM theory (McCarthy and Zald 1977). This has been noted by both academics and activists. For instance, Beppe Grillo, the leader of the Italian M5S, has frequently pointed out that the prominence of his movement party has stopped the growth of the populist radical right, thus acknowledging their interconnections. Like similar formations, this movement party utilises a repertoire of typical social movement action, but in expressing anti-migration stances, significant aspects of its ideological package are closer to the right, whilst the emphasis on deliberative democracy is typically borrowed from the repertoire of new social move-

ments. These formations then compete with both the left liberal and the RRPM markets, often shifting their alliances over time for strategic reasons. For instance, in recent years, the Five Star Movement has formed a group in the EU parliament with UKIP; but in early 2017, for tactical reasons, it attempted to leave the group to join the Alliance for Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE). Its application for membership was rejected by ALDE, however, and the M5S abandoned its plans to move to what is, in effect, a completely different political formation. Thus, in order to understand the strategies and outcomes of the populist radical right, it is essential to understand its roots in the global social movement sector of a society and the complex nature of its competition, which can easily justify purely tactical stances and abrupt reorientation. This is facilitated by the strong control on parties' programmes by the charismatic leadership frequently found in movements of this kind. This research programme is still in its beginnings, however.

Finally, it should be noted that in several political systems, the social movements of the 1980s have institutionalised and come to confront the radical right as ideological and policy allies of the neo-liberal pro-market consensus. For instance, the prominent feminist Nancy Fraser notes that 'progressive neo-liberalism is an alliance of mainstream currents of new social movements (feminism, anti-racism, multiculturalism and LGBTQ rights), on the one hand, and high-end 'symbolic' and service-based business sectors (Wall Street, Silicon Valley, and Hollywood), on the other. In this alliance, progressive forces are effectively joined with the forces of cognitive capitalism, especially financialisation' (Fraser 2017). Ideologically, Fraser points out that 'progressive neo-liberalism' as a form of integration of the values of emancipation and of societal financialisation leaves radical right populism as the only remaining political and ideological opponent, and she explains its success in these terms.

This analysis, and similar ones, highlight that, in order to explain the success of RRPPs and RRPMs, analysts should focus on broader processes of the institutionalisation of earlier social movements and their relations with the 'losers of globalisation', who are no longer willing to embrace their ideologies, but whose quality of life has deteriorated to the point that they are seeking an anti-system answer – a radical right solution, which might be perceived as the only one currently available. Their acceptance of protectionist and xenophobic values and policies can therefore be interpreted as the last resort adoption of a protest stance in the absence of rival ideologies. Accounting for the success of the radical right therefore requires consideration of the protest sector in its entirety and comparative analysis of the processes whereby social movements and parties become institutionalised and their impact on the populist radical right.

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CHAPTER 5:

ANALYSING AND EXPLAINING POPULISM:

BRINGING FRAME, ACTOR AND CONTEXT BACK IN¹

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The academic debate about populism seems to be unable to resolve some persistent conceptual and taxonomic issues. While disagreements have continued over whether populism is a style, a mode of expression, political strategy, discourse, ideology, zeitgeist, political logic or related construct (Roberts 2006; Stanley 2008; Barr 2009; Gidron and Bonikowski 2013), controversies still persist about the criteria that should be used to identify some current parties, movements or leaders as ‘populist’ and to gauge the extent of the phenomenon. One of the crucial obstacles is that the label populist is above all a creation of observers and political competitors, which has tended to infuse the term with a normative, polemic and/or pejorative connotation. Populists also often refuse to identify themselves as populist because the attribution is seen as coming entirely from outside. In fact, it is much less controversial to argue socialist parties belong to the socialist family and communist parties to the communist family. The same is equally true for liberal, confessional and fascist parties.

The historical antecedents from which the name was largely derived, the so-called Russian and American populists, belong to a completely different time and political modus operandi, especially when viewed from the vantage point of contemporary European party politics. When this term was first attributed to some parties and regimes in South America, post-colonial Asia and Africa—where masses were being mobilised as a political resource—the concept was fairly residual and vague (Ionescu and Gellner 1969; Canovan 1981). Classifying Peronism, Nasserism, Nkrumah’s regime in Ghana and that of Sukarno in Indonesia was extremely difficult by Western standards. These were neither socialist nor fascist but nonetheless egalitarian and anti-imperialist, so observers chose to categorise them as populist. The classification of some ‘outsider parties’ emerging in Europe in the 1970s, especially the anti-tax parties in Scandinavia, followed a similar pattern. A particular problem in developing conceptual and taxonomic categories has been the ideological and strategic heterogeneity of political actors.

Populism is always linked to ideological frameworks beyond populism itself. Thus, populist actors always embrace additional ideological positions, right-wing, centrist, or left-wing ideas, or combinations thereof. Despite belonging to the same ideological family and regardless of the stigma they carry in their own respective political systems, populists often share the same prejudices about each other and refuse to be seen as cooperating with each other. For instance, populist parties have found it difficult to form coherent institutional expression in the EU Parliament. In fact, they prefer to ‘marry up’ if given a chance, as McDonnell (2016) has concluded. Importantly, populists refuse to be assigned to or belong to any known political family.

¹ This chapter is based on a paper presented at the Fourth Mid-Term Conference of the Political Sociology Research Network, Brussels, 28–29th October 2016.

‘Populist’ has often been a label applied to ‘homeless’ actors, which probably also explains why the academic debate on the definition of populism and classification has become so assiduous (Hubé and Truan 2017). Apart from scholars who do not consider populism a useful term, two main tendencies arose in recent years: a first and dominant tendency persists in the form of a somewhat philosophical or ‘essayist’ view. It suggests that democratic regimes, especially in Europe and the US are facing a sudden and unexpected proliferation of what observers and media have labelled ‘global populism’. Thus, almost every form of ‘anti-establishment’ or protest resentment tends to be subsumed under the label ‘populism’ (see Müller 2016: 1-3). This has contributed to the term populism becoming ubiquitous in its presence and allusive in its meaning, which has often resulted in normative and polemic uses of the label. The second trend, represented by scholars in political sociology, in political science and recently in political communication, is to try to develop new analytical tools in order to understand populism as an empirical phenomenon.

Agreeing with this second approach, we argue in favour of the development of a more comprehensive framework of analysis for comparative research, which seeks to address several unresolved conceptual, taxonomic and methodical issues. First of all, we want to develop a conceptualisation that captures the intrinsically ambivalent nature of the populist claim, thus pushing beyond the constraints of the essentialist and normative approaches. Second, we suggest that the concept of ambivalence lends itself to a more gradational approach and frame-based analysis. Third, we want to draw attention to the underlying conditions, as they relate both to actor and context, so as to be able to explain the rise and diffusion of the populist frame and its employment by political actors in current democratic regimes.

From Ideological Dichotomy to Ambivalence

One of the most frequent laments in political science and political sociology regarding populism is that scholars continue to struggle to define this concept (for an overview see Gidron and Bonikowski 2013). In response there have been numerous attempts to render populism as a simpler and empirical-oriented concept related to ‘people’ and the ‘elite’. Broad common conceptualisations that define populism as a set of ideas that encompass anti-elitism, the belief in a general will of the people and a Manichean outlook (Hawkins 2009; Rovira Kaltwasser 2012; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2013; Rooduijn 2014) arguably incorporate important aspects of populism and provide definitions on which most scholars agree (Rooduijn 2014). However, these categories are still rather broad and allow us mainly to distinguish clear-cut populist actors from non-populists but are less well-suited to comparing different manifestations of populism with each other. They are also often ill-equipped to assess many of the borderline cases outside Western Europe and Latin America. Although, as van Kessel (2015: 8) has argued, different interpretations of populism are not problematic from an empirical perspective “as long as there is a consensus about the concept’s attributes”, we are not sure that this is necessarily the case.

In this regard, the emergence of the idea that populism is a thin-centred ideology, as proposed especially by Cas Mudde (2007), has represented something of a breakthrough because of its simplicity. Whether based on actual conviction, mere pragmatism or simply exhaustion from the interminable debates about the nature of populism, a sizeable share of the populism re-

search community, particularly in the UK, the Netherlands and Scandinavia, has adopted this framework since the 2000s, for it provides a means of identifying populism and populist manifestation more unambiguously. In doing so, scholars have appropriated Michael Freeden's (1996) idea of ideologies with a thin centre and applied it to understanding populism. Nonetheless, Freeden (2016) himself has remained sceptical that populism would indeed fit the definition of a thin-centred ideology any more than, for example, 'nativism' and remarked about this publicly in his keynote address at the 2016 Prague conference on *Current Populism in Europe*.

The growing tendency to conceive populism as a thin-centred ideology stands in some contrast to the also widespread understanding of populism as a form of discourse following Laclau (2005; see also Panizza 2005; and Filc 2010). The latter has come in for increased criticism for its normative roots, its high degree of theoretical abstraction and its lack of empirical applicability, as well as its failure to link political discourse convincingly to political practice (for example, Moffitt 2016).

Nevertheless, as populist claims continue to proliferate and morph after appearing in new contexts and as they attach themselves to different parties and host ideologies in ever more settings, populism's hybridity and diversity continues to pose significant empirical challenges. Thus, the Muddean perspective, which arguably minimises populism to a parsimonious classificatory pattern, seems to show distinct disadvantages both from a theoretical and empirical perspective. Not only did Michael Freeden view populism as 'too thin' an ideology to be meaningful, but there is also new dissent by other scholars who raise important objections.

First of all, it is worth noting that once we apply the label populism as a(n) ('thin') ideology to a political actor or group of actors, we engage in an essentialist enterprise and run the risk of treating populist parties/leaders in a derogatory and thus normative manner (Aslandis 2015: 7). Although the intention is always to avoid normative appraisal, populism and its protagonists are often assumed to be forms of pathology to be studied in order to be eliminated rather than understood. Second, it is rather difficult to distinguish 'thin' and 'not thin' in ideological terms. Even though it may be argued that populism does not exist in a pure form as a 'full' or 'thick' ideology (like socialism or liberalism), this view still runs the risk of rendering populism as a catch-all concept (Moffitt 2016:19), thus reducing the chances of us differentiating between a generic populist claim and those traits more or less rooted in other ideological legacies. Third, without additional criteria (often added tacitly in empirical studies, see again Moffitt 2016: 19), the Muddean conception limits the opportunity to analyse the extent to which a discourse or a party is or are populist on the basis of theory. This is because a dichotomous approach avoids 'grey zones' and, more generally, refuses to recognise the possibility of a continuum between populists and non-populists. Until now this has been less of a problem in Western European party systems, where there have been clearly identifiable populist formations (typically only one) that stand apart from the other mainstream parties. However, as some right-wing populist parties are moving into the mainstream and mainstream parties have begun to integrate some of the former's issues and orientations, the borderlines are becoming less impermeable (Akkerman et al. 2016; De Lange 2012; Bale et al. 2010). Above all, in Eastern and South Eastern Europe, where mainstream parties have adopted nativist, illiberal and also populist messages, and where leftist and conservative parties have morphed in order to adopt a discourse on immigration, ethnicity and the EU, which is broadly similar to that of

populist parties in Western Europe, a reductive or dichotomous conception of populism is ill-equipped to make global comparisons.

Moreover, treating populism as an ideology in the context of a binary classificatory scheme also ignores one of its more crucial features, namely the intrinsically *variable and ambivalent* character of populist claims. Scholars such as Paul Taggart have pointed out that populism lacks “universal key values, taking on attributes of its environment” and instead creates “an episodic, anti-political, empty-hearted, chameleonic celebration of heartland in the face of crisis” (Taggart 2000: 5; see also Taggart 2002: 68). At its heart is a series of ambivalent claims about the people, the elites/outgroups, democracy, the state, society, the economy and so on. For example, the ‘people’ may refer to ‘us in general’, to ‘natives’ but not all nationals or citizens, to ‘the people of the heartland’ but not of the metropolis, to so-called ‘genuine citizens’, or to the ‘common folk’, to ‘hardworking tax payers’ or to certain kinds of voters alluded to in political campaigns. Generally, the terms employed by populists remain purposefully vague and flexible. Although the term ‘people’ often does denote *ethnos* in the sense of ‘natives’, it does not always apply. For example, in the Balkans, religious affiliation matters more than language or national heritage. Moreover, especially in left-wing populism, the ‘people’ include lower-class and poor people but there is less concern about citizenship.

The ambivalence serves to divide a population in an effort to reconstitute a popular majority with which to gain political control. Thus, the kind of exclusionary rhetoric applied by populists depends on the ideological background of those making the claims and the existing opportunity structures. For example, the former Freedom Party (FPÖ) governor of the Austrian province of Carinthia, Jörg Haider, called upon ‘real’ Carinthians to vote for him. This implied that the members of the Slovenian-speaking minority of that partially bilingual Austrian province were somehow less genuinely real citizens of Carinthia than the German-speaking majority although both groups have been living there since the early Middle Ages and have long since intermingled. Moreover, the ubiquitous presence of Slavic family names in that state suggests that a large share of the so-called German-speaking population who voted for Haider were themselves of Slovenian ancestry but had become assimilated over the centuries. Thus, neither *ethnos* nor *demos* really mattered. Later, Haider’s Carinthian branch of the Freedom Party broke away from the national party and joined the somewhat more moderate Alliance Future Austria (BZÖ). Nonetheless, Haider as state governor, kept up the anti-Slovenian rhetoric because of the favourable political conditions. Using a dichotomous and reductive framework would make it difficult to assess the populist characteristics of the FPÖ compared to the BZÖ.

Perhaps even more ambivalent than ‘the people’ is the term populism uses for its enemies, who are often broadly labelled ‘the elites’ or the ‘others’. Even people of the same ethnic ancestry may be perceived as outsiders and aliens. For example, the Bolivian populist leader Evo Morales and his MAS party refer to their main electorate as the *originarios*, meaning the original inhabitants as opposed to the European colonisers and their descendants. However, the Bolivian population is nearly 70 percent mixed (*mestizo*) and 20 percent genuinely indigenous. The number of whites is quite small, amounting to only five percent.² Yet, the claims made by Morales and his party and the rhetoric employed conjure up a fictitious population of original

2 South America: BOLIVIA". CIA The World <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/bl.html>.

inhabitants who speak indigenous languages, dress in traditional clothes, engage in pre-modern practices and live outside the central cities. In reality, there are few countries in Latin America in which *ethnos* and *demos* overlap as much as in Bolivia. The people in the cities may be culturally different, more urban, prefer Spanish to Quechua or Aymara, wear Western clothes more often and attend better schools, but ethnically speaking, they are no less *originarios* than their fellow *mestizos* in the countryside.

Although current literature tends to perceive the alleged opposition between people and elite as clear-cut, the relationship between these two categories is rather complex because of the difficulty of defining who the targeted elites actually are. Depending on the populist party and its leader and also contingent upon the specific situation, populist claims may defend or condemn specific people, groups, institutions and arrangements. The often denounced so-called 'political class' may include (members of) the government, mainstream parties, businessmen, intellectuals, journalists, bureaucrats, judges, corporations, the EU and its officials, interest groups, international societies and so on. What is more, the populist universe includes additional 'enemies of the people', such as immigrants, minorities, refugees, 'welfare cheats', criminals of various types and others. As one of the oldest and most successful populist formations, the Austrian Freedom Party has often adapted their messages to shifting circumstances. Despite appearing outwardly consistent, it has morphed from a pro-European, German-nationalist, anticlerical, pro-business party into an anti-European, welfare chauvinist, Austro-patriotic party that presents itself as the defender of Christendom and draws most of its support from blue-collar workers. Every time the party changed, so did the subtext of what the party meant through it juxtaposing 'the people' and 'the elites'.

While scholars do not always recognise it, populists are not only opponents of the existing political reality but also present themselves as agents of change. Although this may not necessarily mean revolutionary change, the promise of a more or less radical transformation of the (economic or political) situation to restore power to the people is the central appeal of populists. In some cases, change might be a systematic goal embodied in a clear strategy, while in other cases it is rather vague. According to Meny and Surel (2000: 181; see also Canovan 2005: 81-82), populism promises change in order to provide power to the people betrayed by the elite. 'Change' may express a demand for the dismissal of a government, policy change, but also the whole transformation of a polity.

Populism has an inherent plasticity and is thus politically highly malleable. Nonetheless, it entails a profound tension underlying its core promise in that it claims to deliver people from the present and lead them to a future in the name of the past. The promise of restoring popular sovereignty by acting in the present to return to a *status-quo ante* in the future, that is, to a time and place before the elites had allegedly usurped power, is the core appeal and a prerequisite for the emotional connection between populists and many of their supporters. People are not necessarily emotionally invested in populist politicians but in the vision of a time and place they cherish and seem to have lost (see Betz and Johnson 2004). It is not surprising that research in the US found that many Trump voters "wished they had lived in the 1950s", a period which candidate Trump singled out as a time when things were great.³

3 "Why Trump voters wished they lived in the 1950s". BBC Report 24th August 2016 <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-37161449>.

Populism's fundamental promise is the salvation of ordinary people from current conditions (Canovan 2005: 89). In fact, populism's appeal for change occurs precisely in a changing context: When political trust is low and the role of the media (including the new media) as critics of the dissatisfactory status-quo is extraordinarily strong, ambivalent populist claims about unspecific but sweeping change seem to be particularly favoured.

Despite promises about sweeping change, populists know how to tailor their claims in such a way that they may achieve their intended strategic ends. Depending on the extent of change demanded, they are able to position themselves as radical anti-regime opposition far outside acceptable political norms, or they can open up the possibility of cooperating with mainstream parties and perhaps even be included in government. In the former case, a populist party may end up politically ostracised, as was, for instance, the case with Vlaams Blok (VB) and Vlaams Belang in Belgium.

The linkage between government and populism also highlights the inherently ambivalent nature of that relationship both in terms of discourse and practice. Populists often use representative institutions to change policies and engage in office-seeking strategies even though they push for plebiscitary measures and routinely denounce aspects of representative democracy. Likewise, their claims about the importance of sovereignty of 'the people' are contradicted by their top-down organisational models and authoritarian tendencies.

Given the complexity of populism, it seems overly reductionist to employ a minimal definition of the phenomenon. Instead, we suggest populism should be understood as making inherently ambivalent claims diffused by individual and collective actors designed to challenge the status-quo in favour of people's empowerment and of elite change. It would be heuristically and empirically useful to analyse populist claims and their variation across time and space to see how they are adapted under given circumstances.

Ambivalence is a multidimensional phenomenon: It may occur vis-à-vis 'the people,' whom populists define in various ways (see above) or may not define at all (for instance, all non-outsiders); and it applies to 'the others', an equally nebulous category in populist rhetoric. Ambivalence is also attached to other concepts populists often invoke, such as democracy: there, populists may argue in favour of certain liberal rules such as freedom of speech but oppose others such as the power of judges and the freedom of media. Populism's relationship to established ideologies is equally flexible. In terms of economic policy, the ambivalence expressed in populist discourse varies between deregulatory demands and criticism of capitalism and free trade. Likewise, populists claim to want to increase or restore the power of the people, while also calling for more state control, expanded police power, better security and more law and order. Moreover, while talking about expanding democracy, the organisational model of populist parties is often rather undemocratic with power highly centralised in the top leadership (Heinisch and Mazzoleni 2016). Given that populism depends on such ambivalent claims, which form part of a carefully constructed narrative that is made to fit a specific political context, in the subsequent segment we propose that populism should be best understood as a *frame* and less as an ideology (see for instance Aslanidis 2015).

Gradation and Frame

Scholarship has considered populism an ideology, a discourse, a strategy, a political logic or a style (cf. Laclau 2005; Moffitt and Tormey 2013; Moffitt 2016). Despite this range of approaches, only some of this research has tried to develop rigorous empirical frameworks (cf. Pauwels 2011). Nevertheless, the aforementioned dichotomous conceptualisation has emerged as something of a standard in the field. Yet, in recent years there has been a growing interest in treating populism empirically as a gradational phenomenon (Hawkins 2009; Akkerman et al. 2014; see also Pauwels in this volume; Jagers and Walgrave 2007). Scholars working with different conceptualisations of populism seemed to converge on similar ways of analysing speeches, texts and citizens' attitudes by using content analysis and surveys to measure the extent to which populist claims are made. Despite the diversity of underlying theoretical assumptions about the nature of populism, the main unifying feature of this empirical work is that parties, leaders and activists can be more or less populist at different points in time and in comparison with other parties, leaders and activists. This means that the 'degree' of populism (whether seen as an ideology, discourse or style) depends on some quantifiable presence of certain themes, words, tones, metaphors and images (Reese et al. 2001).

Usually, the gradational approach has been justified by the necessity to understand both how the mainstreaming of populist actors occurs and how it is that mainstream politics adopts populist claims all too readily (Mudde 2016: 15; Pauwels 2011; Deegan Krause and Haughton 2009). However, one might argue that the gradational approach also corresponds very well to understanding populism as being 'chameleonic' and ambivalent by nature. By focusing on how different tactics and messages occur in different fields and at different times, the gradational approach permits us to show empirically how ambivalence is expressed.

This observation leads us to our next key point: If ambivalent claims are central to this phenomenon, this would additionally support the idea that populism or populist claim-making can be conceived as a frame. Frame analysis offers a powerful tool, as an increasing number of scholars have pointed out (Jagers and Walgrave 2007; Caiani and Della Porta 2011; Ruzza and Fella 2011; Aslandis 2015; Aalberg et al. 2017). Despite internal differences and controversies associated with this type of analysis (Benford and Snow 2000; Scheufele 1999), frames are generally seen as providing authoritative interpretation of particular social phenomena by activating larger discourses or highlighting certain properties that place the phenomenon in a particular light. Thus, "framing becomes a strategic attempt to guide the activation of particular narratives and repertoires of understanding with the purpose of mobilising consensus" (Lindekilde 2014: 201). An extreme example would be the suggestion that immigration as the target phenomenon to be interpreted was mainly a tool used by elites to replace one people with another that was more pliant. The idea of population transfer or *Umwolkung* has been a recurring staple in FPÖ campaigns since the 1990s.

Like ideologies, frames try to explain what is wrong, whose fault it is and what has to be done (Albertazzi and McDonnell 2008: 3). As such, frame analysis is compatible with most of the concepts related to populism and lends itself to both qualitative and quantitative methods. The core of the analysis is to empirically examine texts, oral speeches and images to determine to what extent a populist frame occurs.

The *master populist frame* is generally expressed (a) by claiming that the ‘people’—typically conceived as a single homogenous entity—are in need of defending, (b) by identifying the sources of the threat and subsequently by directing criticism at the elites (and outsiders), and (c) by promising deliverance from the status quo through more or less radical change (Mény and Surel 2000; Canovan 2005). Given that the presence and the relevance of each of these three components vary among and within actors, we should be able to map actors, parties, movements and other populism-related attributes along a continuum in terms of the direction, salience, ideological connotation and extent of the claims employed. The same applies to sub-frames on issues such as democracy, European integration, immigration, Islam and the like.⁴ For instance, the anti-establishment sub-frame adopted by candidates and party leaders during an electoral campaign is presumably not the same in terms of position and intensity as the one adopted by that party’s representatives in government, which is likely to be closer to mainstream sub-frames. Ambivalence may thus occur within discourse and between discourse and practice. For instance, a frame analysis focusing on the relevance of anti-establishment critiques in official party speeches may not necessarily correspond to the legislative behaviour of that party. The early Trump White House provided many examples of this seeming disconnect, especially since the president continued his campaign rhetoric in office, drawing on anti-establishment sub-frames while his surrogates were simultaneously trying to assuage the fears of international allies and members of Congress by sounding more mainstream. The tension between different sub-frames—one more mainstream, the other based on the narrative of the popular insurgent outsider—were quite clearly visible as different staff, some drawn from the populist campaign, others from circles of experts and career civil servants, were intermixed when having to craft policy proposals and make public statements. At the same time, the Trump Administration also shows that discourses do have an effect on political practice itself in that populist politicians who were elected based on their outsider credentials feel the need to act as disrupters and launch a variety of initiatives designed to shake up the political status quo.

In frame analysis it is important not to conceive populist claims as mainly a discursive phenomenon but to assess its impact on political practice. For example, when populists employ a frame depicting ‘the people’ with certain attributes—for instance, defined neither in terms of ethnos nor class but as a hybrid category representing an idealised community of imagined authentic people—, then this follows a strategy of dividing and reconstituting groups of voters with the purpose of creating electoral majority populations.

Research has shown that the use of ‘people’ varies across contexts and cases. A comparative analysis of party manifestos of six Western European parties yielded the following four types of appeals concerning ‘the people’: ethnic-nationalist, civic, collectivist and particularistic (Raadt et al. 2004). Thus, it is generally important to ascertain the variability of the boundary and definition of a concept such as ‘the people’ and also to understand why a certain meaning was employed in a particular context or in connection with other sub-frames (Betz 1994: 69-106; Kuisma 2013; Marzouki et al. 2016).

4 Despite our heuristic interest in their approach, we question whether Jagers and Walgrave’s (2007) focus on three distinct types of populism—“empty populism”, “anti-elitist populism” and “complete” populism—is able to overcome the shortcomings of reductionism.

In frame analysis, it is important to distinguish between supply-side and demand-side dimensions because the populist frame expresses ambivalence both with respect to the 'sender' and the 'audience' of claims. Thus, populist framing and practices have to be considered both dependent and independent variables. These mutually reinforcing linkages between party manifestos and leaders' speeches, on the one hand, and the attitudes of their various constituencies, on the other, have not yet been sufficiently explored by the scholarship on populism and represent fruitful new research avenues on populism.

Explaining the Rise and the Spread of Populism Across Contemporary Democracies

In many democratic systems where actors expressing populist frames were successful in the electoral arena, societies were undergoing crises and grave uncertainties. The common linkage that has emerged is the one between populism and societal, economic and cultural change. Addressing the question of the extent to which the populism frame occurs and matters is crucial; but it is equally important to understand why populist (sub-) frames arise and how they spread. To answer this question, one must look at the actors engaging in a populist discourse and the context: What matters here is first of all what we may call the *endogenous condition of possibility*.

Endogenous Conditions

These conditions refer to the innate abilities, resources and structural assets available to and shaped by populist actors. These include the origin and formation of the political actors themselves, including their personality and wealth as well as the pattern of the organisation of the party or movement in which they operate. For example, populist leaders like Jörg Haider, Christoph Blocher (although he was never actually the party leader) and Jean-Marie Le Pen each enjoyed the advantage of considerable personal wealth, which gave them a measure of autonomy both from internal party factions and external interests. Moreover, it allowed them to shape aspects of their party to suit their preferences. However, access to a financial fortune is only one aspect: They need certain abilities and resources inherent in themselves and in their organisation to communicate their messages effectively. If they lack communicative abilities, they will not be listened to. If they lack fame or the ability to muster promotional resources, they will be ignored by the media and public. If they lack organisational strength, they will not be able to concentrate power in the leadership or project their claims with sufficient intensity. We need to distinguish those conditions which are under the control of actors or which may be shaped by them from those which may not be altered and to which populist actors must adapt if they want to be politically successful.

Exogenous Conditions

Exogenous conditions of possibility refer to the given context in which actors opt to express their populist claims but which is beyond the control of the actors themselves. These conditions are defined by a complex configuration of structural dimensions, popular predispositions and communication patterns, to which populist actors must react. In a society with an ethnic minority population, populist actors may opt to build their claims around ethnic divisions, whereas in systems with a centre-periphery cleavage, populists will likely invoke heartland mythologies. In the latter, existing local predispositions against the capital city and the national media located in the metropolises may be readily exploited.

Exogenous conditions vary not only across space but also over time. As already mentioned, such conditions entail various crises and uncertainties as a result of societal, economic and cultural change. They also include the revolution in information technology, increasing economic interdependence and a changing relationship between the economy, the state, society and the individual. These are well-known factors which drive different forms of socio-economic polarisation and growing mediatisation, both of which have an impact on everyday politics and life in general (cf. Castells 2009).

Nonetheless, individual electoral races occur within national borders and thus in a given institutional context with defined constituencies. In order to explain how and why actors expressing populist frames emerge and succeed in electoral arenas, we have to consider more deeply how macro-level changes, such as those attributed to different forms of globalisation, become translated and framed in regional and national contexts. Although several scholars are strongly fascinated by the idea of 'global populism' or of the general 'Zeitgeist' (Mudde 2004; but also see Müller 2016), comparative research on populism clearly shows that regional, systemic and epistemic differences produce different populist outcomes (for Europe, see Ignazi 1992; Betz 1994; Koopmans 1996; Betz and Immerfall 1998; Kitschelt and McGann 1995; Norris 2005; Carter 2005; Ivarsflaten 2007; Mudde 2007; Art 2011; for Latin America, see Weyland 2001; Madrid 2008; Hawkins 2009; Levitsky and Roberts 2011). One such crucial element are the political rules of the game that exist in a particular context. The election rules, government legacies and other political institutional arrangements may explain the variation in how populists frame their discursive strategy. For instance, as Katz and Mair (1995; 2009) have argued, party cartelisation, a collusion system of mainstream parties within government, may represent an important window of opportunity for anti-establishment opponents.

As a result, socio-economic and cultural changes may by themselves not explain widespread populist claim-making. But if we connect these underlying factors with the erosion of old political cleavages and with associated changes in political institutional arrangements, we may develop a plausible argument for how democratic politics in consolidated political systems has been undermined and how this subsequently contributed to the creation of widespread insecurity. Such sentiments are exploited not only by protest parties but mainstream political actors as well. They too, may engage in making populist claims, to some extent using populist subframes to distinguish themselves in a highly competitive and strongly mediated political campaign environment. Candidate-centred electoral campaigns, dramatisation and sensationalism in media coverage, as well as the spread of social media may strongly enhance the rise of populist (sub-)frames (Mazzoleni et al. 2003; Moffitt 2016). One can also assume that the more public opinion embraces the frame of a distance between 'ordinary people' and the political

elite expressed in opinion polls through waning trust in politicians and their low approval ratings, the more the populist claim is perceived by elites themselves as a tool for their competition in a communication environment shaped by media logic. Thus, populism is not necessarily a pathological symptom of societal crisis, but the most effective response by (including mainstream) actors when pursuing political power under changing—political and media-based—rules of the game.

The Role of Endogenous and Exogenous Conditions in Populist Claim-Making

Most scholars would agree that discrete contexts shape not only the perception of populism as a construct but also the perception of populist protagonists themselves in the sense that the phenomenon becomes attached to certain leaders, political parties, movements and even forms of communication (Madrid 2008; Subramanian 2007; Hawkins 2010; Jansen 2011). This means that the endogenous conditions related to actors' traits and the factors under their control are the more crucial dimensions in spreading populism. Whereas exogenous dimensions are necessary conditions, they are not enough to explain the rise, spread and the ambivalence of populist claims. The decision on whether to convincingly claim that women's liberation is under assault from Islam or to equally persuasively denounce it as undermining the community's social fabric depends on the populist protagonist's ability to read a given context and to use their available assets as effectively as possible. Overall, the claims about women remain ambivalent but different versions will be deployed to maximum effect in different contexts.

Populist frames need political entrepreneurs capable of developing and disseminating them. A crucial condition for the success of the populist discourse is the credibility of the claims maker as a challenger or change agent. The key is the populist actor's 'transformational' leadership (Burns 1978), although populist scholarship prefers to adopt the controversial term of 'charisma' (see for instance, Barr 2009). In doing so, the claims maker can draw on the aforementioned objective resources, such as wealth, networks, celebrity status, media access and the like, to appear credible in effecting change.

Depending on the actor and the context, individual and collective dimensions are relevant. The individual dimension, especially once populist leaders present themselves as outsiders, is linked to their capacity to convert non-political (economic, cultural and so on) capital into political capital (for example, public reputation), and, more generally, to mobilise all resources available to oppose (political) elites and call into question the formal/informal political rules governing the political system. The collective dimension can also play a crucial role in increasing a leader's or party's ability to spread populist claims. The organisation of the movement or party, which varies between more or less highly centralised and cohesive models, with differing financial and/or activist resources for mobilisation (Heinisch and Mazzoleni 2016), and its capacity to link with more or less relevant interest groups in society and the economy all matter in this respect. Again, we notice how the endogenous condition reflected the populists' ability to shape their party organisation intersects with the exogenous dimension of institutional rules and established practices.

In a presidential political system like the US, in which political parties are mainly fundraising vehicles but which are otherwise focused on a 'horse race' between two major party candidates, fame and financial resources are key to overcoming the threshold of public awareness.

Donald Trump's fame as a media show host and celebrity, his experience in handling himself in front of an audience and his ability to communicate effectively were his assets in the endogenous condition of possibility. It was also an asset that he was able to finance his campaign independently of his party and their major donors. Moreover, Trump was able to mount a successful insurgency campaign more or less against the party that eventually nominated him without shattering the party, as would undoubtedly be the case elsewhere. Thus, he also benefited from the fact that the US party system is structured loosely enough to allow for considerable internal division and dissent without splitting a party altogether. In other words, the political entrepreneur Trump could engage in claims against and operate in a manner contrary to a party whose leadership he was seeking to an extent which conditions elsewhere would prohibit. By comparison, in a West European party system, populist political entrepreneurs might first try to bring the respective parties under their control by challenging the old leadership or mobilising the base, as Jörg Haider did in 1986 when he took control of the FPÖ. In such a context, leaders may then aim to concentrate power and centralise decision-making so as to project polarising messages without fear of internal dissent (Heinisch 2016).

What matters is how populist actors shape the intersection of endogenous and exogenous conditions. This also extends to the populist party's position in the political system. Whether a party's place is more 'peripheral' or 'central', such as by participating in government, shaping public policy and/or using public administration for party goals, matters as it implies easy access to public resources. It also enhances a party's capacity to be recognised by allies and opponents in the political system as well as by the media and journalists (Akkerman et al. 2016; Aalberg et al. 2016). Since one crucial strategy against populist opposition parties is the 'cordon sanitaire'⁵, the ability of populists to ensure their centrality in the political and media system is the most effective strategy with which to protect their reputation and credibility. Nonetheless, the populists' claim of being a central player includes an important contradiction because seeking office and entering government while simultaneously advocating revolutionary change creates a tension between the constraints of public office and the populist party's operational logic (for example, Heinisch 2003). The populist frame of being a political outsider seeking power to become an insider in order to change the system on behalf of the people represents numerous challenges. The populists have to convince voters that they, as outsiders, have enough inside wherewithal to effect change without becoming system insiders themselves. Populist actors often fail in this task and pay the price for what is perceived as mainstreaming (Akkerman et al. 2016). Yet under certain circumstances, political success may occur. This happens in strongly polarised and mediatised systems, once the transformational leadership becomes strong enough to shape the rules of the institutional game both in emerging or consolidated democratic regimes.

Application and Summary

In this chapter, we argued that scholars of populism, especially those working in political science and political sociology should overcome certain limitations of current literature by moving on to a more comprehensive framework of analysis. The growing challenges in scholarship

5 In a 'cordon sanitaire' other political actors completely refuse to cooperate with and politically isolate the populists so that the latter become politically ineffective.

are related to the capacity to grasp the complexity, the variety and the fluid character of populism. In contrast to proposing reductive, essentialist and normative approaches, we argued in favour of a relational structure-agency approach by asking how populist claims arise and how they may be studied empirically. In keeping with our understanding of populism as a frame, we are most interested in understanding how the populist frame varies across different arenas and constituencies.

Inspired by Taggart (2000: 5), who argued that scholars should consider populism an “anti-political, empty-hearted, chameleonic celebration of the heartland in the face of crisis”, we argued that populism can be heuristically defined as an intrinsically ambivalent claim. It is diffused by individual and collective actors to challenge the status-quo in favour of people’s empowerment and elite change. We take the ambivalence expressed in populist claims to be a dynamic and plastic multidimensional phenomenon: concepts such as people, elites, (liberal-) democracy, constitutional rights, rule of law or the economic system, among others, are all subject to highly ambivalent expression by populists, and so their content and meaning remain purposefully vague and vary depending on circumstances and context. The same goes for the traditional ideologies to which populism has developed a connection full of ambiguity and flexibility. The ambivalence expressed in populist claims is not only a question of discourse but also one of political practice. This means the ambivalence reflected in populist claims finds an expression both in policymaking and political culture.

Table 5.1: Overview of the Principal Definitions and Conceptualisation

Definition
<i>POPULISM</i> can be defined as a frame containing intrinsically ambivalent claim(s) diffused by individual and collective actors in order to challenge the status-quo in favor of people’s empowerment and elite change.
<i>FRAMES</i> are sets of concepts used to organise, perceive, and communicate about reality. Frames and underlying claims are often connected to host ideologies.
The <i>GOAL OF FRAME ANALYSIS</i> is to understand the relationship between frame, actor, and context.

In order to analyse the ambivalence of populist claims, we proposed proceeding with a frame analysis (cf. Aslanidis 2015). It begins with the assumption that the *populist master frame* is restored (Mény and Surel 2000; Canovan 2005). The research would then trace, for example, through content analysis, the variation of these concepts in populist claims: the portrayal of ‘people’, the nature of the ‘elites’ and the extent of the ‘change’. Claims can be measured at the very least in terms of their direction, extremeness, prominence and frequency. We then suggested adopting a gradational approach which allows for the study of parties, leaders and citizens with the objective of uncovering the extent of populist (sub-)frames used within themes, words, tones, metaphors and images in relation to their background ideology (left-wing, centrists, right-wing), channels of communication, intended constituencies and arenas of competition.

If populism, as expressed by ambivalent claims, is the dependent construct, we suggested that a set of contextual variables can explain the emergence of such populist frames. These include, in particular, exogenous conditions of possibility like societal and cultural change, frames rooted in public opinion (disenchantment, waning trust in politicians and so on), institutional

conditions, the configuration of the party system pattern (relations among government and oppositional parties, strength of cleavage politics) and the media structure (for example, the increasing relevance of media logic in contemporary democracies). Within each respective context, it is the actor(s) that play(s) the key role in spreading populist claims. Thus, any analysis of populism has to focus on the means of individual and collective actors and their innate abilities and acquired resources, their credibility as change agents and their capacity to shape strategies and affect political rules.

It is important to note once again that discourse and practice are linked to each other. In this sense, populism is not only a discourse but connected to measurable political realities in terms of conditions of possibility, choices of strategy and selection of policies.

In our approach, we intended to suggest a way forward designed to bridge the chasm between those who have adopted the Muddean framework because they prefer its ideational aspects and empirical operationalisability, and those who see the discursive and multifaceted dimensions of populism but struggle to both link discourse and practice and measure populism's causes and effects.

Table 5.2: Overview of the Application of Frame Analysis to Empirical Research (Example)

<p>Hypothesis: <i>The rise and spread of populist claims depend on social, economic, institutional, cultural conditions of possibilities.</i></p> <p>Dependent Variable</p> <p>MASTER FRAME: <i>“Defense of the (virtuous) ‘people’ against the machination of elites and the promise of political change to restore the power of the people.”</i></p> <p><u>Ambivalent claims in the discursive frame:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PEOPLE: ‘Heartlanders’/demos/ethnos/Christians/whites/working people/taxpayers - ELITES: The political class/politicians/bureaucrats/ financial/economic elites/media/judges - DEMOCRACY: Plebiscitary decision-making/unrestraint majoritarianism/curbs on media and judiciary <p>SUBFRAME 1: <i>“Mainstream parties/Leftist parties have abandoned the working men and women because politicians are self-serving and corrupt.”</i></p> <p><u>Ambivalent claims in the discursive subframe:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PARTIES: Praise for old left/criticism of the (new) Left or the Left in general/’parties are all the same’ - ECONOMY: Critique of capitalism and free trade/favor economic protectionism/favor deregulation and lower taxes/criticise trade unionism <p>Empirical Measurement: Claims can be empirically analysed by the range of meanings assigned to its component concepts, internal consistency, radicalness, ideological connection, frequency and prominence (salience).</p> <p>Sources: Manifestos, speeches, interviews, public debates, posters, billboards, political ads and commercials, and so on.</p> <p>Independent Variable</p> <p><u>Exogenous conditions of possibility</u></p> <p>Rise and diffusion populism claims is causally linked to a) societal and cultural change; b) institutional conditions; c) party system patterns d) the main trends in public opinion and e) the (changing) pattern in media structure...</p> <p><u>Endogenous conditions of possibility</u></p> <p><u>1) Individual (actor-related) dimension</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Innate characteristics of the populist actor(s) (charisma, rhetorical ability, leadership ability) - Economic, cultural, social capital (that can be converted to political capital) - Credibility of the claims maker as a change agent in the given context. <p><u>2) Collective dimension</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organizational-networking basis - Level of centralization/control over the organization/formation supporting the populist actor - Cohesiveness of the formation supporting the populist actor - Financial-activist and other resources of the formation supporting the populist actor
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CHAPTER 6:

MEASURING POPULISM: A REVIEW OF CURRENT APPROACHES¹

Teun Pauwels

Introduction

Despite the increased interest in populism, it has taken a long time for systematic measurements of populism to be conducted. This can probably be explained largely by the fact that there has been little agreement on the definition of populism, which seems a prerequisite for measurement. Furthermore, systematic measurements of populism for a wide range of actors is a labour-intensive task. However, in recent years there has been more agreement on the core elements of populism—mostly conceptualised as a ‘thin-centred ideology’ or discourse drawing on the alleged opposition between the ‘pure’ people and the ‘corrupt’ elite—which has facilitated attempts at measuring it. This has resulted in some large scale attempts to measure populism across time and space. The results of these attempts are interesting in themselves and will be briefly reviewed in this chapter. Moreover, these measurements are now also resulting in practical applications. After all, the simple question of whether a party can be labelled as populist is ultimately not the most interesting one but it seems a necessary starting point from which to address several other more relevant research questions concerning populism.

Challenges and Methods

Definitions, Data, Dimensions

Before exploring different methods to measure populism, we need to discuss some challenges that are relevant for any researcher who undertakes this task. These include definition, sources and operationalisation. First, it is clear that how populism is defined has an impact on how it can be measured. When populism is defined as an ideology or discourse, an analyst will traditionally rely on party manifestos or other party documents (speeches, party membership magazines, content on the website) to measure it. If populism is defined as a style, other sources might be preferred. Moffitt and Tormey (2014), for instance, conceive populism as a political style in which aesthetic and performative elements play a prominent role. As non-verbal aspects become important, party literature seems insufficient to measure populism. Jagers and Walgrave (2007), who also define populism as a political style, draw on party broadcasts to explore how politicians present themselves in the media, although their measurement does not differ fundamentally from other types of content analyses.

¹ I would like to thank Kirk Hawkins for allowing me to use his data on the holistic grading of German parties and for his feedback on an earlier draft of this chapter. Furthermore, I would like to thank Vanessa Marent and Reinhard Heinisch for helping me translate the dictionary terms into German.

Since most definitions of populism agree that a divide between the ‘pure people’ and the ‘corrupt elite’ is the most important element of populism, many measurements make use of two separate dimensions: they assess whether the people are seen as a homogeneous and virtuous group, on the one hand, and the elite as a homogeneous and ‘corrupt’ group, on the other. However, some scholars argue that populists always exclude ‘dangerous others’, such as intellectuals, immigrants or other groups depending on the context (Albertazzi and McDonnell 2007). In this case, ‘exclusionism’ might be included as a separate dimension when operationalising populism. This strategy was followed by Jagers and Walgrave (2007) but since they measured exclusionism as a separate dimension, one can still calculate the degree of populism with or without exclusionism.

The definition of populism might impact on the selection of the sources, as we have just seen. However, even with a similar definition, different sources may be selected. In general, it seems that although party manifestos are easy to access and represent relatively similar sources across different contexts, they are less suitable for expressing populism. Pauwels (2011) found that party membership magazines contained more manifestations of populism when compared with manifestos. This might be explained by May’s (1973) law of curvilinear disparity, which suggests that the rank and file members of a political party tend to be more ideological than both the leadership of that party and its voters. Therefore, membership magazines might reveal ‘radical views’ or, as Mudde (2000) puts it, the ‘true nature’ of a party more than other sources. Similarly, Hawkins and Castanho Silva (2016) found that speeches contained on average more populism compared to party manifestos and explain this by the fact that formal party documents for elite consumption are soberer in tone.

Classification by Means of Minimal Definition

Researchers using a minimal definition of populism can, quite easily, classify parties or leaders according to the criteria set out in the definition. Mudde’s (2004: 543) definition, for instance, provides strict guidelines in classifying a party as populist or not. A party can be labelled populist if (1) the people are depicted as a homogeneous and pure entity, (2) the elite as a homogeneous and corrupt entity, (3) the people and the elite as two antagonistic groups, and (4) measures in favour of returning power to the people are advocated (for example, direct democracy). Mudde (2007) uses this definition to classify a large number of populist parties in both Western and Eastern Europe. He also distinguishes between populist radical right, neo-liberal populist and social populist parties.

A minimal definition suits the classical categorisation approach and has at least three advantages. First, minimal definitions enable a clear and dichotomous categorisation. Sartori (1970) pointed out how a taxonomical ‘either-or’ approach has important value and warns us about the dangers of a less conceptually grounded ‘more-or-less’ thinking. Second, this approach leaves a lot of room for the researcher to interpret the party literature to come to a conclusion. A complex concept such as populism cannot always be grasped easily by methods of content analysis because of their rigidity. Finally, minimal definitions can be specific enough though not too contextualised to classify a large number of parties in cross-national research (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012). Nonetheless, there are also some drawbacks when using minimal definitions to identify populist parties in practice.

A first practical problem is that language restrictions make it difficult for a single researcher to investigate party ideology in many countries. Another problem is related to the frequency and the level of a party's populist expression that are needed to consider it populist. Is it enough when one finds one interview in which a party leader argues that the political system is corrupt, or do we need multiple examples? Third, the condition that the people and the elite have to be homogeneous groups is rather vague and leaves room for interpretation. Some borderline cases might fall in between two categories, and with relatively vague criteria, the classification might be contested. Finally, when applied by a single researcher, minimal definitions do not enable a reliability check.

Content Analysis

A second method to measure populism is based on content analysis: the systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics (Neuendorf 2002). First, the researcher constructs a codebook in which populism is operationalised according to one or more dimensions. Next, extensively trained coders analyse documents in line with the codebook. Finally, one can calculate the percentage of paragraphs or sentences that are populist in different party documents. A content analysis is different from the Sartorian approach since it sees populism as a matter of degree.

One of the first content analyses of populism was conducted by Jagers and Walgrave (2007), who developed a coding scheme to measure 'thin' (referring to the people) and 'thick' (against politics, the state, the media and immigrants) populism among (Flemish) Belgian parties, drawing on political party broadcasts. The content analysis revealed that the Flemish Interest (VB) was by far the most populist of all the parties examined, thereby confirming earlier qualitative assessments. While this study constituted a breakthrough in measuring populism, it was limited to one country, and issues of reliability and validity were not explicitly dealt with. It is also questionable whether referring to the people is enough to speak of (thin) populism.

Another seminal study was published by Hawkins (2009), in which populism was measured by means of holistic grading of speeches by chief executives. The author devised a rubric that captures the core elements of populist discourse and then recruited and trained native speakers to analyse speeches according to the rubric. The unit of analysis is the entire speech, which could be ranked along a two-point scale (non-populist; mixed; populist). This strategy enabled the author to measure the degree of populism among executives in an impressive number of mainly Latin American countries. Cases that have often been labelled populist, such as the Latin American political leaders Hugo Chávez or Evo Morales, were ranked high on Hawkins's measurement scale, and reliability statistics were mostly satisfactory. This approach profits from some of the advantages of the classification approach, such as the scoring of entire documents according to a clear and concise operationalisation, while allowing coders ample room for interpretation. The method was later applied to many more countries in Europe and the Americas and drew on election manifestos in addition to speeches to create one of the most comprehensive datasets to date (Hawkins and Castanho Silva 2016).

Other content analyses include Rooduijn and Pauwels (2011) and Rooduijn et al. (2014), in which the researchers used party manifestos to gauge populism in different European countries. Each paragraph of these party manifestos has been coded along two dimensions (empha-

sis on the people and anti-elitism). The measurements were typically reliable and their validity also seemed satisfactory since usual suspects, such as the Party for Freedom (PVV) in the Netherlands or the British National Party (BNP) in the United Kingdom scored among the highest in terms of populism according to the analysis. Lately, these types of content analyses have become increasingly popular (for example, Bernhard et al. 2015; Reungoat 2010; Franzmann 2016).

The main advantage of a content analysis is that the same source—for instance, a party manifesto—is analysed systematically by different coders which allows for reliability testing. Instead of only analysing ‘usual suspects’, one can empirically test to what extent all parties display populism in their documents. A content analysis also provides a more detailed score instead of the dichotomous outcome when using a minimal definition. However, content analyses are not without problems either. First, it is very important that coders understand the codebook well and interpret texts correctly. This is not evident given the complex nature of populism. Second, content analyses tend to be more rigid: one can encounter populism in one paragraph, while another paragraph might contain very elitist language. Often, only the percentage of populist paragraphs or sentences is calculated without taking other elements into account which might lead to invalid conclusions. However, this should not necessarily be the case. Third, scanning entire manifestos or speeches is a very resource-intensive task, while populism is often relatively scarce in these documents.

Computerised Content Analysis

A computerised content analysis is a variant of the classical content analysis, but the main difference is that texts are no longer interpreted by human coders. Instead, a computer carries out the analysis by means of counting the percentage of words that match an a priori or a posteriori defined dictionary (Laver and Garry 2000; Pennings 2011). Such a method is less time-consuming and allows for large bodies of text to be analysed. In an era of increasing availability of digital information, this creates fascinating possibilities. The main drawback of a computerised content analysis is that when it is applied strictly, no interpretation is possible because the work is done by a computer, which might undermine validity. In other words, the method might produce too many false results with the result that a researcher then is no longer measuring what he or she intended to measure (for example, the Flemish socialists, as discussed below). This problem is prominent given the complexity of a concept such as populism. Therefore, it is advisable to validate the dictionary manually to remove false positive cases (for example, while a computer detects a term as populist, a manual check reveals that the word is in fact not meant in a populist way). Moreover, the construction of a dictionary might be contested. A different dictionary will generate different results, and particularly when documents contain few words, these differences can be substantial.

Pauwels (2011; 2014) measured the degree of populism by means of a computerised content analysis in Belgium, Germany and The Netherlands. Based on theoretical reasoning and using some of the early party literature of the VB as an inspiration, a ‘populist dictionary’ was designed in an attempt to identify populist parties, examining both externally (manifestos) and internally (membership magazines) oriented party literature. By comparing the results with classical content analyses on the same cases, the validity of the method was tested. Most of the

time, the computerised content analysis produced the highest scores for parties that were also most populist according to human coding. However, the computerised method discriminated much less between populist parties and other parties, while also yielding a false positive result (the Flemish socialist party scored very highly in a particular year although it has never been considered populist by others). Bonikowski and Gidron (2016a) also drew on a dictionary approach to analyse populist claims by politicians and parties in the European Parliament (1999–2004). To tackle validity problems, they gradually adapted the dictionary by iterative rounds of validation in which they manually analysed whether the dictionary words were meant in a populist way. Only words that had an accuracy of more than 50 per cent were retained.

Expert Survey

The use of expert surveys has been well established in political science, mostly to determine the ideological positions of political actors (Benoit and Laver 2006). Expert surveys provide information on some objective or subjective state of the world based on a review by people with comprehensive or authoritative knowledge on the subject (Wiesehomeier 2016). Typically, this is done by asking multiple experts to position parties on a priori or a posteriori determined dimensions. In general, expert surveys are seen as an economical way to obtain information as they can be set up anytime, do not require party manifestos and may cover a large set of parties and countries if experts are available. Particularly in unstable party systems with few party documents available, expert judgments might be useful. At the same time, there are concerns about the validity of such surveys (Steenbergen and Marks 2007).

Owing to the recent interest in populism and its contested nature, populism has not been included explicitly in existing large-scale expert surveys. However, Van Kessel (2015) has relied on experts for the identification of populist parties in Europe, which has also enabled him to ask for some other characteristics, such as the credibility of these parties. Experts were asked to what extent parties could be labelled populist according to three criteria (delineate an exclusive community of ‘ordinary people’; appeal to the ‘ordinary people’; fundamental hostility towards the establishment). This shows that an expert judgement is very similar to a classification by means of minimal definition with the advantage that multiple experts are involved, which allows for reliability testing and solves the problem of language restrictions. Wiesehomeier (2016) similarly conducted two waves of expert surveys, applying two different approaches in order to measure populism in Argentina and Brazil. Both approaches showed considerable overlap in identifying populists, while future research will allow her to validate the method further. The main problem with expert surveys is that the number of country experts on populism is relatively limited, and it is not always clear whether they have actually read the party literature of those parties of which one is asked to make a judgement. Therefore, there is a risk that expert surveys reinforce ‘received wisdom’ instead of making judgements based on original empirical research.

Table 6.1 provides an overview of the different possible methods of measuring populism. It shows that each of them has both strengths and weaknesses.

Table 6.1: Overview of the Different Methods of Measuring Populism

	Classification through minimal definition	Content analysis	Computerised content analysis	Expert survey
<i>How does it work?</i>	Analysing whether a party matches all minimal criteria to be labelled as populist	Human coders explore for each (subunit in the) party manifesto to what extent it corresponds with the criteria in the codebook	A computer calculates the percentage of words that match the 'populist' dictionary.	Experts are asked to position parties on a scale of populism
<i>Logic</i>	Either populist or not (dichotomy)	More or less populist (degree)	More or less populist (degree)	Could be either a dichotomy or matter of degree
<i>Unit of analysis</i>	Party literature, interviews, etc.	Election manifesto	Election manifesto and other written (digital) sources	Unclear
<i>Unit of measurement</i>	Na	Paragraph (Rooduijn 2009) or entire document (Hawkins 2009)	Word (Pauwels, 2011)	Unclear
<i>Strengths</i>	Leaves room for inter- pretation to the researcher Enables classification Less time consuming	Interpretation by coders Allows for reliability testing Systematic	Not time consuming Allows for analyzing many texts Systematic and reliable	Not time consuming Allows for reliability testing
<i>Weaknesses</i>	Leaves room for discussion (borderline cases) Less systematic (selective evidence)	Potential subjectivity of coders Potentially unreliable Time consuming	The creation of a dictionary is not straightforward Lack of validity (no interpretation)	Unclear on the basis of what evidence expert judgements are made

A Measurement of Populism among Parties in Germany

To demonstrate how different measurement techniques work and to evaluate their outcomes in terms of strengths and weaknesses, this section will focus on measuring populism among German parties. I will draw on a qualitative classification, a classical content analysis (holistic grading) and a computerised content analysis with and without a manual check. Except for the qualitative classification, the other methods use party manifestos of the major German parties between 2002 and 2013 as the unit of analysis. For the qualitative classification I relied on party literature and academic literature on the most important cases to assess whether a party matches the minimal definition of populism as provided by Mudde (2007). The results of the holistic grading have been provided by Kirk Hawkins and his research team. As described above, different coders read the entire documents and ranked them on a two-point scale, after which an average score was produced. The computerised method scanned the proportion of words in each manifesto that matched a populist dictionary including words such as elite*, corrupt*, propaganda*, and others. Finally, I manually checked each positive hit and assessed whether the term was actually meant in a populist way by drawing on a short codebook. More details on operationalisation and the dictionary can be found in the appendix.

The results of the different measurements are presented in Table 6.2 with the three highest scores for each method depicted in bold. What appears from this is that mainstream parties such as the Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU), the Free Democratic Party (FDP), and the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) mostly score very low on populism. Interestingly, the Alternative for Germany (AfD) also scores zero on each populism measurement, while this party has often been labelled as (right-wing) populist in the press. For the Party of Democratic Socialism, which later transformed into The Left (PDS-DL), The Greens, the National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD) and the Pirate Party some methods produce high scores for populism while others do not. These cases will be discussed in more detail below as they also show the strengths and weaknesses of each method.

According to the computerised analysis, The Greens score relatively high on populism (particularly in 2002), yet the other methods do not consider this party to be populist. The reason for this is that two words in the populist dictionary appeared very frequently in the manifestos of The Greens, namely monopoly and corruption. However, the term monopoly related in almost all cases to the energy market and was not meant in a populist way, meaning this is a 'false positive' case of populism. In 2009, the party argued that power should be transferred from corporations to the consumers of energy, which could perhaps be seen as a manifestation of populism, although this is a difficult call. Corruption is another important topic for the Green Party. It calls for a registration system for interest groups, more transparency in party finances and argues that 'corruption distorts the democratic process'. However, The Greens never depict the political elite as a homogeneous group that is corrupt. Hence, we can conclude that the computerised content analysis is susceptible to producing false positive cases if no manual check is included. A similar analysis can be made for the Pirate Party, which also focuses very much on the breakdown of monopolies and thinks corruption is an important issue, but this does not mean that the party is necessarily populist after a manual check.

Table 6.2: Four Measurements of Populism among German Parties (2002-2013)

Party	Year	Qualitative classification	Holistic grading	Computerised CA	Computerised CA with manual check
CDU	2002	0	0.3	0.00014	0.00000
	2005	0	0.1	0.00017	0.00000
	2009	0	0	0.00004	0.00000
	2013	0	0	0.00005	0.00000
FDP	2002	0	0.3	0.00025	0.00000
	2005	0	0.2	0.00013	0.00000
	2009	0	0.2	0.00031	0.00000
	2013	0	0	0.00021	0.00000
SPD	2002	0	0.2	0.00046	0.00000
	2005	0	0.2	0.00000	0.00000
	2009	0	0.1	0.00022	0.00000
	2013	0	0	0.00009	0.00000
The Left	2002	0	0.3	0.00036	0.00007
	2005	0	0.3	0.00027	0.00027
	2009	1	0.4	0.00036	0.00026
	2013	1	1.3	0.00022	0.00008
The Greens	2002	0	NA	0.00081	0.00000
	2005	0	NA	0.00047	0.00000
	2009	0	NA	0.00034	0.00002
	2013	0	0.2	0.00025	0.00000
NPD	2009	0	1.4	0.00087	0.00000
	2013	0	1.4	0.00029	0.00010
AfD	2013	0	0	0.00000	0.00000
Pirate Party	2013	0	NA	0.00094	0.00000

The NPD is an interesting case in that it is considered populist according to holistic grading and the computerised content analysis but not by the others. After a manual check of the words that appeared in the dictionary, it appeared that they were not used in a populist way, with one exception in the 2013 manifesto. However, this does not mean that the manifesto does not contain populism. A further manual analysis shows that some elements can be considered populist, yet the words that have been used were not in the dictionary. One could call this a type II error or false negative. However, experts on populism in Germany usually do not consider the NPD a populist party. The reason for this is that they consider the NPD to be an extremist neo-Nazi party that rejects parliamentary democracy (Mudde 2000; Carter 2005). This would make the party non-populist as populist parties are formally democratic. Nonetheless, as explained above, party manifestos do not always reveal a party's 'true nature' because they are addressed to the public at large. Since extremist viewpoints are generally seen as harmful to the electoral potential of a party, they might not make it into the official manifesto. This problem might be even more relevant in Germany, where the German Federal Office for

the Protection of the Constitution closely monitors whether parties espouse extremist views which might result in a party ban.

The party that is most consistently considered populist is the PDS-DL. While it is very difficult to judge a very diverse party that also went through an important transformation, different experts have labelled the party as populist, particularly after 2009 when it campaigned under the name The Left. Hough and Koss (2009: 78) claim that “[t]he LP [Left Party] is, in this sense, populist par excellence—it regularly talks in the language of elites betraying the population at large, and it is frequently disdainful of the wider political process.” Holistic grading also gives DL scores above 0.2, with an exceptionally high score for 2013. The computerised analysis does not provide similarly high scores for DL, but after a manual check, it appears that the words flagged as populist by the dictionary were also meant in a populist sense. The party refers, for instance, to referendums as a means of showing the gap between ruling politicians on the one hand and citizens on the other. Similarly to The Greens, DL wants to break up commercial monopolies and to place energy resources into the hands of the people.

Finally, as mentioned, the AfD does not appear to be a populist party. An in-depth study by Arzheimer (2015) exploring the manifesto and web content of the AfD comes to a similar conclusion. On the other hand, we must acknowledge that content analyses are static assessments of one moment in time which might lag behind reality. In 2015 Frauke Petry took over the leadership of the AfD and pushed the party in a more openly right-wing populist direction. Furthermore, it might also have been a deliberate strategy to hide the populist discourse in official party documents, as was suggested by a recent study (Franzmann 2016).

Lessons from Studies Measuring Populism

Measuring populism has recently become increasingly popular. In this section, I will review what can be learned from these large-scale analyses.

Populism is More Prevalent in Latin America Compared to Western Europe

One of the few measurements of populism across different regions revealed that populist discourse can be found more in Latin America than in Europe (Hawkins and Castanho Silva 2016). Analysing speeches and the party manifestos of 136 parties in 26 countries, Hawkins and Castanho Silva (2016) found that particularly in Venezuela, Bolivia and Ecuador populism was found frequently while also resonating among the electorates (aggregate country populism scores were constructed by multiplying each party’s populism score and its vote share). Within Western Europe Hawkins and Castanho Silva (2016) found high populism scores for Switzerland, Italy and Spain. Bonikowski and Gidron (2016a) found high scores for populism in Greece, France and Denmark within Europe.

Populism can be Found More at the Fringes of the Party System

Given the systematic nature of content analyses, these studies can sometimes reveal findings that go against common wisdom. While in Western Europe populism has been traditionally associated with (radical) right-wing parties, Rooduijn and Akkerman (2015) show that radical parties on *both* the left and the right are inclined to employ a populist discourse by drawing on an analysis of 32 parties in five Western European countries (Rooduijn and Akkerman 2015). The study suggests that the contemporary radical left in Western Europe is generally populist. Bonikowski and Gidron (2016a) come to a similar conclusion while studying populism in the European Parliament. They find that populism is most prevalent on the radical left and right of the ideological spectrum. “Of the five parties that most frequently make use of populism, two are radical-left (the Communist Party of Greece and the French Lutte Ouvriere) and three are paradigmatic examples of radical rightwing parties (the French National Front, the UK Independence Party, and the Belgian Flemish Block)” (Bonikowski and Gidron 2016a: 16–17).

Populism Over Time: The Impact of Issues, Government or Opposition and Campaigning

Bernhard, Kriesi, and Weber (2015) content-analysed the discourse of the Swiss People’s Party (SVP) from 2003 to 2013, drawing on a range of different party documents. This analysis revealed that the level of populism depends on different contextual variables. First, populism appears more in texts dealing with cultural issues, such as European integration, immigration and related institutional issues. This finding seems to be context dependent, however, since the SVP is a populist radical right party. In contrast, Bonikowski and Gidron (2016b) found that when the US Democrats made populist claims, this was mostly related to economic issues, targeting business elites.

Second, Bernhard et al. (2015) found that the SVP was more populist when in opposition compared with their time in office. Bonikowski and Gidron (2016a) also found that incumbent parties at the national level made less use of populist claims in the EP. There are exceptions, however, such as the Lega Nord, which did not turn less populist once in government (see also Bobba and McDonnell 2016). In general, it seems that the probability of a candidate’s reliance on populism is proportional to his or her distance from power, which suggests that populism is an important strategic tool for political challengers (Bonikowski and Gidron 2016b).

Finally, Bernhard et al. (2015) found that the SVP made more populist claims during the election campaign than when there was no campaigning. An even higher level of populism was found when the SVP launched referendums or initiatives on its own or when it deposited signatures for such measures. Bonikowski and Gidron (2016b) found that in US presidential elections, populism was highest in the three months before the elections and then decreased when election day was approaching. A potential explanation for this is that parties first target the more ideological party base and then the more moderate general public.

Conclusion and Discussion

This chapter began by highlighting the importance of the definition, sources and operationalisation of populism as these all have an important impact on how it can be measured. In a second step, the main methods of measuring populism were discussed. Each of these techniques have their strengths and weaknesses, although it seems that some of them produce more valid results than others. While expert surveys and qualitative classifications certainly have their merits, they risk reinforcing existing knowledge (for example, identifying usual suspects) without empirical verification. It is questionable whether experts will actually read the party literature of all parties in a given party system and verify whether populism is present or not. In theory, a qualitative classification could be based on a thoughtful reading of party literature, but here too we should be sceptical about how feasible it is for a single researcher to do this for many parties across different countries. When it comes to computerised content analysis without human interpretation, it seems that it produces too many random errors (false positives or false negatives) to be considered a reliable and valid method of measuring populism. Therefore, a content analysis, if designed and carried out well, seems to be the most appropriate way to measure populism systematically across time and space. The downside of a content analysis is that it is very resource hungry, and therefore a computerised content analysis complemented with human interpretation might also be an interesting way to explore populism in large bodies of texts.

However, large-scale content analyses of manifestos are not without their problems either. To mention only one, we can challenge the choice of party manifestos as the unit of analysis. In general, they lend themselves less to populism given their rather technocratic nature. As we have seen in the German case (NPD, AfD), it might also be possible that some parties shun extremism or populism in manifestos for strategic reasons. Therefore, it is necessary to complement large-scale content analyses with qualitative research (for example, Vossen 2011). Drawing on multiple sources and studying them in depth can reveal interesting details about the nature and extent of populism, thereby possibly nuancing findings from more rigid content analyses. In general, it is of added value to complement different methods and sources to increase the validity of populism measurements.

As consistent measurements of populism are becoming increasingly available, researchers can now start to tackle several more substantive questions. For instance, what factors explain high levels of populism (both in terms of discourse and electoral strength) in different regions? And what are the consequences of a populist upsurge for the quality of democracy? These and important related questions can be answered in more detail once a solid and reliable data set on the degree of populism is established and maintained.

Appendix

Holistic Grading

The full description of the holistic grading method can be found elsewhere (Hawkins 2009). It essentially boils down to coders being trained to grade an entire document (in this case, manifestos) based on the elements of the concept of populism and a set of anchor texts defined as

examples of the lowest, intermediate and highest boundaries. These three categories (lowest, intermediate and highest) are defined as followed:

- 0: A document in this category uses few if any populist elements. Note that even if a manifesto expresses a Manichaeian worldview, it is not considered populist if it lacks some notion of a popular will.
- 1: A document in this category includes strong, clearly populist elements but either does not use them consistently or tempers them by including non-populist elements. Thus, the discourse may have a romanticised notion of the people and the idea of a unified popular will (indeed, it must in order to be considered populist), but it avoids bellicose language or references to cosmic proportions or any particular enemy.
- 2: A document in this category is extremely populist and comes very close to the ideal populist discourse. In particular, the speech expresses all or nearly all of the elements of ideal populist discourse, and has few elements that would be considered non-populist.

Because graders in earlier studies reported that it was often difficult to choose between the blunt categories, they could also give decimal scores and were told that 0.5 rounds up to a categorical 1, and 1.5 rounds up to a categorical 2, so they should consider the qualitative difference between the categories when assigning decimal points.

Computerised content analysis

Computerised content analysis gives the percentage of words in a party manifesto that matches a ‘populist dictionary’, which is a list of words that indicates instances of populism. The dictionary for this chapter has been based on that of Pauwels (2011) and Bonikowski and Gidron (2016a). The following terms were included in the dictionary, with those in bold being actually found in the German manifestos:

Gier*; Grosskonzern*; Imerialismus*; **Imperialistisch***; Internationalismus*; Kapitalisten*; Lakai*; **Monopol***; Oligarch*; Oligarchie*; Plutokratie*; abgehoben*; anti-basisdemokratisch*; anti-demokratisch*; antibasisdemokratisch*; **antidemokratisch***; aritsokrat*; aufhals*; **aufzwing***; **ausbeuter***; **autokrati***; **elite***; elitär*; eurokraten*; eurokratie*; geldadel*; **herrschend***; internationalistisch*; kooptier*; **korrupt***; kumpanen*; **plünder***; **propagand***; **technokrat***; ungewählt*; unterjochen*

For the computerised analysis with a manual check, I read each paragraph in which a ‘populist’ term appeared and then coded it as populist if it referred to people centrism or anti-elitism as defined below. Then, I divided the number of populist words (manually validated) by the total number of words.

- People centrism: The people are depicted in a positive manner and/or as a collective entity (the homogeneous people). Just referring to the people is not sufficient to be coded as people centrism.
- Anti-elitism: The elite is depicted in a negative manner and as a collective entity. Criticism on individual politicians or the executive is not sufficient to be coded as anti-elitism. Criticism on the political regime and conspiracy theories are also coded as anti-elitism.

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CHAPTER 7:

POPULISM IN COMMUNICATIONS PERSPECTIVE:

CONCEPTS, ISSUES, EVIDENCE

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Introduction¹: Overall Context

In the wave of populism that is currently sweeping Europe, the US and the non-Western world, the media are playing an unprecedented and crucial role in its success. Modern populism is facilitated by conditions of what Keane (2013: 1) calls “a revolutionary age of communicative abundance ... [that is] structured by a new world system of overlapping and interlinked media devices”. Fundamental changes to media regulation coupled with innovations in media technologies, not least the internet, not only mean that such technologies have become embedded in all aspects of everyday life. They have also opened up a profusion of communicative spaces for a variety of political actors and citizens. At the same time, the traditional party system is in decline, or perhaps renewing itself, according to Chadwick and Stromer-Galley (2016). Many citizens are increasingly disillusioned with the lack of authenticity in mainstream politics and seek out marginal political voices. Worldwide, populists have been able to capitalise on these conditions.

In media and communication studies, the changing media environment has created at least two concurrent preoccupations. First, the increasing intrusion and power of the traditional mass media – chiefly television, radio and the press – in relation to politics have fostered a focus on the media’s ability to define reality, to naturalise ideology and on this process of ‘constructing’ meaning. Second, developments in new media technologies—especially the internet and social media platforms—have fomented a questioning of the way online technologies privilege previously powerless actors, as well as how such technologies increasingly filter content so that users are largely exposed to information that reinforces existing views. Both areas of study are concerned with changing aspects of the otherwise well-established process of ‘mediation’ whereby the media substantively intervene in the problematic process of communicating ‘reality’. And both areas involve the institutions of the mass media, their technologies and their audiences (Silverstone 2005: 189).

To a political communicator who wants to get a message across to a particular audience, the process of mediation is fraught with problems and risks. The message may be selectively simplified, distorted, misinterpreted, contradicted, passed on to unintended audiences or simply ignored at any number of stages in the process. As a result, political institutions are increasingly adapting their operation to the norms and practices of the media to maximise their chances of success (Strömbäck and Esser 2014); yet this practice has in itself become the subject of media scrutiny, and the cycle of mutual influence between the media and politics is serving to en-

¹ I am indebted to Jay Blumler, Katrin Voltmer and Katy Parry for their insightful comments on an earlier draft.

gender mistrust about the authenticity of politicians (Coleman 2011). A key position in the emerging body of literature on populism's relationship to the media maintains that recent changes in media systems and technologies, and in the media's relationship to politics, may be contributing to populist success (Aalberg et al. 2016). Populists, it is argued, have a certain affinity with the media despite their well-known antipathy towards the mass media and media-tion in general. This literature, however, still largely relies on single cases and lacks a comprehensive theoretical understanding of the issues that would place it in the context of broader changes in the media environment. What is it about populism, then, that enables it to negotiate the treacherous process of mediation so successfully and to retain an aura of authenticity where mainstream parties often fail?

This paper takes a communication-centred approach to political populism as its starting point. After briefly considering the definitional debate, it outlines this perspective. It then goes on to discuss one of the most influential recent general theories in communication studies, mediation, as a framework for conceptualising the link between populism and the media. Finally, it inspects a substantial body of research literature for its conceptual abundance, divergences of approach and gaps needing attention. The review maps the literature to the aforementioned sites of mediation – institutions, technologies and audiences – to specifically consider how close we are to answering the question of how populists negotiate the process of mediation.

A Communications Approach to Populism

Approaching populism from a communications perspective implies a shift in focus from *what populism is* to *what it does* and *how it does it*. In other words, the concern is less with issues of definition and structure and more with questions of process and practice. Such an approach investigates how populist ideology attempts to become naturalised, the role the media play in this, the extent to which the undertaking succeeds and the conditions under which it does so. This chapter will only briefly engage with the issue of defining populism (for a detailed discussion, see Heinisch and Mazzoleni in this volume). Instead, it will concentrate on that more particular aspect of populism – its relationship to the media and, more specifically, the process of mediating populism.

Defining Populism

Given the concept's contested nature, the definitional problem nevertheless has to be considered. The difficulty is partly exacerbated by the fact that most empirical studies are confined to regional pockets and subtypes of populism, such as radical right-wing populists in Europe (for example, Akkerman 2011; Mudde 2007; Rooduijn 2014a; Wodak et al. 2013) or progressive populists in Latin America (for example, De la Torre 2010; Waisbord 2012). This specific focus of much recent scholarship has contributed to further confusion as the concept becomes entangled with local cultural and political factors. In the following, I adopt Mudde's definition of populism as,

an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, 'the pure people' versus 'the corrupt elite', and which argues that po-

litics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people.² (Mudde 2004: 543)

Mudde uses the concept of ideology in its ‘thin’ sense. Rather than constituting a full or coherent set of ideas that form a complete worldview, a thin ideology is “a loose complex of attitudes” (Krämer 2014: 44). It can attach itself to a range of peripheral elements or ‘host ideologies’ that serve to fill in the ideology and give it situational form. This helps to explain the contextual nature of populism, its historical and situational contingency, as well as the enduring strength of its core concepts – the people, the elite and the general will. As Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2013: 498–9) put it, the thin ideology of populism is “a kind of mental map through which individuals analyse and comprehend political reality”. The use of a minimal definition, such as Mudde’s, opens up the possibility of most different comparative studies, of which there have been few so far in populism literature. Indeed, only a handful of interregional, comparative studies have been undertaken (see, for example, De la Torre 2014; Hawkins 2010; Mazzoleni et al. 2003; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012).

Communicating Populism

Approaching populism from a communications perspective shifts the focus from what constitutes the thin ideology of populism to how it is communicated. This inevitably involves considerations of style as well as ideology. A brief return to a controversy in the literature on definition may illuminate the relationship between these two categories: Where some scholars see definitions of populism as an ideology and a style³ as mutually exclusive, others, implicitly or explicitly, build ideological elements into stylistic definitions (Jagers and Walgrave 2007; Moffitt 2016). In any case, until very recently there has not been much consideration of what is meant by the concept of style. Moffitt (2016: 38) provides the exception and defines political style as “the repertoires of embodied, symbolically mediated performance made to audiences that are used to create and navigate the fields of power that comprise the political, stretching from the domain of government through to everyday life”. Performance here involves a process of symbolic meaning-formation (Silverstone 1999: chap. 8); that is, it not only communicates ideology, it also contributes to its meaning. Empirically, the core characteristics of populism clearly manifest themselves in both style and ideological expression, in form and content, in the way that a message is communicated and in the meaning of the message itself: ideology cannot be communicated without style. Moreover, style in and of itself contributes to the formation of meaning; it is not a neutral vehicle in the transmission of the ideological message. It socially constructs, actively and artfully performs and, thereby, also transforms the ideological message in the process of communication.

The importance of style in the contemporary media-centric political communication landscape (Corner and Pels 2003) directs attention to the style of populist political communication. Yet rather than using style as the definitional category, it can equally be seen as the process

2 Mudde’s definition, and especially its status as a ‘thin’ ideology, is not seen as an acceptable definition by everyone but does seem to express the essence of the key elements of the concept particularly well.

3 Other approaches include the categorisation of populism as a discourse, a strategy and a political logic. All approaches, however, although using different classifications, largely hone in on the same core elements—populists identify *the people* as a homogeneous mass in possession of a *general will*, who are pitched in opposition to an unrepresentative *elite* and, in some cases, to a threatening *‘other’*.

through which populists communicate their ideology to the people. Thus, we can define populism as an ideology and still pay attention to the political style through which it communicates. In a communications approach, style and ideology are inextricably intertwined, even if we may keep them analytically distinct. Rather than precluding us from considering populist style, a communications approach thus does not so much disentangle the stylistic and ideological perspectives on populism but rather explains why both camps have resulted in almost identical definitions and what part each of these dimensions plays in the manifestation of populist communication. Moreover, style highlights the importance of the medium and of mediation more generally. Different media technologies invite different styles; as do different institutional contexts, audiences and contexts of reception, all of which in turn shape meaning. These aspects all form part of the process of mediation (Silverstone 2005). The following section discusses the concept of mediation as a theoretical framework for reviewing the literature on the media's relationship to populism.

Mediation

In everyday English, 'mediation' means getting in between, negotiating or resolving disputes, and generating mutual understanding and agreement instead of conflict. However, the term has been 'repurposed' in academic English, and in the field of media and communication studies, it now points to a much more problematic process (Livingstone 2009: 4–5). Here, the term is often concerned with questions of the media's power to shape representations of 'reality'. In this use, mediation no longer indicates a process of clarification. Rather, it denotes a more substantive intervention where what is being dealt with is itself changed by that intervention, and this includes how 'reality'—in our case, political reality—is depicted and understood. In the words of Hepp and Krotz (2014: 3), "communication has to be grasped as a process of mediating meaning construction".

The concept of mediatisation goes further by emphasising change over time, denoting an increase in mediation that is taking place with new developments in and of the media (Hepp and Krotz 2014: 3; Livingstone 2009: 7; Strömbäck 2008). In the field of political communication, mediatisation denotes a process whereby the media become more and more of a political actor in their own right, and the 'logic' of the media—understood as the norms and routines that govern the media's operations (Altheide and Snow 1979)—is adopted by, and thereby transforms, political institutions (Strömbäck 2008; Strömbäck and Esser 2014). Mediatisation is thus "much more specific [than mediation] in analysing the role of various media in the further process of socio-cultural change. However, it has to be linked to an analysis of communication as symbolic interaction", that is, of communication as mediation (Hepp and Krotz 2014: 3–4).

Analysis of the process of mediation is thus key to determining how the relationship between 'reality' and naturalised ideology is changing as part of the process of mediatisation. In a discussion of a metatheoretical comparative strategy employed in a seminal election study, Swanson (1992: 29) outlines how the media's depiction of reality may be broken down into three distinct aspects, which are here adopted with reference to the overall process of mediation:

‘objective’ political reality (the actual events and conditions that are the referents of journalists’ and politicians’ representations in campaign messages); ‘constructed’ political reality (the content of the representations offered by journalists and political leaders); and ‘subjective’ political reality (citizens’ perceptions of political reality, including political attitudes, beliefs, impressions of political leaders, and so on).

These areas of analysis in turn direct attention to the relationships between them, which are open to investigation through different theoretical approaches and objects of study. For example, the relationship between objective and constructed political reality may be investigated from an institutionalist or a materialist perspective (these are elaborated in the following sections), depending on whether the media as an institution or as technology is conceived as the more important factor in constructing reality in a given context. Media effects studies, meanwhile, focus on the relationship between constructed political reality and the subjective reality of audiences.

These relationships, then, constitute three sites of mediation: *media institutions* and, for instance, the impact of commercial imperatives on news values and editorial decisions; *media technologies* and the limitations and opportunities they impose on the production, distribution and recirculation of content; and *media audiences*⁴ and their variously active participation. Silverstone stresses that mediation involves a dialectic between a variety of actors, institutions and the environments that support them (2005: 189). In new media, these relationships are perhaps even more asymmetrical than the term ‘dialectic’ denotes (Couldry 2008: 8). Most importantly, however, mediation involves non-linear interrelations between actors: media work “through a process of environmental transformation which in turn transforms the conditions under which any future media can be produced and understood” (Couldry 2008: 8). The following sections go on to review extant literature on populist political communication and its relationship to the media through the lens of mediation theory.

Media Institutions as Sites of Mediation

In studies that focus on the role of institutions in the construction of political reality, we can consider institutional sites as the practices of content selection, gatekeeping and framing that emerge from the norms and routines of journalists and other key media workers. Most studies of populist political communication and its relationship to the media focus on such institutional sites of mediation. Here, the concern is exclusively with populism’s relationship to traditional media and mostly with the media’s coverage of populist parties. Such studies tend to adopt an institutionalist perspective, leaving technology out of the equation. Institutional practices, norms and routines are seen as shared by the news media collectively as a single institution (Asp 2014; Cook 2006). As such, the institution of the news media wields collective power in relation to the sphere of politics through ‘media logic’. In the literature on populism, the construction of political reality that takes place in the dialectic between media institutions and

4 To avoid confusion about the terms ‘reception’ and ‘consumption’, Thumim (2012: 63–69) argues for the use of the term ‘audiences’ in both new and traditional media in the context of the mediation process, even where audience engagement does not only include active involvement with the media in processes of interpretation but also in those of production.

populist actors is largely focused on the notion of media logic and on populists' attempts at news management.

Media Logic

The notions of news values and 'media logic' are common in explanations of traditional media institutions' favourable mediation of populist content (Mazzoleni 2008). A number of European studies find, for instance, that populists have had positive coverage due to the media portraying immigrants in conflict with local culture (conflict framing), presenting elections as strategic games (strategic framing) and focusing on leaders and their personalities rather than policies (personalisation) (Esser et al. 2016: 372). In the literature on populism, this argument tends to be tied to distinctions between media types and formats. Commercial media's (the press, especially tabloid newspapers, and private broadcasters) news values favour the drama and spectacle of populists and therefore give them increased attention.

Notable examples of such studies include Mazzoleni et al.'s (2003) comparative research, which showed that the elite press in a number of countries was more critical and selective in their coverage of populist parties than tabloid formats due to their news values of social importance and closer integration into the elite structure of society (Stewart et al. 2003: 225). However, "because of their tendency to appeal to mass audiences, to crave sensationalism, scandal, conflict, and to voice social anxieties", 'popular' media such as the tabloid press, talk radio and infotainment TV shows "were more likely to offer support to subjects involved in, or initiators of, 'newsworthy' actions". (Stewart et al. 2003: 233). This view is echoed by Stanyer (2007: chap. 5), who contends that the preference for conflict frames in commercial media outlets chimes with the binary us/them discursive constructions of populists on issues such as immigration and the EU (see also Moffitt 2016). Some more recent empirical studies suggest, however, that the distinction between elite and tabloid formats is not entirely clear-cut (Akkerman 2011; Bos et al. 2010; Rooduijn 2014b).

In the Latin American context, the term *telepopulism*/ *télépopulisme* was coined to account for the easy fit between the news values of television and populism (Schneider 1991; Weyland 2001; for a non-Latin American example, see also Peri 2004). In television talk shows in particular, political populist and journalistic objectives have been shown to be in close harmony. They share, for instance, anti-establishment positions and a wish to demonstrate closeness to 'the people' (Bos and Brants 2014; Cranmer 2011). Here, technology as a site of mediation also plays a role. The talk show format uses a degree of audience involvement as a means of demonstrating the people's support, as do reality television (Cardo 2014) and talk radio with its 'talkback' function of listener phone-ins (Krämer 2014; Stanyer 2007: 126–131). These latter analyses focus more on the qualities of 'media populism' (Krämer 2014), that is, populism *by* the media, than on how a party's populist message is mediated in this process. They do, however, combine the institutional and technological sites of mediation, which overlap and merge in empirical reality.

A potential explanatory factor for differences in results on elite/tabloid formats may be found in Esser et al.'s (2016: 7) argument that the convergence between commercial media and populism is stylistic rather than ideological; that is, based on charisma and rhetorical style such as simplification and polarising drama. In other words, there is a convergence between the me-

dia's news values and populist style but not between the norms and self-prescribed roles of journalists and populist ideology. Journalists are not populist as they subscribe to professional norms of objectivity and independence that uphold liberal democracy. However, the news values they conform to leave them wide open to populist communication efforts. Such an interpretation is supported by empirical studies that demonstrate how news coverage and readers' letters favourably mediate populist messages in contrast to opinion columns (Rooduijn 2014b), and how populists fervently attack the mainstream media despite extensive coverage (Jagers and Walgrave 2007). However, more systematic and conclusive research is clearly needed to clarify this.

Attempts at News Management

That institutional sites of mediation and their power to construct reality are of concern to populist communicators is evident from their strong attempts at all kinds of media management and control over images (Mazzoleni et al. 2003). At an extreme, such struggles over the mediation process result in populists taking control of media institutions. In Latin America and other less established democratic contexts that have witnessed populists in power, a tendency is evident of populist governments turning state controlled media into personal mouthpieces (see for example Hawkins (2010) on Venezuela and other authoritarian states, Mancini (2014) on Berlusconi in Italy, Císař and Štětka (2016) on the Czech Republic, Corbu et al. (2016) on Romania and Stępińska et al. (2016) on Poland). Waisbord (2012) argues that populist governments in Latin America have launched initiatives to fundamentally change media systems to strengthen the power of the populist leader, bolster community media and exercise tighter control of the press. Such moves demonstrate a uniquely populist view of what 'media democracy' entails. According to such a populist perspective, journalism as an institution should support popular sovereignty, social rights and government programmes rather than a liberal-democratic notion of the public good (Waisbord 2012: 516–517). Waisbord's analysis thus highlights the institutional discordances between populism and the liberal-democratic mass media which exist alongside its consonance with media logic and news values.

Media Technologies as Sites of Mediation

With the advent of new media, the analytical distinction between mass and interpersonal communication is dissolving (Castells 2013) and is vastly complicating our conceptualisation of mediation. It has also reinvigorated an interest in material aspects of the media (see, for example, McLuhan [1964] 2002) and the ways in which media technologies contribute to processes of meaning formation (see, for example, Lievrouw 2014). Studies in this area focus on the 'affordances' of new media—the possibilities of action that a media technology or platform gives to users, such as the 'Retweet' button on Twitter or Google's personalised search. The, albeit never linear (Couldry 2008: 3; Silverstone 2005: 191), process of mediation becomes far more heterogeneous and hybridised in new media. Networked circulation and recirculation of content (Couldry 2008: 8–10) by a variety of users, their changed role as 'prosumers' (a term that conflates producers with consumers), interaction between traditional and new media formats

and institutions in hybrid forms (Chadwick 2013), and media usage that can result in highly selective exposure of viewpoints (Klinger and Svensson 2015) characterise this ubiquitous and interactive form of mediation (Lievrouw and Livingstone 2006). Such technological features favour political actors who can distribute personal and emotional content through personal networks (Klinger and Svensson 2015: 1253): these modes of constructing reality are more likely to be successful and to ‘go viral’.

Indeed, emerging studies of populism and new media argue that there is a ‘fit’ between new media technologies and populism (Bartlett 2014; Chadwick and Stromer-Galley 2016; Engesser et al. 2016; Gerbaudo 2014; Groshek and Engelbert 2013; Van Kessel and Castelein 2016). This claim considers media technologies in two parallel dimensions: the symbolic and the material dimensions of technology.

Symbolic Technology

Media technologies are not only material artefacts but are also “means for creating, circulating and appropriating meaning” (Boczkowski and Lievrouw 2008: 955). In our use of and interaction with technology, symbolic configurations become intricately tied to its material form (Boczkowski and Lievrouw 2008; Silverstone 1999: chap. 3). Couldry (2015), for instance, argues that our collective belief in social media platforms as natural sites of social and collective expression constitutes just such a “myth of ‘us’”, a myth that forms the economic basis of these platforms. In his account of ‘populism 2.0’, Gerbaudo (2014: 16–17) indicates a correspondence between populist ideology and this ‘imaginary’ aspect of social media:

Populism 2.0... incorporates much of the techno-utopianism that dominates current debates about the Internet (see, e.g., Shirky 2008; Mason 2012). It operates with the idea that the Net automatically provides a horizontal infrastructure where democracy can flourish... Crucial to the political deployment of such a participatory imaginary of Web 2.0 is an emphasis on the emancipatory character of disintermediation and directness.

According to this argument, the symbolic message inherent in social media lends credence to and enhances populists’ claims for democratisation and emancipation, as well as their non-establishmentarian self-representation. Yet such myths are also reinforced by institutional forms of mediation. In fact, social media institutions, such as Facebook and Twitter, capitalise on ideas of emancipation, democracy and community as part of their marketing strategy (Van Dijck 2013) in a process of mutual cultural shaping between institutions and audiences. Populists can in turn utilise these myths, as their ideology chimes with social media’s constructed myth of empowering the common man.

Material Technology

The correspondence between symbolic frames in social media and populism is reinforced by the material affordances of social media. A few studies address this accord, arguing that digital, especially social, media affordances not only facilitate but also augment populist communication. Inherent in this argument is also the idea of new media technologies as enablers of interpersonal communication, which allow populists to speak directly to the people and thus

chime with their aversion to institutional forms of mediation (Jagers and Walgrave 2007), including the gatekeeping function of traditional mass media. Two studies by Van Kessel and Castelein (2016) and Engesser et al. (2016) contend that social media offer populists the means of ‘free’ or ‘unmediated’ communication. By this they mean the lack of institutional interference in the form of gatekeeping or editorialising. They thus support the view of social media technology as a site of mediation that favours populist ideology.

Further, Gerbaudo argues that populism’s demand for direct democracy is translated into a form of digital mass democracy that utilises Web 2.0 interactivity features according to the principle of “one like, one vote” (2014: 80) in digitally savvy forms of populism. Such a form of populism thus avoids not only the intermediary institutions of the media but also of liberal democratic government. Bartlett (2014: 94) complements these arguments on the unproblematic mediation of populism’s *ideological* message through technological affordances with an argument about *stylistic* concord: “The short acerbic nature of populist messages works well in this medium. Humour, outspokenness, pithy put-downs and catchy slogans: these are the DNA of cyber culture.”

In their study of double differentiation, whereby populists simultaneously attempt self-representation as influencers and outsiders of the political establishment, Groshek and Engelbert (2013) find that populists’ use of the material affordances of social media and internet technologies not only conveys but also *amplifies* such self-representation. Yet the study also demonstrates the significance of the contextual use of media technologies. By comparing across two different political cultures—the US and the Netherlands—Groshek and Engelbert find that populists appropriate affordances differently and use different affordances. Their overall purpose—double differentiation—remains the same, but their means of achieving it differs according to context as they position themselves in direct opposition to the local political culture.

Casero-Ripollés et al. (2016), however, argue that neither ideological nor stylistic agreement between populism and technological mediation is the ultimate determinant of success. Rather, in their case study of Spain’s *Podemos*, the populist party’s strategic adaptation of its organisational structure to suit the ‘logics’ of both new and traditional media give it its winning formula to achieve ‘two-way street mediatisation’, that is, a reciprocal transformation of media and party institutions. The party uses social media platforms to organise ‘circles’ in which members of the public can meet and debate policy proposals, which are then adopted by the party. This novel form of an ‘ideologically empty’ party that is shaped by the audience is a feature of the new media environment, according to Chadwick and Stromer-Galley (2016). A dichotomy develops between the technology and audience sites of mediation.

Arguments about a close fit between new media technologies and populism are convincing, and new empirical studies are emerging to support much-needed theorisation of this aspect of populist mediation. Yet, as is evident from the previous discussion, the complexity of the mediation process and the way it changes the very environment that supports it means that studies are in danger of oversimplifying the relationship between specific technologies and populism. New studies that consider the interdependence of technology with other sites of mediation would abet this. Moreover, extant research on populism and technological affordances not only focuses almost exclusively on new media technologies—and especially on social media—to the detriment of traditional media technologies and material formats, but it is also entirely de-

voted to the supply side of the mediation process, that is, to the populist communicator as a producer. As a result, we know practically nothing about how users and audiences appropriate, circulate and recirculate populist messages based on media-specific environments and affordances and the norms and practices of use that they engender.

Audiences as Sites of Mediation

Users and audiences are active interpreters who do not uncritically gobble up mediated content. Rather, they digest information in a contextual and social process (Martín-Barbero 1993), and, using new media technologies, even produce, distribute and recirculate it. Most extant literature on populism and media effects describes the characteristics of populist supporters: their voting behaviour and sociodemographic and attitudinal characteristics. However, as Reinemann et al. argue (2016: 381), “drawing direct inferences from voter characteristics to the communicative processes underlying the success or failure of populist actors is just not possible.” Thus, we know little about how or why audiences are affected by mediated populism and how they participate in the process of mediation. Only a few studies on populism and media effects consider audiences as sites of mediation. These exclusively consider the traditional mass media and are focused on specific aspects of media effects, mainly audiences’ media consumption and the effects of coverage of populist leadership.

Media Consumption

Some studies have connected populist support to certain patterns of media consumption. Support for UKIP in Britain, for example, correlates with a tendency to read right-wing tabloid newspapers (see, for example, Ford et al. 2012). Watching commercial TV stations has also been found to relate to anti-immigration attitudes in Norway (see Jupskås et al. 2016). However, such studies have not specifically related mediated populist content to populist attitudes or such attitudes to populist support. There is, therefore, a danger of assuming that audiences passively absorb media content.

Mass society theories argue that citizens are particularly susceptible to populist propaganda in contexts that combine an urban environment, sophisticated media technologies and poorly educated citizenry (Hawkins 2010: 137). Arguments concerning telepopulism likewise tend to reduce citizens to passive spectators (De la Torre 2010: 128). However, Hawkins (2010: 137–65) demonstrates that mass society theory is invalidated as an explanation of the causes of populism when corruption is taken into account. Identifying citizens’ attitudes to corruption as a cause of populism in turn assumes a level of rationality and morality in citizens as they react to corruption in favour of populist candidates who stand up to less democratic governments. Hawkins’ argument thus demonstrates that also in the case of populist supporters, an active audience does indeed form a site of mediation. This point is also corroborated by De La Torre (2010: 128, 206), who calls for more audience studies that go beyond the telepopulism argument of reducing audiences to passive consumers.

Leadership

Three studies, all conducted by Bos et al. (2013; 2011; 2010), investigate the effects of media coverage of right-wing populist party leaders in the Netherlands. The authors approach the topic of leadership from an audience, rather than an institutional, perspective, although the two overlap. They find that the electoral success of these parties is preceded by their leaders' higher level of prominence in the news. Prominent leaders, moreover, appear to be 'more populist' in ideological terms – that is, they score higher on scales which measure criticism of representative politics and references to the common man (Bos et al. 2010). This does not, however, mean that all media coverage is good coverage. Bos et al.'s second study (2011) finds that the media can be both 'friend and foe' (see also Mudde 2007: 253). When negative coverage questions the legitimacy of right-wing populist party leaders, public perceptions are negatively affected. It is unknown whether this links to electoral support, however. In fact, evidence from several other European countries shows that negative media coverage results in improved standing in the polls (Esser et al. 2016: 366). Here, it is argued that the increased publicity, whatever its sentiment, has benefited populist parties. This is explained by populists' ability to use the coverage to attack the media for their establishment bias and other parties for being given preferential treatment (see also Koopmans and Muis 2009: 659).

Bos et al.'s third study (2013) distinguishes between effects from populist style and from populist ideology, which they test on specific population groups. They find that the lower educated, the politically cynical and the less politically efficacious (that is, the voters who are over-represented among these parties' supporters) are more susceptible to persuasion from populist leaders who use a populist style. In such cases, populist leaders are perceived as legitimate. In a representative sample of Dutch voters, however, mainstream party leaders are punished for adopting a populist style (Bos et al. 2011). Such a striking result clearly demonstrates the role of an active audience in the mediation process. A possible explanation may lie in the audience perceiving a potential discrepancy between the populist style adopted as a strategic tool by mainstream parties and their underlying non-populist ideology. Populist leaders are able to use the style with authenticity rather than as an insincere measure to obtain votes, and audiences discern this.

An even more active role of the audience is evident in the aforementioned case of 'ideologically empty' parties, which are rather united around a leader. The affordances and practices of use of digital media, on the one hand, and digitally enabled citizens, on the other, contribute to audiences remaking political parties in their own participatory—and more populist—image. In such cases, the interaction between technology and audiences transforms the institution of the political party from the outside in.

Conclusion

The preceding pages have outlined a communications approach to populism that involves a dichotomy between populist ideology and its expression through political style. In the current fragmented debate on populism and communication, mediation theory has proven a useful framework with which to structure extant research. Mapping the literature on populism and the media to the three sites of institutions, technologies and audiences has highlighted their in-

terconnectedness. Yet it has also brought to light a lack of synthesis of approaches to new and traditional media in the literature on populism. Previous scholarship has noted the affinity between populism and specific media types, such as tabloid journalism, talk radio and social media. So far, however, there has been little coherence of theory on populism's relationship to new and traditional media. A tendency exists in the literature on populism to, on the one hand, view traditional media from an institutional perspective in terms of news values and their connection to populism and, on the other hand, to view new media from a technological perspective of affordances and the way they accentuate populism. Yet in new as well as in traditional media, institutions and technologies cannot be separated as they interconnect and shape each other, and neither can populist style and ideology. Both sites of mediation, and both dimensions of populism, are interdependent and play a role in constructing political reality, and all have implications for how audiences perceive and construct their subjective political reality.

Indeed, although such a conclusion is based on incomplete and unsystematic evidence, there are indications that the source of populist authenticity is its ability to maintain consistency between style and ideology in all sites of mediation. In institutional sites, the professional norms and self-prescribed roles of journalists are in discord with populist ideology, which has a very different idea of what 'media democracy' ought to be. Yet the media's news values have an appetite for populist style, which makes it hard to resist. Especially in media types and genres where such news values trump less commercial considerations, populist style ensures the relatively unscathed mediation of populist ideology. In contrast, we find mainstream politicians laboriously adapting their style to media logic, which in turn impacts on the meaning of their message. It is when the audience finds the performance of style unconvincing, or when they perceive that politicians do not believe their own message, that mistrust develops.

In technological sites of mediation, certain media technologies, such as those of social media platforms, combine with institutional arrangements to harmonise with both populist style and ideology. In cases where populism has truly integrated media and network logics into its organisational form, it has even managed to shift the power balance between the media and politics. In these cases, audiences, too, have become sites of mediation that not only interpret politics but also actively shape it in their own image. Such ultimate cases of mediation congruence demonstrate that when populist political communicators manage to interweave the institutional, technological and audience sites of mediation and integrate their logics into their own operations, they not only achieve the smooth mediation of populist ideology. The consistency between populist style and ideology in the mediated message also results in the attribution of authenticity by the audience.

Further questions that such a communications approach to populism through mediation theory may answer include, very broadly, how populists relate to different media types in the media ecology and their associated forms of mediation; how the increasingly advanced political communication practices of populists attempt to control the process of mediation; how the paradox of proximity and separation inherent in the mediation process—the media's ability to bring us closer together but actually keep us apart—relates to populism's dislike of institutional mediation and promise of responsiveness and closeness to the people/distance to 'the others'; how populism interacts with media culture to become part of our everyday lives and thereby contributes to the growing trend of lifestyle politics; how and whether populists respond to active audience involvement in the mediation of their messages; and which aspects of

populist ideology and style encourage recirculation and virality in the hybrid media system. Such questions also need to be addressed through cross-nationally comparative research that considers macro-level contextual conditions. Answering these and related questions will bring us closer to determining the power populists wield through their negotiation of the process of mediation, whether they are in government or marginalised, and thereby also the power they have over dominant representations of reality and over our everyday lives.

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PART II:
Assessing the Success of Populist Actors in Europe
and in the Americas

Europe

CHAPTER 8:

ELECTORAL BASIS OF POPULIST PARTIES

Gilles Ivaldi

The electoral success of populism has been one of the most significant political developments of recent decades, which has accelerated dramatically in the 2010s. While most of the research on populism has concentrated on conceptual issues, the analysis of populist discourse or explaining the rise of populist parties, the relevance of the ‘demand-side’ of populist politics is increasingly recognised in the literature on this subject (Pauwels 2014; Van Kessel 2013). This article engages in a review of that literature on the basis of electoral support for populist parties, and the motives of voters for supporting those parties. Working from the predominance of populism being defined as a ‘thin ideology’ (Mudde 2004), it addresses two dominant strands of research, which relate to the radical right-wing and left-wing manifestations of populism, to propose a review of current knowledge on the social and attitudinal basis of voting for radical populist parties. The last section identifies future research avenues in the field of populist electoral politics.

Populism Left and Right

The work by Cas Mudde (2004) marked an important turning point in the field of populism. A large swathe of the research on populist parties has endorsed Mudde’s idea of populism as a ‘thin-centred’ ideology which attaches itself to other ‘thicker’ sets of ideas. From this argument, it follows that populism rarely exists in isolation and that it manifests itself across ideologically diverse political parties with distinct appeals to voters (Pauwels 2014).

In the European context, populism has been predominantly associated with the radical right. Mudde (2007) defines the ideological core of the populist radical right as a combination of nativism, authoritarianism and populism. Mudde’s framework clearly focuses on nativism as the key feature of this ideology, and a similar emphasis is found in most of the populist radical right literature.

Recent studies suggest that populism is increasingly found at the left end of the Western European party system. The transformation of former communist and socialist parties, together with the rise of new parties, such as Podemos in Spain, the Five Star Movement in Italy or Syriza in Greece, has resulted in the emergence and consolidation of a distinct radical left party family. March (2011: 8) defines the radical left ideology as one that rejects the structure and values of contemporary capitalism, and advocates alternative redistributive policies in opposition to dominant market liberal economics. Rooduijn and Akkerman (2015) suggest that the contemporary radical left in Western Europe is generally populist. There is, however, greater heterogeneity in the programmatic and ideological appeals of those parties when compared with their radical right counterparts. Gomez et al. (2016) suggest, for instance, distinguishing

between ‘traditional’ and ‘new politics’ radical left parties. Similarly, Ramiro (2016) warns against the danger of simplifying the complexity of the radical left family, acknowledging the plurality of policy mixes among those parties.

The malleability of populism and its ability to attach itself to a variety of parties and host ideologies pose a challenge to the apprehension of its electoral appeal, prompting the question of which ‘independent variable’ must be considered for the analysis. The dynamics of populist electoral mobilisation continue to be strongly associated with the ideologies to which populism is anchored. In most cases, voting preferences are explained by variables relating to those ‘deeper’ ideologies, making it difficult to disentangle the possible effect of populism from the various sets of cultural and economic issues that are traditionally identified as sources of voting behaviour.

Because of this emphasis on the ideologies to which populism attaches itself, there is virtually no comparative research that takes ‘populist’ voting as a distinct phenomenon by linking populist attitudes to party preferences. The few studies that address the distribution of populist attitudes among voters and the consequences of those attitudes for electoral politics relate to predominantly single country case studies in Slovakia (Stanley 2011), in the Netherlands (Akkerman et al. 2014; Schumacher and Rooduijn 2013), in the United States (Hawkins et al. 2012) or in Flanders (Elchardus and Spruyt 2016). While inevitably limited in scope, these few single country studies nevertheless provide a valuable starting point and source of insightful exploration of the electoral dynamics of populism, which can be referenced into the broader comparative framework of the supply-side and causes of the various manifestations of the populist phenomenon across time and space.

The Social and Attitudinal Basis of Populist Voting

Hawkins et al. (2012) show that populist attitudes have consistent correlations with a number of socio-demographic attributes and attitudinal predispositions. Supporters of populist parties are often specified by their distinctively lower social position, higher levels of political distrust and dissatisfaction, ideological extremism and opposition to European integration (Pauwels 2014).

A Populist Gender Gap?

Most studies of the populist radical right have shown that a gender gap exists and have found that men are generally more likely to support those parties (Givens 2004; Arzheimer 2009; Zhirkov 2014; Kehrberg 2015; Han 2016). Harteveld et al. (2015) argue that men are more likely to attach greater salience to traditional radical right issues and that they may also be less repelled than women by the extremist reputation and political stigmatisation generally associated with those parties. Recent studies suggest, however, that the size of this gender bias varies strongly across countries (Immerzeel et al. 2013; Spierings and Zaslove 2015; see also Dingler et al. in this volume).

The gender gap seems of lesser relevance in the cases of other populist manifestations (for example, Hawkins et al. 2012; Elchardus and Spruyt 2016). Studies of the radical left report that men are not more likely than women to support radical left views (Beaudonnet and Gomez 2016; Visser et al. 2014). Ramiro (2016: 15-16) also finds considerable variation in the effect of gender across Western European countries, which may account for the absence of a more general discernible pattern.

Populism and the Secularised Voter

In the case of the populist radical right, the relative propensity for women to support those parties is often associated with religiosity, pointing to the fact that female voters tend generally to be older and more religious (for example, Montgomery and Winter 2015: 394). Arzheimer and Carter (2009) find that religious voters are less inclined to radical right voting despite those parties claiming to defend traditional Christian values, and that religious voters remain primarily attached to traditional Christian Democratic and conservative parties. Montgomery and Winter (2015) find robust support for the assumption that Christian religiosity negatively correlates with radical right populism, while increasing the odds of voting for a party of the mainstream right.

Research on radical left voting provides similar evidence of those parties predominantly drawing their electoral support from secularised voters, which reflects the traditional ideological antagonism of the radical left vis-à-vis religion. Gomez et al. (2016) find, for instance, that radical left parties are successfully attracting non-religious voters and that the negative relationship with Christian religiosity is significantly stronger in the case of radical left parties with a 'new left' appeal. Moreover, according to Visser et al. (2014), religiosity is an important deterrent of radical left voting, which pits non-religious people against religious people. Ramiro (2016) provides further evidence that the likelihood of radical left support decreases with both religious affiliation and Church attendance, finding attendance patterns to be stronger predictors than simply belonging to a religious denomination.

Are Populist Voters the 'Losers of Modernisation'?

Hawkins et al. (2012) show that populism is predominantly found among the lower socio-economic strata. Their findings suggest that lower levels of education are essentially associated with higher populism. Similarly, findings from Elchardus and Spruyt (2016: 115) on the distribution of populist attitudes in Flanders indicate that people with low levels of education are more likely to support populism, due to their weaker position in society.

The numerous empirical studies of the populist radical right confirm that the affinity for those parties is stronger among voters with a lower education and that the lower socio-economic strata are overrepresented among the radical right electorate (Arzheimer 2009; Kehrberg 2015; Han 2016; Lubbers and Coenders 2017). This is accounted for by the fact that voters with a higher education tend to hold more liberal values, that they also have more favourable socio-economic positions and that they exhibit lower levels of political distrust, which make them less susceptible to the xenophobic and authoritarian appeal of those parties. There is a social

desirability bias associated with the radical right, and individuals with high levels of education may also be less inclined to report they vote for those parties.

There is no consistent evidence that people with a lower education are more likely to support populist radical parties of the left, however. Gomez et al. (2016) find education to have a significant effect on the probability of voting for traditional radical left parties and that those parties have a larger base of support among the least educated. Ramiro (2016) reports a relatively complex U-shaped curvilinear effect, whereby support for the radical left is higher among both those with the highest educational levels and those with no formal education. Other scholars, such as Visser et al. (2014: 552), demonstrate that voters with a lower education are less likely to support the radical left than people with a tertiary education. Ramiro and Gomez (2016) suggest that Podemos voters differ from the conventional descriptions of globalisation losers found predominantly among those with a lower education. This is corroborated by Beaudonnet and Gomez (2016: 10), who examine radical left voting covering a large number of parties in the 2009 and 2014 European elections, and find that education has no clear effect on the likelihood of someone supporting the radical left.

These divergences are reflected in analyses of the social class determinants of populist voting. A large block of research focuses on the strong appeal of radical right populist parties to working-class voters (Rydgren 2013). The ‘proletarianisation’ of the social bases of the radical right has been extensively documented in the literature on populism, and it is generally explained by economic, cultural and political factors (Oesch 2008). Kriesi et al. (2008) argue that radical right populist parties draw most of their electoral support from ‘globalisation losers’ among the working class, the lower middle class and the unemployed, who are affected the most by modernisation, economic competition and feelings of cultural insecurity. Working-class and lower-middle-class voters are more likely to feel threatened by rapid changes in post-industrial societies and fears of ethnic competition in the job market. They tend to hold less culturally liberal views on immigration, while supporting economic redistribution, and they are also more prone to show anti-establishment attitudes (Van Der Brug and van Spanje 2009). Van der Brug et al. (2012: 70) suggest that the electoral weight of working-class voters varies among radical right parties, but show that parties such as the Danish People’s Party and the French Front national share more substantial lower-class support and that Eastern European radical right parties have a larger working-class base than their Western counterparts. Harteveld (2016) generalises these findings and shows that economically centrist or centre-left pro-welfare radical right parties attract larger shares of voters with lower socio-economic backgrounds, compared with their more market liberal counterparts.

Looking at the relationship between populism and the economic position of voters, Hawkins et al. (2012: 21) suggest that populist attitudes are less pronounced among American voters in higher income bands, although the size and significance of the effect varies across samples and also when measures of education are eliminated from their models. In their study of Flanders, Elchardus and Spruyt (2016: 125) fail to identify that the economic position of voters—taken from a composite measure of income, financial assets and occupation—has a significant direct effect on their populist inclination. The authors argue that economic vulnerability may have an indirect effect on populism inasmuch as it fosters feelings of relative deprivation and a declinist view of society, which may fuel populist sentiments. The recent study by Han (2016) finds support for the radical right to be generally higher among the ‘poor’. Looking at interactions between country-level and individual-level variables in Western European countries, Han

stresses that rising income inequality in a country increases support for the radical right among low income earners—particularly manual workers and the lower salariat—, while decreasing it among voters with a higher income. Han contends that in adverse economic times, the poor seek to identify “with a cross-class sociocultural identity and increasingly shift their attention to their sociocultural traits, such as nationalism” (63).

Comparable findings are reported in Visser et al. (2014) concerning the radical left. The authors highlight the greater propensity for the unemployed and people with a lower or middle income to subscribe to a radical left ideology. Introducing contextual variables, however, they find that a higher level of income inequality in a country reduces rather than increases the likelihood of individuals holding radical left views. There seems also to be growing evidence that the populist radical left may be increasingly tapping into wider sectors of the electorate. Visser et al. (2014) find little difference between manual and non-manual workers in their propensity to support the radical left. Other studies provide mixed findings that increasingly contradict the traditional link between the working class and the radical left-wing vote (for example, March 2011). Recent work by Beaudonnet and Gomez (2016: 10) also refutes the assumption that manual workers or the unemployed are more prone to vote for radical left-wing parties. Ramiro and Gomez (2016) point in the same direction and show that Podemos voters in Spain do not fulfil the traditional profile of the populist voter. Their data suggest that the party is drawing support from a broader coalition of voters across all social strata, and that it is relatively more successful among educated voters hit by the economic crisis. As Ramiro (2016: 18) concludes: “there is no longer an obvious reliance of radical left parties on disadvantaged social groups”.

Political Distrust as a Unifier of Populist Voters

It is generally acknowledged that the background characteristics of voters have only limited explanatory power and that populist voting is primarily influenced by general ideological orientations (Van der Brug et al. 2000). Existing research on the ideological profile of populist voters suggests, however, variability in the issues and attitudes that motivate support for the populist radical right and left, respectively.

There is a large consensus in the literature on populism that radical right populist parties typically mobilise support on the sociocultural dimension, most particularly by politicising immigration and law-and-order issues (Norris 2005; Rydgren 2008; Dunn 2015). Anti-immigrant attitudes are presented as crucial determinants of radical right voting and the strongest predictors of electoral support for those parties (Lubbers et al. 2002; Ivarsflaten 2005; Van der Brug et al. 2005; Arzheimer 2009; Zhirkov 2014; Kehrberg 2015; Stockemer 2016a). Populist radical right voters perceive immigrants as both a cultural and economic threat. The study by Lucassen and Lubbers (2012) reveals that cultural fears are predominant among radical right supporters. Other research, such as that by De Koster et al. (2013), shows that those voters exhibit significant welfare chauvinism, that is, a “system of social protection only for those who belong to the ethnically defined community and who have contributed to it” (Kitschelt 1995: 22). Lubbers and Coenders (2017) find that voting for radical right-wing parties is associated with national pride and an ethnic conception of nationhood.

In contrast, traditional economic issues are generally considered of lesser relevance to radical right populist voting (Mudde 2007). Cross-national studies suggest that the social groups attracted by the radical right often share heterogeneous if not conflicting views about the economy, which are filtered by cultural issues (Ivarsflaten 2005). The study by Allen (2015) emphasises regional differences, pointing to the more leftist economic orientation in post-communist far right voters in Eastern Europe. Authors such as De Koster et al. (2013) propose that diverging socio-economic preferences among populist voters are reconciled by a mix of egalitarianism and welfare state criticism. Derks (2006) argues similarly that electoral support for right-wing populism is strongly influenced by ‘economic populism’, which is defined as the combination of egalitarianism and anti-welfarism.

Economic issues achieve greater importance among the populist radical left, although these issues remain largely understudied in the current literature on left-wing populism. Visser et al. (2014) suggest that preferences for income redistribution are a main determinant of support for a radical left ideology, particularly among voters in lower income groups and the unemployed, who generally show higher support for redistribution. Since 2008, economic issues have also been associated with the unfolding of the global financial crisis. Beaudonnet and Gomez (2016) find, for instance, that voters with negative retrospective views on the economy show a greater tendency to support the radical left. The authors find the impact of economic evaluations to have significantly increased since 2009. As suggested earlier, there seems to be convergent evidence that the economic crisis has enabled the radical left to build a broader yet more heterogeneous electoral base of support (Ramiro and Gomez 2016; Beaudonnet and Gomez 2016).

One aspect which stands out as a possible unifier of populist voters across time and space is political distrust and disillusionment with mainstream politics. Many studies outline the relationship between populist voting and dissatisfaction with the political system, demonstrating that those who are less satisfied with politics are more prone to support populist parties. The vast literature on the radical right corroborates this link (for example, Arzheimer 2009; Lubbers et al. 2002; Werts et al. 2013; Zhirkov 2014; Kehrberg 2015; Lubbers and Coenders 2017), a pattern which is of course consistent with those parties’ profile as populist anti-establishment actors. Similarly, political distrust is identified as a key factor in the electoral dynamics of the populist radical left. Studies such as that by Gomez et al. (2016) indicate that dissatisfaction with democracy considerably increases the probability of radical left voting, while others point to the significance of a ‘disaffected voter’ syndrome (Ramiro 2016: 20). Looking at the attitudinal basis of support for Podemos in Spain, Ramiro and Gomez (2016) confirm that the party has assembled a cross-sectional coalition of voters hit by the crisis and deeply dissatisfied with mainstream politics, who hold negative views on both the government and the opposition.

Further empirical evidence of the relevance of political disaffection in populist voting is provided by comparative studies of left-wing and right-wing manifestations of populism. Ivaldi and Zaslove (2015) find that supporters of European populist parties on the left and right demonstrate higher levels of mistrust towards political institutions. Schumacher and Rooduijn (2013) demonstrate that ‘protest attitudes’, which the authors define as an expression of anti-elitist feelings, are strong motivations for people to vote for populist parties both left and right, and that populist voters differ in this respect from those of the mainstream. Similarly, the findings by Akkerman et al. (2014) from a sample of Dutch voters show that populist par-

ty preferences are interrelated with populist attitudes and that holding such attitudes significantly increases the probability of people supporting populist parties. Using a path analysis of Dutch panel data, Rooduijn et al. (2016) look symmetrically at this relationship, demonstrating that political discontent fuels support for populist parties but that the anti-establishment message of these parties may also cause political dissatisfaction among voters.

Populists Opposing Europe?

Finally, there is a wealth of empirical evidence which shows that populism today is being increasingly directed against European integration, which also attests to the connection between populist anti-establishment and anti-EU attitudes among voters. It has been shown that Euroscepticism is a common trait of most radical right populist parties (Vasilopoulou 2011), which stems from the perception of the EU as a major driver of immigration, multiculturalism and economic liberalisation, and as a primarily elite-driven project. A large number of studies have highlighted that opposition to European integration is strongly related to voting for the populist radical right (for example, Arzheimer 2009; Lubbers and Scheepers 2007). The more recent work by Werts et al. (2013) demonstrates that Euroscepticism is a predictor of voting for the radical right and that it has a significant independent effect beyond the perceived ethnic threat and political distrust (see also Lubbers and Coenders 2017: 111).

Similar evidence is found to the left of the European party system. Recent research points to an increase in the salience of European integration issues and growing Euroscepticism among radical left voters. March and Rommerskirchen (2015) show that macroeconomic adversity and a high level of public Euroscepticism in the country provide fertile ground for the electoral success of the radical left. Looking at individual-level determinants of voting for the radical left, Ramiro (2016) finds support for those parties to be strongly associated with negative opinions about EU membership. The analysis by Gomez et al. (2016) corroborates the relationship between Euroscepticism and voting for the radical left, suggesting that negative views of the EU are more pronounced among supporters of traditional leftist parties compared with those of the radical 'new left'. Looking more specifically at the impact of the global financial crisis, Beaudonnet and Gomez (2016: 16) find that voter support for the radical left in Europe is increasingly based on Eurosceptical attitudes, and argue that those parties have also been able to attract pro-EU voters dissatisfied with the management of the economic crisis and austerity policies imposed by national and EU elites.

Future Populism Research

There are a number of questions worth exploring in future research on the electoral basis of populism.

A Global Perspective on Populism

First, future studies should expand on the burgeoning literature that focuses on a comparative analysis of the left-wing and right-wing variants of electoral populism (for example, Lefkofridi and Casado-Asensio 2013; Visser et al. 2014; Ivaldi and Zaslove 2015; Bakker et al. 2016). Mudde (2016) proposes that we adopt a pluralistic approach to populism and suggests using the concept of ‘functional equivalence’ for the analysis of populist parties across the spectrum by looking at the functions those parties perform in their respective party systems. More research is needed on the electoral dynamics of populist politics, exploring which common features populist voters across the spectrum may share and which may, on the other hand, oppose them.

More cross-regional analyses of populism are also desirable in future studies. Contemporary populism is widespread in Europe and America, and scholars should be encouraged to cover populism across a broader geographical range. To date, there has been little systematic empirical research conducted on the dynamics of populist mobilisation in different regional contexts. Recent innovative studies have laid out the theoretical foundations for a global perspective, which should influence future work on the demand-side of populism across Europe as well as in North and Latin America (De la Torre 2015; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012).

Different political opportunity structures may have important consequences for the electoral politics of populism. Future research should address the generalisability and travelling potential of concepts and theories of populist mobilisation across both established and new democracies. The literature on radical right politics in the post-communist states of Eastern Europe suggests, for instance, that the radical right has been able to capitalise on specific political and economic grievances that have emerged from the processes of democratisation and transition towards a market economy (for instance Bustikova and Kitschelt 2009; Bustikova 2014; Minkenberg 2015; Pirro 2015; Pytlas 2016; Allen 2015).

Studies of populism in Latin America point to the significance of public distrust in the traditional political institutions of liberal democracy and high levels of perceived corruption as correlates of populist attitudes. Populist leaders in Latin America have mobilised mass resentment against established governments during periods of economic recession and growing social inequality (Doyle 2011; Hawkins 2010). Exploring the interconnection between the experiences of populism across continents further might help inform our understanding of the current impact of the economic recession on the electoral performances of European populism. Meanwhile, the recent rise of Trumpism in the United States will certainly open new research avenues for the transatlantic analysis of right-wing populism (for example, Oliver and Rahn 2016).

Populist Politics in Multilayered Politics

Significant progress could also be made by embedding populism research in a framework including various socio-spatial levels—global, national and sub-national—which looks at the relationships between those levels and how these contexts may shape populist mobilisation. Contemporary populism operates across different arenas of electoral competition in multilayered politics, taking advantage of the political opportunities offered at the state and substate

levels, while also competing in supranational institutions such as the EU. We need to improve our understanding of the factors that explain the diverse electoral capacities of populist parties at different levels of competition, their regional affinities and their links with territorial claims, interests and the dynamics of mobilisation. Future research should look at the development of populism in subnational party systems and how populist parties focus their strategies to adapt to specific opportunity structures.

It is certainly worth noting the growing scientific interest in integrated multilevel approaches that seek to combine individual and contextual factors of populism, and look at how the effects of local context may vary over time (for example, Poznyak et al. 2011; Rydgren and Ruth 2013; Green et al. 2016; Stockemer 2016b). In the European context, we also need more studies that bridge the literature on populism and that related to Euroscepticism to explore the connection between populist and anti-EU voter attitudes and help refine the traditional ‘horse-shoe’ hypothesis (Van Elsas et al. 2016).

Populism as an Independent Variable

Finally, an important and fast expanding area of empirical research relates to the measurement of populism as an ‘independent’ variable in the analysis of electoral politics (see Pauwels in this volume). This burgeoning literature, to which we have referred earlier in this chapter, is seeking to address the distribution of populist attitudes among voters and elites as a means of explaining the success and failure of populist parties (for example, Akkerman et al. 2014; Hawkins et al. 2012; Immerzeel and Pickup 2015; Van Hauwaert and Van Kessel 2017). This recent and promising strand of literature provides a robust empirical basis for the measurement of the core people-centred and anti-elite features of populism, which can be applied to a variety of parties and contexts and should help improve our comparative knowledge of the variegated electoral manifestations of the defining features of populism across both time and space.

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CHAPTER 9:

POPULIST PARTIES IN POWER AND THEIR IMPACT ON LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES IN WESTERN EUROPE

Tjitske Akkerman

Populist parties are widely perceived as a threat to liberal democracies. Now that populist parties are increasingly participating in national governments, their impact on policies and politics should be at the centre of scholarly attention. This chapter will discuss the effects of radical right-wing populist parties on liberal democracies when they gain executive power. Its focus will be on their impact on consolidated democracies in Western Europe. Populist parties entered the Western European political scene as important players in the 1990s. These parties were predominantly right-wing parties. Left-wing populist parties have been far less successful until now, and hardly any of these parties have managed to gain governmental power. Right-wing populist parties, in contrast, have entered office in various countries.

Right-wing populism is predominantly a *radical* right-wing phenomenon in Western Europe (Rooduijn and Akkerman 2015). Although there are some centre-right populist parties, such as Forza Italia, radical right-wing parties, like the Freedom Party of Austria, the Danish People's Party, the Norwegian Progress Party, the Finns Party, the Dutch Party for Freedom and the Lega Nord, have been the most successful in setting up a populist profile. Rooduijn et al. (2014) demonstrated that mainstream parties are not characterised by their populism. Although some mainstream parties also deploy populist rhetoric, they do so only marginally in comparison to various non-mainstream parties. The disloyalty of populist parties to the political establishment and their aspirations of changing both the formal and informal rules of the game contrast starkly with the commitment of established parties to the status quo (Akkerman et al. 2016; Abedi 2004; Capoccia 2002). Moreover, populists differentiate themselves from centrist parties—namely Christian democratic, conservative, liberal and social democratic parties—by taking radical positions on economic or cultural issues (Adams et al. 2006; Meguid 2005).

Defining Populism

Populism has become a large encompassing framework for understanding political phenomena. Studies of populism often appear to be talking about different things. To achieve consistency, it is important to begin by distinguishing between the different ways in which the terminology of populism is used (Gerring 2001: 120). The most elementary characteristic of populist ideology in Western Europe is the separation of society into two antagonistic groups: the pure people versus the corrupt elites (Mudde 2007). The antagonism between the people and the elites can be defined in political, cultural or economic terms (Mény and Surel 2000). The definition of the people varies historically as well as regionally (Canovan 1981). Nowadays, pop-

ulists in Western Europe define the people and the elites primarily in political terms. Left-wing and right-wing populists both position political dissatisfaction with the domination of elites in liberal and representative democracies at the centre of their discourses. While both types of populists target political elites, left-wing populists also attack economic elites. In contrast, radical right-wing populist parties (RRPPs) tend to emphasise *cultural* antagonism between elites and the people. They define the people as culturally homogeneous, adhering to the idea that only members of the native group belong to the people, and that non-native people and ideas are fundamentally threatening to the nation state (Mudde 2007). This nativist populism has been translated programmatically into anti-immigration stances, and more recently into anti-European Union and anti-Islamic positions.

The Impact of Radical Right-wing Populists in Government

The debate about the impact of populism has been mainly waged in theoretical and normative terms. The term is often used to discredit opponents. Only recently have some scholars emphasised the need to develop a more neutral and empirical approach (Rovira Kaltwasser 2014). Its opponents characterise populism as being bad for liberal democracy, while a minority of advocates insist that populism is a positive, corrective force (Rovira Kaltwasser 2014). In the academic world and in the media, (radical right-wing) populists are regularly characterised as (neo-) fascists (Riker 1982). Since the 1980s, radical right-wing populist parties have taken steps, sometimes half-heartedly, to distance themselves from classic extremist subjects, such as anti-Semitism, racism or references to Nazism and fascism. Some parties, like the National Front, the Flemish Interest or the Sweden Democrats, have a problematic extremist reputation. The predominant academic understanding, though, is that populism fundamentally differs from fascism. Radical right-wing populists are not anti-democratic, but they are opposed to the predominant *liberal* form of Western democracies (Rovira Kaltwasser 2014; Mudde 2007; Müller 2016). Populists reject a conception of democracy based on the idea that the rule of law, division of power through checks and balances, and constitutionalism are essential for the protection of individual rights. Liberal democracy also presumes that society comprises plural groups with diverging interests, while populists perceive society to be divided by a single cleavage between the people and elites. Their ideal is a majoritarian type of democracy founded on the general will of the people. For them, the will of the majority—often channelled through a strong leader—should be supreme.

Some scholars argue that populism is not only a threat but also a corrective to liberal democracy. Populism may counter the propensity of liberal democracy to move too far away from its foundations in popular sovereignty and to delegate too much power to elites (Schmitter 2007; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012; Plattner 2010; Meny and Surel 2002). The idea that populism should be regarded as a potential corrective to democracy presupposes that populists aim to restore the balance between pluralist elite rule and the will of the majority.

These three views of populism—as an anti-democratic threat, an anti-liberal threat or a corrective to liberal democracy—all skate on rather thin theoretical ice. Populism is a thin ideology with little intellectual backing from authoritative texts. Populist analyses of what is wrong with current democracies, what kind of future society should replace them and what means are required to build up an alternative society are not very well elaborated. No wonder that

some would call it a style or discourse rather than an ideology (Aslanidis 2015; Stanley 2008). The thinness of populism does not provide sufficient grounds for settling the key debate about its impact on liberal democracies. It leaves room for a wide range of interpretations. Empirical evidence is therefore crucial. Evidence to substantiate one claim or another is often randomly gathered from various regions, even though the political contexts in regions like Western Europe, Latin America or Eastern Europe differ fundamentally. Populists like Hugo Chávez and Rafael Correa in Latin America or Viktor Orbán in Eastern Europe are often used as examples to demonstrate what the phrase ‘empowerment of the people’ really means. These populist leaders have undertaken constitutional reforms that systematically curtail the power of parliament, the media, the judiciary and civil society. The results are authoritarian, illiberal regimes based on plebiscitarian politics combined with strong leadership. It is rash to presume that RRPPs in Western Europe not only aim to copy them but will also be able to do so.

Normative discussion about populism can hardly be avoided. However, a normative perspective should incite empirical research rather than replace it. Moreover, one should be aware that most populist policies cannot simply be translated into good or bad effects for liberal democracies. Whether restrictive policies in the fields of immigration or integration, for instance, go beyond liberal principles is a complex discussion with narrow dividing lines (Bauböck and Joppke 2010; Joppke and Morawska 2014). Empowering the people through forms of direct democracy might serve as a corrective to elite domination, but judging under what conditions referenda are a blessing or a peril is far from easy. A research agenda that approaches populism normatively is suitable as long as it is empirically oriented and does not take moral judgements for granted.

Mapping the Research Field

Radical right-wing populist parties (RRPPs) in Western Europe have not only been electorally successful during the past few decades, but they have increasingly joined coalitions in various countries. The first party to enter government in Western Europe was Lega Nord in 1996. This was a short experiment that demonstrated the difficulties populist newcomers experience in governing. After the turn of the millennium, beginning with the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ), which entered a coalition government with the Austrian People’s Party (ÖVP) in 2000, RRPPs have been on the march towards executive power. Based on the definition outlined above, we can identify nine radical right-wing populist parties that have participated in 17 cabinets either as formal coalition parties or formal supporting parties of minority governments in Western Europe since the turn of the millennium (Akkerman et al. 2016: 3).

Table 9.1: Radical Right-wing Populist Parties in Office

Country	Party	Cabinet	Composition	Period
<i>Austria</i>	FPÖ	Schüssel I	ÖVP–FPÖ	2000–2005
	BZÖ	Schüssel I	ÖVP–BZÖ	2005–2006
<i>Denmark</i>	DF	A.F.Rasmussen I	V–KF–(DF)	2001–2005
	DF	A.F.Rasmussen II	V–KF–(DF)	2005–2007
	DF	A.F.Rasmussen III	V–KF–(DF)	2007–2009
	DF	L.L.Rasmussen I	V–KF–(DF)	2009–2011
	DF	L.L.Rasmussen II	V–(DF)	2015–
<i>Finland</i>	PS	Sipilä II	KESK–KOK–PS	2015–
<i>Italy</i>	LN	Berlusconi I	FI–AN–LN–CCD–UCD	1994–1994
	LN	Berlusconi II/III	FI–AN–LN	2001–2006
	LN	Berlusconi IV	PdL–LN–MpA	2008–2011
<i>Netherlands</i>	LPF	Balkenende I	CDA–LPF–VVD	2003–2003
	PVV	Rutte I	VVD–CDA–(PVV)	2010–2012
<i>Norway</i>	FrP	Solberg I	H–FrP	2013–
<i>Switzerland</i>	SVP	-	-	2003–2007
	SVP	-	-	2007–2011
	SVP	-	-	2011–

Notes: FPÖ: Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs; BZÖ: Bündnis Zukunft Österreich; DF: Dansk Folkeparti; PS: Perussuomalaiset; LN: Lega Nord; LPF: Lijst Pim Fortuyn; PVV: Partij Voor de Vrijheid; FrP: Fremskrittspartiet; SVP: Schweizerische Volkspartei

Given that this is a relatively new phenomenon, it is not surprising that research devoted to RRPPs' performance in government and the effects of incumbency on them is still relatively scarce. There is little general academic attention paid to new parties in governments. Systematic comparative research is also scarce regarding the Greens and regionalist parties (Müller-Rommel and Poguntke 2002; Deschouwer 2008). Compared to other new parties such as the Greens, however, RRPPs have been the most successful new family of parties in terms of electoral results and government participation since the turn of the millennium (Mudde 2013). Moreover, no family of parties has been studied so intensively as that of the radical right-wing populists. Against this background, government participation is still remarkably understudied.

There are numerous case studies but only a few systematic studies investigating the impact that these parties have when they participate in national governments. Admittedly, systematic research in this field is not always easy. Impact is a complex phenomenon that can be exerted in various fields including public opinion and debate, electoral competition, policy fields and political institutions. Moreover, impact can be exerted in different political arenas at the same time. RRPPs may have considerable indirect influence once they break through electorally and gain entry to national parliaments (Schain 2006). Electoral success pressures other parties to reconsider their policy agendas with respect to the key issues that RRPPs have successfully politicised. The step from opposition to government provides these parties with opportunities to increase their impact directly through executive action. The difficulty is that, in the latter case, agenda setting and policy effects are still also mediated at several levels through interaction with other political parties and parliament (Heinisch 2003). Analytically disentangling the impact of RRPPs through government power from their impact as successful opposition parties can be a daunting task. Case studies can successfully provide some insight into distinctions between indirect and direct impact (see Bale and Hampshire 2015). Systematic comparative research on the impact of RRPPs in opposition and in government, however, is still lacking.

A Threat to Liberal Freedoms and Rights?

Although populism is perceived to be an anti-liberal ideology, RRPPs in Western Europe do not foreground anti-liberal elements in their campaigns. No leader of a radical right-wing populist party in Western Europe has voiced their aversion to liberalism as explicitly as Viktor Orbán, Hungary's prime minister and leader of the populist party Fidesz—Hungarian Civic Alliance. He openly defied liberal democracy and praised ‘illiberal democracy’ when he was re-elected in 2014. RRPPs in Western Europe tend to refrain from openly promoting an alternative, illiberal model of democracy. Nevertheless, their policy proposals and legislative initiatives in government betray the fact that they have little respect for the fundamental freedoms and rights of ‘non-native’ groups. RRPPs in government have frequently promoted policy proposals or legislative acts that come into conflict with fundamental human rights, according to constitutional tribunals or international courts. The FPÖ proposed taking the fingerprints of all foreigners, the Lega Nord proposed a ‘security package’, which included proposals that were thrown out by the European Court of Justice as conflicting with fundamental human rights, and the Swiss People’s Party used popular initiatives to restrict religious freedoms, such as the building of minarets, which breached the European Convention on Human Rights. However, overall RRPPs have not been very successful in implementing such policy proposals (Albertazzi and Müller 2013). Case studies confirm that the negative impact of RRPPs on liberal rights and freedoms in Western Europe is still limited (Akkerman and De Lange 2012; Minkenberg 2001).

A few studies that have systematically investigated the impact of populist governments on freedoms and rights in Latin America, Eastern Europe and Western Europe make clear that each respective region makes a significant difference in this respect (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012; Rovira Kaltwasser and Taggart 2016). While cases in Latin America and Eastern Europe demonstrate that populists have managed to erode fundamental freedoms and rights, the cases of Berlusconi’s governments in Italy and the initial coalition government, which included the

FPÖ, in Austria indicate that in Western Europe such negative effects are absent (Verbeek and Zaslove 2015; Fallend and Heinisch 2015).

The initiatives of RRPPs to curtail fundamental freedoms and rights are mainly driven by an ethnic view of the people and are linked to their core policy issues. RRPPs are first and foremost anti-immigration parties. They perceive the people as culturally homogeneous, and regard certain non-native groups, such as immigrants, Muslims or other cultural minorities as a threat to the nation. This ethnic view of the people might entail a threat to liberal democracy by increasing intolerance and advancing restrictive policies that make democracies less inclusive and pluralist, especially when RRPPs do not hesitate to trade fundamental rights and freedoms for homogeneity or security. RRPPs have pushed to make immigration and integration policies more restrictive. Most studies confirm that the electoral successes of RRPPs have incited mainstream right-wing parties to move to more restrictive positions with respect to immigration and integration (Bale 2008; Howard 2010; Marthaler 2008; Schain 2006; Williams 2006). Although some case studies have questioned the putative influence of RRPPs on other parties (Duncan 2010; Van Kersbergen and Krouwel 2008), systematic research tends to confirm that RRPPs incite mainstream right-wing parties to adapt their positions on multiculturalism or immigration (Han 2016; Van Spanje 2010). While the electoral rise of these parties indirectly contributes to more restrictive trends in some countries, it is far from clear that their access to executive power accelerates such trends (Akkerman and De Lange 2012). Once they are in government, RRPPs do not contribute significantly more to implementing the restrictive legislative reform of immigration and integration policies than incumbent centre-right parties do. The latter appear to have been equally effective in this respect (Akkerman 2012). Electoral success and blackmailing power are probably as effective in shaping policies from opposition as when RRPPs actually gain executive power (see Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012: 209).

Empowering the People?

It might be expected that RRPPs would initiate or support legislative reforms to introduce or extend direct forms of democracy in order to empower the people. Mudde (2007: 153), for instance, claims that all RRPPs in Western Europe put the introduction and use of plebiscitary democratic initiatives at the centre of their propaganda. On the other hand, Mudde (2004) has argued elsewhere that RRPPs do not give much priority to the empowering of citizens through direct forms of democracy. Strong leadership is more important to them and their supporters than direct democracy according to this view. Although research is scarce in this area, what there is suggests that the latter view of Mudde is the most convincing. Kristof Jacobs (2010) concludes that populists do not systematically endorse recall elections, popular initiatives or referenda. When in government they hardly introduce any reforms, and their impact on democratic reforms is more effective when they are in opposition. The finding that democratic reforms are not high on the agendas of RRPPs is not surprising given the fact that the voters of RRPPs do not give any priority to democratic participation (Bowler et al. 2016). Referenda have been on the rise in Western Europe for some time, but this trend has evolved regardless of the electoral success and participation of RRPPs in government (Butler and Ranney 1994; Scarrow 2001; Dalton et al. 2003). From a long-term perspective, the impact of RRPPs on reforming democracies to make them more direct is clearly limited.

RRPPs might be effective in empowering the people in other ways. Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2012) have argued that populist parties are likely to give a voice to groups that do not feel represented politically and succeed in mobilising excluded sections of society. In this respect, they may prove to be a blessing for liberal democracies. This claim has not yet been applied in terms of government participation, but when we review the evidence, it is not a promising avenue of enquiry. The idea that RRPPs manage to make democratic participation more inclusive by mobilising disaffected non-voters is based on some case-studies. For instance, the Pim Fortuyn List in the Netherlands and the Flemish Interest in Belgium have managed to engage specific groups of citizens (De Lange and Akkerman 2012; Van Praag 2003; see also Laycock 2013). However, this does not always lead to an increase in turnout among dissatisfied voters (De Lange and Akkerman 2012). Moreover, systematic analysis of turnout at national elections in Western Europe shows that RRPPs do not foster the turnout of groups of voters who feel excluded (Immerzeel and Pickup 2015). RRPPs can only be credited for making policy agendas more inclusive. They have most consistently and successfully given a voice to dissatisfied voters by adding to the importance of issues related to immigration and integration (Alonso and Claro da Fonseca 2012). In other words, RRPPs' positive impact on liberal democracies can mainly be attributed to the ways in which they give a voice to those groups that prefer more exclusive policies in relation to immigrants or people with an immigrant background. That is a far cry from the claim that populists correct the uneven balance between popular sovereignty and elite rule.

To sum up, there is little evidence that RRPPs have a positive impact on liberal democracies, regardless of whether they are in opposition or government. Fears that these parties might have a negative impact when they enter government are more warranted, but RRPPs clearly have not managed to fundamentally reshape politics so far. Fundamental freedoms and rights have not been harmed during their incumbency. That is not to say that RRPPs are careful to respect individual rights. In the context of their anti-immigration and anti-Islamic policies, RRPPs do not hesitate to propose legislative reforms that clash with fundamental human rights.

Explanations

Comparative research on RRPPs is scarce and based on case studies. Systematic quantitative analyses are still lacking. It is clear, though, that the impact of populists in government is much more limited in Western Europe than in regions like Latin America or Eastern Europe. In Latin America or Eastern Europe, populists have established illiberal and authoritarian democracies by gaining a supermajority in government and/or by taking advantage of weak democratic institutions. In Western Europe, RRPPs are political newcomers that have predominantly governed as junior partners in coalition governments. (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012; Rovira Kaltwasser and Taggart 2016). They are often new parties that still have to learn to build up organisations and to recruit and train competent personnel in order to be able to govern effectively (Akkerman and De Lange 2012; De Lange and Art 2011; Bolleyer et al. 2012; Deschouwer 2008). With the exception of the Swiss People's Party (SVP), they still do not constitute government majorities. Their executive power to establish fundamental reforms through constitutional changes is relatively weak. Moreover, they have to operate within the

context of vested democracies, where they encounter considerable political and civil opposition, and strong checks and balances.

Although RRPPs are electorally on the march, it is less easy to gain majorities or supermajorities with an openly anti-liberal programme in Western Europe. Voters in Western Europe value the legitimacy of parties. When voters perceive RRPPs to be anti-democratic, they are less inclined to vote for them (Bos and Van der Brug 2010). Electoral considerations are, therefore, also important in restraining these parties from too openly attacking liberal democracies in Western Europe.

RRPPs not only lack executive power, but they also face stronger resistance in Western Europe. Strong judiciaries, in particular, prevent RRPPs from curtailing fundamental freedoms (Albertazzi and Müller 2013). Rigid constitutions and constitutional courts are also highly important when fundamental freedoms are at stake. In the case of Switzerland, for instance, the absence of a constitutional tribunal, in combination with strong, direct democracy, provides the SVP with relatively favourable preconditions (Mazzoleni 2016). European courts and conventions, however, are proving to still be an important backup in this respect. (Müller 2013; Batory 2016; Fallend and Heinisch 2015).

The role of strong parliaments in restraining RRPPs is also an important factor. Parties in opposition have effectively resisted the anti-liberal reform agendas of RRPPs. Left-wing parties, in particular, can be an important constraining force here (Verbeek and Zaslove 2015; Fallend and Heinisch 2015). Coalition governments are important for limiting executive power, but the role of coalition partners should not be overestimated. In some incidental cases, coalition partners have contributed to constraining the policy approaches of RRPPs (Fallend and Heinisch 2015). Overall, however, the importance of coalition partners tends to be limited. RRPPs are largely dependent on coalitions with mainstream right-wing parties in Western Europe. Comparative research indicates that mainstream right-wing parties scarcely manage to pressure RRPPs to moderate their anti-immigration positions, their EU scepticism or their populist rhetoric when forming coalitions. They only have some constraining effect on their anti-establishment behaviour (Akkerman et al. 2016).

Populists are the usual suspects when the erosion of liberal democracy is investigated. This could easily lead to tunnel vision that excludes other possible suspects. As Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2012: 210) observed in the case of Venezuela, the effects of the populist government of Hugo Chávez on the erosion of liberal democracies may be overrated. There is a more general trend towards authoritarian regimes delivered by leaders that have been democratically elected and retain legitimacy through elections. Not all these leaders are populists (Bermeo 2016). In the case of Venezuela, for instance, erosion already began before Chávez came on the scene (Roberts 2012). What is called for is research that not only focuses on the effects of populist governments, but also takes other factors into account by including long-term trends and comparing the effects of non-populist governments. A quick look at data from Freedom House, for instance, makes clear that democracies in Western Europe score consistently high on political rights and freedoms generally, but there is variation that indicates their subtle decline under mainstream governments. In summary, research assessing the impact of RRPPs should recognise the possibility that other factors are equally or even more significant in the decline of liberal rights and freedoms.

Conclusions

The access RRPPs have gained to executive power in Western Europe has not yet fundamentally affected liberal democracies. Reforms to make liberal democracies more direct in order to empower the people do not appear to have been central to the agendas of these parties. In so far as they have supported these reforms, RRPPs have been more effective in opposition than in government. Moreover, taken from a long-term perspective, the impact of these parties on the proliferation of referenda is limited. The idea that populists contribute positively to democratic representation by giving a voice to dissatisfied voters has not been verified. Dissatisfied voters do not turn out to vote more when these parties come on the scene. Overall, the conclusion seems to be warranted that populists cannot be credited for correcting the balance between elite rule and popular sovereignty in liberal democracies.

While there is little evidence that RRPPs have a positive impact on liberal democracies, fears of a negative impact when these parties enter government are more warranted. Yet, RRPPs clearly have not managed to fundamentally reshape politics so far. Although RRPPs do not refrain from policy proposals and legislative initiatives that conflict with fundamental individual rights, they have not been very effective. The opposition of parliaments, national and international courts, and civil societies is still strong in vested democracies in Western Europe. While the electoral success of these parties has certainly indirectly contributed to more restrictive trends regarding the rights of immigrants and asylum seekers, it is far from clear that their access to executive power has accelerated such trends.

In this respect, as well as in others, empirical research is still in its infancy. The impact of RRPPs in government is a difficult subject to study, as it is not easy to distinguish impact through executive power from impact through electoral competition and opposition in parliament. Research has focused mainly on indirect impact. Most scholars agree that RRPPs have an indirect impact in core policy areas, such as immigration and integration, through electoral competition. Impact in government is more difficult to investigate as it is challenging to disentangle the direct and indirect impacts of parties in power. Case studies that closely explore this issue are much needed.

The amount of research on the impact of RRPPs in government is increasing, but some aspects are still largely unexplored. Descriptive studies investigating the impact of RRPPs in fields like public opinion and debate, electoral competition and in policy areas like immigration and integration are well developed, while policy areas like welfare arrangements, economic policy and foreign policy are beginning to be explored as well. However, their effects on liberal democracies—constitutional rights, checks and balances, and representative and direct forms of democracy—have scarcely been investigated yet. Systematic and quantitative studies, in particular, are difficult to find. Explanatory studies which investigate systematically why RRPPs fail or succeed to use executive power effectively are generally still scarce.

Research concerning populist parties is easily eclipsed by normative approaches. When investigating the erosion of liberal democracies, populists tend to be regarded as the usual suspects. However, it is far from clear that they are the only or even the main suspects. Research in this field founded on a broader approach that includes non-populist government actors deserves a prominent place on the research agenda.

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CHAPTER 10:

SOCIOCULTURAL LEGACIES IN POST-TRANSITION SOCIETIES IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE AND THE RELATIONSHIP TO THE RESURGENCE OF RIGHT-WING EXTREMISM AND POPULISM IN THE REGION

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Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) can be considered a specific geopolitical area in terms of the spread of populism and research on this phenomenon. The communist era in this region blocked the development of a pluralist party system and open societies. After the fall of the non-democratic regimes, the rise in nationalist tensions in many countries was accompanied by the growing strength of far right parties. Research on these phenomena has been a fairly well-developed part of current social sciences. Many questions are still unanswered, so we will try to explain paradigmatic approaches of research on extremism, on the one hand, and research on populism, on the other hand, although in much of the research these concepts are closely interconnected. Before we move to the examination of the sociocultural legacies in post-transition CEE societies which have contributed to the rise of far right parties, a short terminological note is needed.

Various authors use different concepts and terms in order to identify the specific parts of the political spectrum – right-wing extremism (von Beyme), the radical right (Minkenberg), right-wing radicalism (Weichsel) or the far right (Hloušek, Kopeček). These scholars used the terms synonymously and therefore we adopt a similar approach in this chapter. Focusing on extremist elements of right-wing politics in comparison with extremist elements of left-wing politics is typical of the research on extremism that has been conducted in Germany (the so-called ‘theory of extremism’). Tom Thieme—one of the theoreticians of extremism—applied approaches of this research in the East and Central European area, and he compared the legacies and strength of the communist and right-wing extremist parties (Thieme 2007).

As a starting point, we accept the existence of a far right party family, which can be divided into two groups. We understand the term right-wing extremism to be the ideologies and movements aimed against the main values of a democratic constitutional state (mostly against pluralism, equality and democratic procedures), based on ideas of biological inequality (Bötticher and Mares, 2012). On the other hand, the ideology of right-wing populist parties is based on a combination of nativism, authoritarianism and populism (Mudde 2007). In accordance with the introductory chapter of this book (Heinisch and Mazzoleni in this volume), populism is understood here as the “intrinsically ambivalent claim diffused by individual and collective actors in order to challenge the status-quo in favour of people’s empowerment and elite change”.

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In other words, populism constructs the moralistic divide between the corrupt and allegedly incompetent elites and the pure people, whose power, previously held by the elites, should be restored (Mudde 2004a; Stanley 2008; Albertazzi and McDonnell 2008). Nativism is defined here in accordance with Mudde, that is, as “an ideology that holds that states should be inhabited exclusively by members of the native group (‘the nation’) and that the normative elements (persons and ideas) are fundamentally threatening the homogeneous nation state” (Mudde 2007: 19). By authoritarianism, we understand “the belief in a strictly ordered society, in which infringements of authority are to be punished severely” (Mudde 2007: 23). The main aim of this chapter is to examine both right-wing extremism and right-wing populism in Central and Eastern Europe, and research on them within the context of sociocultural legacies with specific attention devoted to the legacies of communism. The main focus will be placed on the identity and the emergence of right-wing extremism and populism, partly from a perspective which compares both phenomena to West European experiences. After examining the current state of research, we summarise the main areas of contemporary research on right-wing extremism and populism in Central and Eastern Europe and outline possibilities for further research in the future.

The State of Research on Right-wing Extremist and Populist Legacies

Right-wing extremism occupied a relevant position within the party system of new democracies in East Central Europe shortly after the start of the democratisation process. In the first or second elections after the fall of communism, right-wing extremist parties were successful in several countries (for example, the Serbian Radical Party). Also at that time there was the first surge in right-wing extremist violence in Eastern and Central Europe (mostly against the Roma, immigrants and political opponents; specific cases are the Baltic states, where Russian nationalists incited violence against local targets) (Mareš 2005; Mudde 2005). It is also important to mention that in the 1990s temporarily established right-wing authoritarian regimes existed (for example, the so-called Meciarism in Slovakia).

Right-wing extremism during this era has been investigated in studies on transformation. There are studies on democratic consolidation (Beyme 1997: 34-7) within the broader context of consolidation of representation (Merkel 2010: 120), studies on nationalism (as an expression of ethno-nationalist tensions in the post-communist era) (Jahn 2008) and studies on non-democratic regimes (as a constitutive element of several new right-wing authoritarian regimes) (Balík and Kubát 2015). The more important legacy of current research, however, is connected with research on the radical right. Published by Klaus von Beyme (1996), it is based on the concept of organised intolerance (Ramet 1999) and comparative approaches within the research on political parties. Beyme also connected the issue of right-wing extremism with the spread of populism (Beyme 1996: 424-34).

A debate about the character of right-wing radicalism proceeded on the pages of the German journal *Osteuropa* in 2002. Its starting point was an article written by Tim Beichelt and Michael Minkenberg about the conditions of establishing and explaining the model of the radical right in transformation societies. The authors argued that the formation and consolidation of the radical right was a result of the social changes which took place after the socio-economic and sociocultural modernisation in post-communist Europe (Beichelt and Minkenberg

2002a: 260–2). Several authors published case studies on the radical right in Central and Eastern Europe in this journal; other authors discussed the question of whether right-wing radicalism could be considered a phenomenon *sui generis* (Weichsel 2002). This debate was again summarised by Beichelt and Minkenberg (2002b).

Minkenberg later analysed legacies of the radical right in Central and Eastern Europe with the help of the following categories: nation type, existence of external homelands, existence of strong national minority, regime conflict (regime contested by major political forces), transformation costs, non-reformed post-communist parties with “communist-nationalist” predecessors and nationalist parties. Minkenberg labelled the radical right a “syncretic construct” and he stated: “it is derived from both pre-communist and communist legacies” (Minkenberg 2010: 20–4).

Specific attention was paid to the East and Central European radical right by Cas Mudde. He published an article about political parties (Mudde 2000a) and then he edited the book “Racist extremism in East and Central Europe”, in which he analysed not only political parties but also militant non-parliamentary movements and subcultures, and racist incidents. Mudde concluded that the real political power of the right-wing extremist parties was limited and the level of racist violence in East and Central Europe was higher than in Western Europe (Mudde 2005). In his later contributions, Mudde researched the Eastern and Western radical right and extremist parties within a single analytical framework which included populism, radicalism and extremism (Mudde 2007; Mudde 2016).

The far right parties have also been researched within the context of party family research. An interesting approach can be found in the work of Vít Hloušek and Lubomír Kopeček. They stated: “Comparing the identity of the East-Central European far right with the Western European far right at the end of the 20th century, generally the East-Central European far right was much more influenced by the historical legacy left over from the first half of the last century. In this sense the East-Central European far right was much “older” and “traditional”” (Hloušek and Kopeček 2010: 216).

The initial rise of right-wing populist parties in Western Europe is usually explained as a result of the “silent counter-revolution” of the late 1960s (Ignazi 1992). While the resurgence of the green and libertarian parties stemmed from the counter-revolution within the context of the rising salience of post-materialist values (Inglehart 1977), right-wing populist parties emerged as the defenders of those feeling under threat from the changes brought about by post-industrial societies and globalisation (Kriesi et al. 2008). However, the original modernisation losers thesis (Betz 1993) can hardly be applied to the rise of right-wing populist parties in Central and Eastern Europe after the fall of communism in 1989. Instead, taking into account the effects of the legacies of (post-) communist societies, we can use an innovative approach to modernisation theory as a heuristically interesting explanatory framework for the emergence and the ideology of the populist right in Central and Eastern Europe. As stated by Minkenberg (2002: 336), “[b]esides country-specific histories and opportunity structures, the overall analytical frame for the CEE radical right is multiple modernisation processes, that is, a transformation from authoritarian regimes to liberal democracies, from state socialist to capitalist market economies, and from industrialism to post-industrialism.” All three dimensions of modernisation have increased (the perceived) economic and cultural insecurity, which has created a breeding ground for the mobilisation of support for right-wing populist groups, which

offer simplistic solutions to those negatively affected by the transformation. Kitschelt (1995) noted in the mid-1990s that nationalist authoritarian appeals had often been combined with the leftist position on the economically defined axis of competition. This created a ‘winning formula’ that was different from the often economically neo-liberal right-wing populist parties in Western Europe (although the defence of extensive welfare spending has become an integral part of the programmatic base of populist radical right parties in Western Europe in recent years) (De Lange 2007; Jungar and Jupskås 2014). In other words, right-wing populist parties emerged as defenders of ‘transition losers’ suffering from the economic transformation and opposing the free-market capitalist environment. Moreover, unlike West European countries, the region of post-communist CEE has not (yet) experienced extensive immigration from non-European countries. This lack of non-European immigration has had important effects on the exclusionary ideology of CEE right-wing populist parties in defining the enemy of the nation as either “within the state but outside the nation” (national or ethnic minorities) (Mudde 2007) or even beyond its borders. As stated by Minkenberg (who takes into consideration the previous process of nation building), “external homelands” and “lost territories” have been especially prominent themes for the radical right, who use “offensive ultranationalism” that targets neighbouring countries rather than defensive nationalism (typical of the radical right in Western Europe), which aims at protecting a nation’s culture, welfare etc. from immigrants’ (Minkenberg 2013: 26). Consequently, the Roma minority became the target of nativist discourse of the Czech Association for the Republic – the Republican Party of Czechoslovakia (Hanley 2012), the Slovak National Party (Spáč 2012) and Jobbik in Hungary (Havlík 2012). In Bulgaria, the Turkish minority became the target of Ataka’s nativist appeal. Expansive appeals by the Hungarian Jobbik (attacking the Trianon Treaty), the Greater Romania Party and the Bulgarian Ataka are the most important representatives of this offensive ultranationalism in the CEE (Pirro 2014). To sum up, the most important consequences of communist legacies (and sometimes even the legacies preceding the instalment of the communist regimes) had important consequences on the ideological profile of right-wing populist parties in Central and Eastern Europe. First, they were established primarily as defenders of the losers of transformation, who criticised the introduction of liberal economic reforms. Second, the absence of an immigrant population and the presence of either national or ethnic minorities made the nativist appeal of right-wing populist parties considerably different from the majority of their Western counterparts.

In his study of populism in Central and Eastern Europe, Cas Mudde (2000b) examined the effects of the communist legacy on the presence of the three types of populism: agrarian populism, economic populism and political populism. According to Mudde (2000b: 41), the non-existence of agrarian populism was accounted for not just by the process of industrialisation but also by communist policies of collectivisation, having effectively liquidated the old family farms, which were traditionally the basis of agrarian populism in Europe and elsewhere. Exceptions were seen in countries in which the rural population resisted collectivisation (the rise of Self-Defence in Poland) (Stanley 2015) or where collectivisation was not as effective due to the partial liberalisation of economic policies (Hungary Independent Smallholders’ Party). Despite the potential rise of economic populism stemming from socialisation under ‘protective’ state socialism, economic populism did not materialise in Central and Eastern Europe during the 1990s. Mudde explained the lack of economic populism (with the partial exceptions of Slovakia and Belarus) with reference to both the prevalent pro-market economic reform of the

transition period and the persistent dominance of the neo-liberal economic paradigm on international markets. As for political populism (equated with populist right-wing parties), the Leninist legacy created favourable conditions for several reasons. First, the existence of anti-political sentiments or anti-partyism as a result of the negative perception of former state parties is comparable to the Manichean division between the pure people and the corrupt elites, which is typical of populism. Moreover, it is reinforced by the nihilist, atomised post-socialist society. What is also important is that these anti-political sentiments were also expressed by some of the most influential intellectuals of the transition period, such as Václav Havel or Lech Wałęsa. Havel's famous thesis about "non-political politics" emphasises the role of citizenship in contrast to politics as a "technology of power and manipulation with it or as cyber-management of the people or as the art of pragmatism and intrigues" (Havel 1989: 106). Another example is the narrative of the first Solidarity in Poland, which stresses the non-political role of the independent trade unions (Ost 2006). The anti-political sentiment in polarised post-transition societies was later 'captured by opportunists and anti-democrats', be they right-wing (for example, the Association for the Republic – the Republican Party of Czechoslovakia) or former communist parties.

Nevertheless, to get a more detailed picture of the effects of communist legacies on the emergence of right-wing populist parties, the commonalities described need to be supplemented with a more idiosyncratic view which takes into consideration the specifics of the countries. Bustikova and Kitschelt (2009) used the well-known typology of communist regimes (patrimonial, national accommodative and bureaucratic authoritarian) (Kitschelt 1995) as the explanatory framework in their quantitative study of the electoral success of radical right parties in CEE. The former national accommodative communist regimes (for example, the states of the former Yugoslavia, Hungary) turned into a less polarised party competition with both the governing and the opposition parties supporting the liberal democratic and economic reforms and, at the same time, trying to preserve the 'quasi-welfare state' inherited from the previous communist regime. The lack of contestation on the economically defined dimension of competition soon led to the opening of the social-cultural dimension of contestation between national conservative (sometimes emphasising Christian values) and liberal secular, universalistic, libertarian and cosmopolitan political parties. Moreover, the economic success of the 1990s accompanied by social policy compensation left only limited space for the rise of right-wing populist parties in the former national accommodative communist regimes. Although the economic decline that followed after the period of prosperity opened the door for the resurgence of right-wing populist parties, the strategy of intensifying the social-cultural dimension of competition pursued by the mainstream parties diminished the chances of success for the populist right (Bustikova and Kitschelt 2009).

In contrast, according to Bustikova and Kitschelt (2009), the former patrimonial communist regimes provided more favourable conditions for the rise of right-wing populist parties. The democratic transition was accompanied by great political (unstable institutions) and economic problems, although part of the authoritarian and nostalgic grievance generated by economic turmoil fuelled support for unreformed successor communist parties. The potential for the rise of right-wing populists remained quite high even after the partial economic recovery of the 2000s, partly because of the partial change in governmental policies towards the market-oriented economic reforms. As for the bureaucratic authoritarian regimes (the Czech Republic and the former East Germany), a polarised party competition between the centre-right and so-

cialist forces over economic reform was established. Despite the introduction of (neo-) liberal economic reforms, the potential for the rise of right-wing populist parties remained only at a modest level because “[t]he intransigent communist party always remained available to rally voters disappointed with the introduction of the capitalist market regime.” (Bustikova and Kitschelt 2009: 465). Another factor Bustikova and Kitschelt took into consideration was the ethnic composition of post-communist countries with the greatest potential for the rise of right-wing populist parties in countries “with small, entrenched ethnic minorities, as well as with irredentist claims against their neighbours” (Bustikova and Kitschelt 2009: 468), such as Hungary and Romania.

Ongoing Debates and the Limitations of Right-wing Extremism and Populism in Central and Eastern Europe

Current debates refer to previous research. The relatively strong presence of right-wing extremist parties with a ‘traditional’ profile in the East Central European party systems in the middle of the 2010s is a challenge to democracy in this area (the Jobbik in Hungary, the People’s Party Our Slovakia, the National Movement in Poland and so on). The consolidation of several Central and Eastern European democracies was connected with EU enlargement. However, recent extremist trends are discussed in the analytical framework of the possible de-consolidation of democracy. Extremism is only one of more possible de-consolidation phenomena (Dufek, Holzer and Mareš 2016).

An important debate is still focused on the issue of a possible specific character of right-wing extremism in Central and Eastern Europe. In research, this *sui generis* character is connected mostly with deeper links to the traditional fascist and right-wing authoritarian legacy (including irredentist goals or the existence of paramilitary units). However, we can observe tendencies towards the modernisation of right-wing extremism in East and Central Europe, on the one hand (the rise of new anti-Islamist movements) (Mareš 2014), and the rise of the ‘traditional’ right-wing extremist parties in other parts of the continent (for example, Golden Dawn in Greece), on the other.

Since the EU enlargement, some of the right-wing extremist parties from Central and Eastern Europe have been involved in EU parliamentary politics and in cooperation with Western European partners. The presence of the extreme right parties is described by Michael Minkenberg and Oliver Kossack: “*The maturation of democracies in Eastern Europe*, along with their integration into the Western capitalist order and the European Union, did not lead to a withering-away of ultranationalism in the region. Evidently the first outbreaks of ultranationalism and racist extremism during and after the collapse of communist regimes in 1989 failed to consolidate themselves into permanent features of the political order, as has happened with the radical right in most West European countries since the societal and political shifts of the 1980s.” (Minkenberg and Kossack 2015: 349)

The right-wing extremist spectrum in Central and Eastern Europe can be divided according to geopolitical changes in the region. Right-wing extremists in the new member countries of the European Union are directly involved in multilevel EU politics. Right-wing extremist Eurosceptics occupy a specific position in EU candidate countries. In the Western Balkans, this

part of the political spectrum is determined by the legacies of ethnic wars in the 1990s (Stojarová 2014). The rise of traditional right-wing extremism, including paramilitary units, is connected with the recent conflict in Ukraine (Færseth 2015). A phenomenon *sui generis* is right-wing extremism in Russia, where it is divided into pro-regime and anti-regime factions. The Russian extreme right has contact to Central and Western European countries, and the current Russian regime is an inspiration to or supporter of several right-wing extremist parties and movements in the European Union (Mareš and Laryš 2015).

The recent research on right-wing populism has gradually left the (previously not dominant) perspective of legacies. The Eastern enlargement of the European Union has resulted in the examination of the relationships right-wing populist parties have towards European integration. It is usually one of the topics of political analysis in broader cross-national comparative studies (Mudde 2004b; Kopecký and Mudde 2002; Lewis and Mansfeldová 2006) and national case studies (Kaniok and Havlík 2016; Szczerbiak and Taggart 2008). Not surprisingly, the nativism of right-wing populist parties determines their Eurosceptical stance, in which they either call for European integration to be turned into an intergovernmental form of collaboration or ask to leave the European Union. The parliamentary and sometimes even governmental presence of right-wing populist parties (the League of Polish Families between 2006 and 2007 or the Slovak National Party between 2006 and 2010) provoked an intensive discussion about the impact of (right-wing) populism on the quality of democracy (Hanley 2012; Deegan-Krause 2012; Stanley 2016; Havlík 2016), with ambivalent findings stemming mostly from the nature of populism as 'democratic illiberalism' (Pappas 2014). A number of studies have focused on the effects of the global financial crisis and the crisis of the Eurozone on the electoral success of right-wing populist parties. Hernández and Kriesi (2016) found that the economic crisis led to the improved electoral performance of the radical right, radical left and non-mainstream parties on average. The edited volume on the impact of the economic crisis on populism in Europe (Kriesi and Pappas 2015) emphasises the effects of both economic and political crises. However, the impact of the economic crisis remains ambiguous in countries without a successful populist right, despite the fact they were heavily hit by the crisis (Romania and Slovenia). On the other hand, there are several countries that did quite well during the crisis but still experienced a (modest) rise in right-wing populist parties (the Czech Republic, Poland or Slovakia) (see also Kriesi and Pappas 2015). In other words, the effects of the economic crisis on the rise of right-wing populist parties are one of the issues that needs further examination in the future.

Conclusion

Right-wing extremism and right-wing populism in Central and Eastern Europe have been strongly influenced by historical legacies (including the legacies of the fascist and communist eras and the Versailles border system). The development of the first half of the 20th century left strong ethnic minorities outside their national states (most typically the Hungarian minority in Slovakia and Romania and the Romanian minority in Hungary). That has become an important issue in the nationalist mobilisation of both extreme and populist right-wing actors in Central and Eastern Europe. Moreover, while communism suppressed the ethnic tensions in the multinational federations (the former Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia), post-1989 democ-

racy transition created an opportunity for the nativist and separatist appeals of the extreme and populist right. Unlike the extreme and right-wing populist parties in Western Europe, their nativist xenophobic appeals were not primarily aimed at non-European immigrants but very often at the Roma minority. Furthermore, the market-oriented economic transition often turned populist and extreme parties into advocates of 'transition losers', defending rather egalitarian policies with an emphasis on an extensive welfare state which protects the social groups most severely hit by the economic transformation. However, recent developments (including the immigration crisis) show a growing interconnection with pan-European issues, on the one hand, (Muslim immigration, in particular) and the influence of Russia, on the other. While scientific research into right-wing extremism and populism seems to be well developed, several important challenges for future research can be identified, including the 'Russian card', the perception of immigration, radicalisation of the mainstream and the rise of new populist actors.

The future research agenda on right-wing extremism in Central and Eastern Europe should verify the impact of the historical legacies on the character of this phenomenon. The possible *sui generis* element should be identified as a result of a comparison with other geopolitical areas. The historical trajectories of the rise and the loss of influence in individual countries need to be explained (for example, the return of strong right-wing extremist parties to parliaments in Hungary or Slovakia). The coexistence of traditional right-wing extremist scenes with right-wing authoritarian governments (for example, in Poland) or with new 'westernised' anti-Islamist populism is also an interesting challenge to scientific research. The unclear borders between extremism, populism and the established spectrum should be also clarified in the future. Due to international development, the 'Russian card' is an important factor in the development of right-wing extremism in this area. Some right-wing extremist groupings are strongly pro-Russian (for example, the National Democracy in the Czech Republic), and some are anti-Russian (for example, the Right Sector in Ukraine). Russian right-wing extremist groupings are active in the Russian diaspora in Central and Eastern European countries. Scientific interest should be focused on countermeasures against right-wing extremism too. In Central and Eastern Europe, various instruments of militant democracy were applied (including a ban on right-wing extremist parties or associations); however, their short-term and long-term effects have not been described or analysed more deeply. This issue is an important part of the pan-European debate about the sense and effectiveness of counter-extremist measures (Mudde 2016: 129-36).

The 'Russian card' mentioned in the context of the extremist right is also relevant in the study of the right-wing populist parties that have expressed pro-Russian attitudes. One of the possible research topics that has arisen from this is the motivation for these attitudes – is it an ideologically driven choice resulting from Euroscepticism and/or the anti-liberalism of the populist right (the well-known 'enemy of my enemy is my friend')? Or is it a pragmatic *quid pro quo* step stemming from Russian 'incentives'? The current immigration crisis provides at least two challenges for further research. First, it is the 'Westernisation' of right-wing populist parties in CEE that is making anti-immigration the most salient issue for these parties. Second, it is possible to observe what Michael Minkenberg called 'radicalisation of the mainstream'. The policies of the Orbán cabinet in Hungary, the Szydło cabinet in Poland, and the xenophobic rhetoric of Czech President Miloš Zeman and the Slovakian Prime Minister Fico are the most visible examples of the illiberal, populist turn of politics in Central and Eastern Europe (Rup-

nik 2007; Dawson and Hanley 2016). This makes the participation of populist parties in government and their impact on the quality of democracy one of the most important topics for future research, since Hungarian, Polish and most recently Czech experiences throw the rise of populism as a litmus test for the quality of democratic representation into doubt. Instead, the illiberal face of populism has gained the upper hand in the region of Central and Eastern Europe. A detailed examination of the ongoing changes and, more importantly, the reasons behind the rise of populism are necessary.

In fact, mainstream parties are becoming radical and – vice versa – radical parties are becoming mainstream. The fact that formerly moderate parties are moving towards authoritarian and nativist positions is also relevant from the perspective of the conceptual discussion about the nature of right-wing populism, which seems to have become a strategic rhetorical tool vis-à-vis the xenophobic majority of electorates. One of the questions that has arisen is whether we can still talk about the category of right-wing populist parties or ‘just’ about a degree of right-wing populist rhetoric which serves as a temporarily effective tactic in electoral competition. The role of the legacy of communism in underdeveloped civil societies and political parties that are not firmly socially rooted (Biezen 2003) and therefore more flexible in their programmatic and strategic choices is obvious. Moreover, besides the rise of several right-wing populist parties, future research should also concentrate on a new species of populism in Central and Eastern Europe: the so-called new/centrist populist parties (Učeň 2007; Pop-Eleches 2010) which make corruption the crucial element of their anti-establishment appeal. The communist legacy which has rendered society more prone to corruption and creating the favourable opportunity structures for the rise of these populist parties is apparent. Although these parties lack the usual radical element of the populist right, their illiberal, anti-party politics (often combined with the organisational model of business firm parties) (Havlík and Hloušek 2014; Kopeček 2016) makes them an important object in the study of the development of democracies in Central and Eastern Europe.

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CHAPTER 11:

HOW FAR DOES NATIONALISM GO? AN OVERVIEW OF POPULIST PARTIES IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

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[B] Introduction

Since Ionescu and Gellner (1969) reopened the discussion about how populism can be defined, the conceptual solidity of the term has been a controversial issue. The emotional (negative) charge carried by populism was often used to criticise its normative and evaluative biases (Mudde 2007). In the post-communist countries, these normative judgements rapidly proliferated and, soon after regime change, populism was perceived as a major threat to democracy. Beyond the regional focus, over the last two decades a particularly fertile collection of literature has brought numerous conceptual refinements to populism, clarified its meaning and addressed the challenge of its normative valence (Mudde 2016). By now, although scholars continue to mean different things when using the same term (Bonikowski and Gidron 2016), populism is considered both a legitimate and a necessary concept. However, most of the literature on it endorses the need to reinforce populism's analytical value by avoiding classifying all the new parties with weak ideological features as populist, a constant menace in post-communist party politics (Sikk 2009).

The literature on populism refers both to empirical facts, such as the expansion of electoral support for populist parties across Europe and on almost all other continents (Gherghina et al. 2013), and to the so-called perception of a major challenge for contemporary democracies (Mudde 2007). This is also the case in Central and Eastern Europe, where most of the research uses the common denominator of “the worshipped people” (Ionescu and Gellner 1969: 4) to assess populism and its variants. More recent studies have also shown the utility of using populism as a scale, implying that parties can be assessed as more populist or less populist.

This chapter aims to provide an overview of populist parties across Central and Eastern Europe with a focus on six countries (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia) between 1990 and 2016. The most recent elections taken into consideration are those in Slovakia in March 2016. The chapter starts with a theoretical section about the ambivalent framing of populism in the region. This section also includes details about the varieties of populist actors, and presents their electoral fortunes and general features of development. A caveat has to be mentioned. The vast majority of post-communist parties that correspond to the criteria identified in our theoretical part are classified as radical right forms of populism. Among the most well-known cases of inclusionary populism in post-communist Europe are the Socialist Labour Party (PSM) in Romania and Self-Defence in Poland. Still, in order to provide an in-depth, although succinct, analysis of the features of post-communist populism, sections one and two focus exclusively on its radical right forms.

Considering the above, the second section presents a qualitative content analysis of the party programmes belonging to six populist parties, one from each country, in the most recent legislative elections. Next, we discuss the ambivalent relationship between discourse and practice by revealing populism's two major contradictions. At this level, in order to broaden the discussion, the last section goes beyond the category of radical right populists. Hence, we integrate insights into our analysis about left-wing forms of populism and leaders that strategically use a populist-based discourse in order to mobilise their voters although they cannot be considered representatives of populist parties according to our definition and the consolidated literature. These two additional insights are used as so-called control cases in order to frame the peculiarities of populism better in the area of reference of this chapter. The conclusions summarise our main findings and shed light on avenues for further research.

The ambivalent framing of populism in Central and Eastern Europe

Populism in post-communist Europe has become a major concern of academic research since the early 1990s. While, in the early days, scholars focused mostly on single case analyses, over the last decade several comparative analyses have deepened the knowledge on the post-communist variants of the phenomenon. The most recent literature on populism goes beyond the emphasis on regional peculiarities (for example, repertoires based on both material and identity-based interests) and engages more intensively with the literature on Western Europe (Bustikova and Kitschelt 2009; Stojarová 2013; Minkenberg 2015a; Pirro 2015; Pytlas 2016). Building on this literature and in coherence with the minimal definition endorsed by this handbook, we refer to populism as a discursive frame which aims to challenge the status quo with the aim of restoring the power of the people and replacing the establishment (the *élites*), their dominant ideas and values. In other words, we assume that before being “a reaction against power structures” *tout court*, populism is “an appeal to a recognised authority” (Canovan 1999: 4), namely the people seen as the unique source of sovereignty and the genuine depository of virtues. Implicitly, the emphasis on the pureness of the people echoes the rottenness of the antagonistic group: the *élites* in power that have proved to be incapable of dealing with the (real) post-communist problems. A caveat has to be mentioned. Drawing on Mudde's and Rovira Kaltwasser's (2013) methodological precautions, we are aware that the implicit consequence of referring to a minimal definition is that our point of departure is rather high on the ladder of abstraction and as such we refer to a highly inclusive definition, accounting for a wide variety of parties and movements. The limitations in terms of precision due to this highly inclusive definition are however counterbalanced by the extension of the cases covered.

Conceptual Delimitations: A Multifaceted Political Phenomenon

Building upon Mudde (Mudde 2004: 543), we can use two core criteria to identify a populist party: 1) its anti-establishment criticisms and 2) its exaltation of the iconic role of a harmonious people in democracy. The two criteria are necessary and sufficient conditions; focusing on only one of the two criteria does not justify a party's inclusion in the family of populist parties. In line with the chameleonic quality of populism (Taggart 2000), the content and the

intensity of the two criteria can vary across time and space according to the specific context in which the populist parties evolve and, as such, affect the degrees of populism.

The first criterion focuses on parties' voicing of the malfunctioning of post-communist democracy. Significantly, most of the post-communist populist parties did not challenge the legitimacy of democracy *per se*. They depict themselves as the 'true democrats', those who translate the real problems of society and advocate correctives for a more transparent democracy which is interested in the people. This 'allegiance' to democracy has to be connected with the legal dispositions adopted since the early 90s through constitutions and party laws across the region (van Biezen 2012). Inspired by the German model of 'militant democracy', the post-communist legal framework promotes civil and political freedoms and cautiously restricts certain ideologies and party activities on the grounds that they contradict democratic principles (Casal Bértoa and van Biezen 2014: 299–300). With different levels of explicitness and intensity, bans on fascism, Nazism or communism, and also on a wider category of extremist behaviour (for example, separatist, insurrectionary, etc.), are in place across the region (van Biezen and Borz 2012). These legal instruments do not have full control over the forms of extremism chronicled by the literature on populism, in particular in relation to a myriad of movements and groups that multiplied outside the parliamentary arena; still, they can be considered an important deterrent and explain the relatively few cases of radical fascism across the region. In all the cases under scrutiny in this chapter, the parties have siphoned away violence as a solution to the democratic malaise.

For the sake of precision, it is important to specify the limited agreement in the literature on a clear-cut distinction between post-communist radical right parties and extremist radical right parties that position themselves in open contestation with the democratic constitutional order (Pirro 2015, 23–27). The extension of explicit or implicit legacies of the pre-communist authoritarian experiences is put into direct connection with the anti-democratic features of numerous post-communist parties (Minkenberg 2002). However, we fully agree with Pirro's detailed argument: "the 'nostalgic' discourse of populist radical right parties in Central and Eastern Europe is still employed within the framework of parliamentary democracy and, at least nominally, abides by its rules" (Pirro 2015, 25). Pirro's arguments are reinforced by Bourne and Casal Bértoa's (2017) most recent analysis. The two scholars illustrate that there are relatively few bans of post-communist parties that are considered to undermine the legitimacy of the democratic system (Bourne and Casal Bértoa 2017). However, the bans chronicled by the literature (e.g., the Slovak Community-National Party (2006), the Romanian Communist Party (Nepeceeristi) (2008), the Czech Workers' Party (2010)) (Casal Bértoa and van Biezen 2014, 300) address less the ideological features of the parties and more their anti-democratic activities (Casal Bértoa and van Biezen 2014, 300). This limited focus explains how it is possible to identify 13 new (extra-parliamentary) parties in contemporary Romania whose founders, names or ideology echo 'nostalgic' interpretations of national identity. Finally yet importantly, most of these legal aspects documented across the region in relation to this topic have dealt with small parties but did not involve legal action against major parties with increased potential of contestation. The 17 parties analysed in this chapter are characterised by different degrees of radicalism, yet they abide by democratic rules and can as such be considered representatives of a radical right populist family that (differing by intensity and content) embodies an opposition to the establishment in the name of a pure organic community and a restored popular sovereignty.

The second criterion translates the Manichean populist repertoire. Like their Western counterparts, post-communist populist parties distinguish between the people (depicted as pure, homogeneous and simple) and the deceitful elites. All in all, as in the Western case, the way the idea of “the people” is encompassed is context-dependent, and, as such, the definition of people may vary “from populist to populist, even within one country” (Mudde 2004: 546) and, most importantly, across time. Unlike interwar fascism, most of the post-communist populist parties praise values of equality within the community of reference, although the usefulness of traditional hierarchies maintains its rhetorical power, in particular in relation to the dominant position of the party leader. Across the region, the enemies populism reacts against are not exclusively located within the establishment; they are mainly fought off in an attempt to hamper the intrusion of an ethnic sources of heterogeneity (Bustikova and Kitschelt 2009; Minkenberg 2015a). As illustrated by Pirro (2015), the ethnic dimension is an omnibus issue for this political family. The myth of a homogeneous nation directly targets the local ethnic minorities (for example, Magyar, Jews, Roma) not only in relation to their disruptive effect on the culturally homogeneous community, but also in relation to their impact on the social-economic benefits (*in primis* the Roma community) and the alleged involvement of the Jewish community in anti-national conspiracies.

On this dimension, the literature on populism consensually assesses that post-communist populism has *ab origine* had a stronger exclusionary identity; the parties’ discourses have been more openly racist, anti-Semitic and xenophobic, echoing the relatively higher levels of aggregate xenophobia at a society level and the absorption of intolerant, aggressive and vulgar discourses by the media (Minkenberg 2015a: 40). Across time, the populist parties found increased resonance within the political environment, considering the mainstream political parties’ constant reluctance to denounce discriminatory speeches (Mudde 2005; Cinpoes 2015), coupled with their progressive radicalisation (for example, Fidesz or PiS (Law and Justice)).¹ Across the region, there are numerous examples of legitimised ethnic, religious, social or moral taboo-breaking, not only among the representatives of the populist family but also among the mainstream parties, transformed into nearby competitors of radical right populism (Minkenberg 2015a; Pirro 2015; Bustikova 2016; Pytlas 2016).

The ethnic dimension has been mainly used in two different ways. There have been attempts to isolate the out-group in order to reinforce the congruence within the in-group (for example, Gypsy crime in Hungary, the allegation of irredentism against the Hungarian minority in Ro-

1 The peculiarity of the entire region is the increasingly blurred boundaries between radical populist parties and radicalised mainstream parties (Bustikova 2016). If we accept that populist parties are characterised by a so-called ‘thin-centred’ ideology (Mudde 2004) and, as such, lack a coherent and complex grand vision of the society, we consider that both Fidesz and PiS are first of all bearers of a ‘full’ conservative ideology. They have a thick ideology on which radical-right populist elements have been progressively crafted. Most notably, beyond the increased emphasis on the nativist dimension, these parties’ relation with the democratic settings has been questioned, in particular in relation to their attempt to undermine the checks and balances (e.g., control of the constitutional court, neutralisation of the media, etc.) (Börzel and Schimmelfennig 2017). We consider these parties to be part of a limbo like state—lost in between their original full ideology and the appeal of populist features. A rather different case is the Slovak SMER, born as a protest party openly avoiding any ideological collocation. In the early 2000s, SMER was considered a populist party (Deegan-Krause and Haughton 2009). However, SMER progressively abandoned the initial features and moved towards a traditional full ideology. Strategically, SMER gathered different small social democratic parties, increasingly appealing to voters of the social-democratic party from which Robert Fico originates. In parallel, the Party’s program has put progressive emphasis on social justice as a main *topos* of its programmes. In brief, we can say that while SMER is in a process of “mainstreamisation”, Fidesz and PiS are migrating towards populism. These elements explain why these parties haven’t been covered in this chapter.

mania or Hungary). In parallel, the ethnic definition of the community has also been used in order to reinforce the congruence among the members of the nation beyond the borders of the state by strengthening relationships with external kin-communities (for example, the relations with the diasporas of minorities belonging to other independent states and the projects of territorial reunification). Although different in terms of content, the two variants can coexist within the same party. A nuance has to be mentioned though; the intensity and extension of the ethnic definition of the community is influenced by indicators such as ethnic heterogeneity, cultural legacies and economic performance (Bustikova 2016).

Populist Diversity

On this common ground, the post-communist populists deploy a variety of repertoires and programmatic contents with both inclusionary and exclusionary populism (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2013). While the left-wing dimension of populism has remained underdeveloped across the region, most of the cases chronicled by the literature on it exhibit predominantly radical right populist features, with a major emphasis on an exclusive ethnic identity (Pankowski 2010, Minkenberg 2015b; Pirro 2015; Pytlas 2016).² The very few examples of left-wing populists include criticism of the exploitation of the people in their discourses (that is, farmers in the case of Self-Defence in Poland). In the following pages, we will focus exclusively on the parliamentary populist radical right frameworks of mass mobilisation. Focusing on the nativist dimension allows us to circumscribe the nature and the causes of the birth and endurance of post-communist populist parties over the last quarter of century better. We identified 17 parliamentary parties that can be labelled as radical right populist parties. These parties are: Ataka (Attack), the IMRO (Bulgarian National Movement)³, and the NFSB (the National Front for the Salvation of Bulgaria) in Bulgaria; the SPR-RSČ (Coalition for a Republic – the Republican Party of Czechoslovakia) and Úsvit (the Dawn of Direct Democracy) in the Czech Republic; Jobbik (the Movement for a Better Hungary) and the MIEP (the Hungarian Justice and Life Party) in Hungary; the KPN (Confederation for an Independent Poland), the LPR (the League of Polish Families), the ROP (Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland), the UPR (Real Politics Union) and ZChN (Christian National Union) in Poland; the PRM (Greater Romania Party), the PP-DD (People's Party – Dan Diaconescu) and the PUNR (Romanian National Unity Party) in Romania; the ĽSNS (People's Party – Our Slovakia) and the SNS (Slovak National Party) in Slovakia⁴.

If we adopt a time caesura linked to accession to the EU, we can see that nine radical populist parties obtained their first parliamentary representation in the pre-accession period although, according to the literature on democratic conditionality, EU sanctions for antidemocratic behaviour were more dissuasive before rather than after accession. Indeed, the implementation and applicability of sanctions in the case of breaches of democratic values after accession can-

² Other exclusion criteria range from religious to gender and from social to cultural issues (Minkenberg 2015, 28).

³ As illustrated by Krasteva (2013), IMRO has formed alliances with parties holding different views on nationalism, some of which are definitely non-nationalist, like the UDF in the 1990s. Starting with the 2001 legislative elections, its partners have exclusively been connected with a nationalist rhetoric, and the party progressively radicalised its profile.

⁴ We have excluded from our sample different splinters. In Slovakia, for instance, we have excluded the PSNS (the Real Slovak National party) and the United Slovak National Party (ZSNS). These are short-lived political experiences, for the most part reintegrated in the SNS.

not compete with the radical threat of withholding membership during the pre-accession phase (Sedelmeier 2014; Gherghina and Soare 2016).

Table 11.1: A Comparison between Several Features of Populist Discourse in Central and Eastern Europe

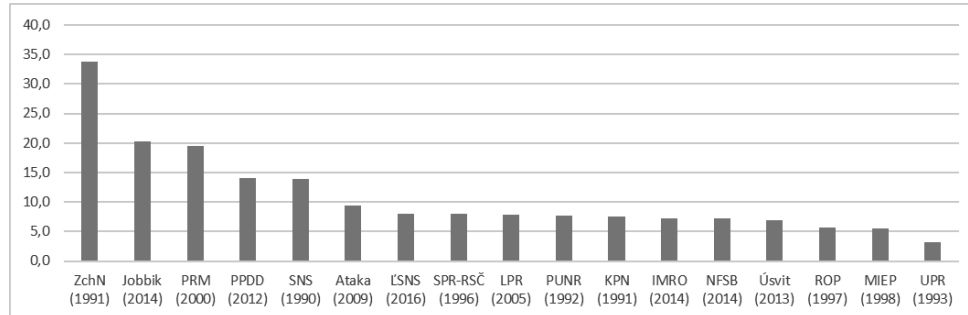
	Primary message	Nationalism	Anti-elite	State	Anti-international
Ataka	Nationalism	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong (NATO, IMF)
Úsvit	Public goods and education	Moderate	-	Minimal	No
Jobbik	Economy and diaspora	Strong	Strong	Moderate	Selective cooperation
UPR	Decentralization and taxation	Moderate	-	Minimal	Anti-EU
PP-DD	Nationalism	Strong	Strong	Strong	No
ESNS	Employment	Strong	Strong	Moderate	Strong (EU, NATO)

Note: - is used when an issue was not explicitly mentioned in the program

Source: Party programmes

If we analyse the duration of their parliamentary representation, only one party, the Slovakian SNS, has been in Parliament from 1990 until today, but with two interruptions (2002-2006 and 2012-2016). On average, the parties under scrutiny here have been in Parliament for 2.3 terms (the top position being held by the Slovakian SNS, followed by Ataka, the ZchN and the PRM). The position of ZchN in our sample needs to be examined in detail. The party has been part of different coalitions (Pankowski 2010, p. 79); by 1997, the ZchN enters the Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS). However, its power in seats is definitely less relevant than the electoral percentage of AWS in both 1997 and 2001 elections. Considering this caveat, if we refer to the electoral results of the other 16 parties from our sample, only one party (the Hungarian Jobbik in 2014) scored more than 20% in parliamentary elections, followed closely by the Romanian PRM in 2000 with 19.48%. Two other parties scored more than 10% and eleven fewer than 10%. All in all, populist parties are a relatively underdeveloped political family (on average less durable than their mainstream counterparts, less electorally successful, less organisationally developed, etc.). Nonetheless, these parties have been easily accepted into governmental coalitions (Minkenberg 2015a: 36). These parties are like Phoenix birds, parties cyclically reborn, sometimes arising from the very ashes of their predecessors (for example, Jobbik in Hungary).

In order to explain the widespread diffusion of the contestation based on exclusionary populism, specific cultural and structural factors can account for the endurance of this family. At the basis of this line of argument, the emergence of the populist radical right in post-communist Europe has been largely associated with post-communist stimuli generated by the triple or even quadruple transition to democracy, together with the cumulative weight of pre-communist (for example, irredentism, fascist experiences and clericalism) and communist (for example, types of communism, minority issues and features of state socialism) legacies (Mudde 2000; Bustikova and Kitschelt 2009; Pop-Eleches 2010; Pirro 2015).

*Figure 11.1: Best Electoral Results in Parliamentary Elections (1990-2016)*⁵

Source: European Election Database and authors' data

On the cultural dimension, three main legacies can be identified: the type of nation and nationalism in relatively recent states, the ethnic borders cutting across other independent states and minority-majority relations (Minkenberg 2015a: 38). Although the literature on populism lays more emphasis on the crisis of values that has been produced by the accelerated social and cultural changes of 1989 (Minkenberg 2002), the economic transformation also contributed to the framing of radical populist discourse. With very few exceptions (for example SNS), most of the radical right populist parties adopted a leftist position on economic issues, as a direct consequence of their mobilisation in favour of (national) state control over the economy. Similarly, these parties converged on the rejection of both Western individualism and a liberal model of democracy (Pop-Eleches 2010).

On this basis, two complementary topics have fuelled their discursive frames: the illegitimacy of the wealth accumulated by domestic elites and the high levels of corporate state capture (Minkenberg 2015b; Pirro 2015; Pytlas 2016). Not only were post-communist states confronted with the economic costs of the transition to democracy (for example, increased social and economic inequalities), but they had to deal with the political elites, who prioritised economic, social and cultural compliance with EU criteria over 'national' interests. Both left and right forms of radicalism criticised the loss of national autonomy over economic policies. In both cases, globalisation was perceived as a source of evil. The radical right framework has further fine-tuned its critical position against the EU, by referring to the cosmopolitan and culturally inclusive model of EU citizenship, which is increasingly associated with special rights for ethnic, sexual or social minorities (O'Dwyer 2012; Kitschelt 2015).

Populist Discourse

These different forms of populism are also reflected in the types of discourse and policies promoted by these parties. For illustrative purposes, this section briefly analyses the content of the political programmes used by six populist parties – one from each country – in the most recent elections. Our selection includes: Ataka (Bulgaria) in 2014, Úsvit (the Czech Republic) in

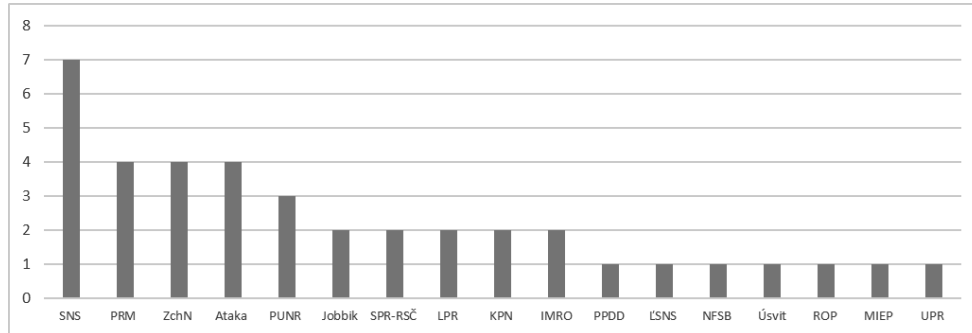
⁵ In 2014, the IMRO and the NFSB are part of the Patriotic Front alliance. We have included IMRO electoral results after the 2001 legislative elections and the alliance with George's Day Movement. In 1991, the ZchN is part of the Solidarity Electoral Action.

2013, Jobbik (Hungary) in 2014, the UPR (Poland) in 2015, the PP-DD (Romania) in 2012 and the ĽSNS (Slovakia) in 2016. We analyse these party programmes because they reflect the long-standing positions of the parties and they are often used as election manifestos. Only in the case of Jobbik did we use the policy programme. All the programmes were available on the parties' websites (see bibliography). Our qualitative content analysis will focus primarily on the topics broached in the programmes and the priorities given by these parties to some policy areas.

At a glance, most of the programmes analysed have a holistic approach to the problems without getting into too much detail. They are limited to the identification of the main problems in society and rarely describe the matters in depth or provide solutions. An exception to the rule is Jobbik, which focuses on several dimensions of policies, such an approach being partly due to its continuous representation in the legislature since its formation. In general, the populist parties investigated seek to include the core elements of their ideology in concentrated messages that catch the eye of voters. In that sense, four parties (Ataka, Úsvit, the PP-DD and the ĽSNS) structure their message according to a number of points, and the UPR in Poland partially does the same. Ataka uses the 20 points that promoted them to parliament in 2005, Úsvit focuses on 18 points that touch upon key issues in Czech society, the Romanian PP-DD presents 100 points with eclectic and contradictory statements, while the ĽSNS structures its ideas according to 10 points (called commandments by the party). As a result of these features, these populist programmes are minimalistic and have several strong messages to convey.

Table 11.1 includes a comparison of several features of populist discourse among the parties analysed. The first column summarises the general message conveyed by the party programme. In the previous section, it was shown how the emergence and development of populism in Central and Eastern Europe followed the lines of ethnic divisions, strong nationalism and a radical, anti-elitist approach. Reading the programmes used during the most recent parliamentary elections in their countries indicates that these parties diversified their messages to address other prominent issues in society. In this sense, the conservative parties are Ataka and the PP-DD, which promote nationalism at the core of their programmes. Both advertise the importance of nationality and call for a ban on ethnic parties. Ataka ends its programme with "Let's regain Bulgaria for the Bulgarians!", while the PP-DD programme is filled with utopian promises targeting Romanian citizens (Gherghina and Miscoiu 2014). The other four parties chose to cover different issues in their programmes. Úsvit focuses extensively on the provision of public goods for Czech citizens, to help reduce disparities between them and Western Europe, and on the necessity of education for a broad segment of society. Jobbik, known for its anti-minority and anti-elitist discourse, focuses on the issues of economic development of the country through growing productivity (industry plus agriculture) and selective external cooperation with big European actors, for example Germany and Russia, in its policy programmes. The topic of nationalism is approached through the lenses of diaspora, with Jobbik advocating the necessity of the Hungarians living in neighbouring countries to have rights. The Polish UPR speaks primarily about decentralised decision-making and refers to the necessity of lower taxation at national level (and allowing local level authorities to collect a higher number of taxes, which can be reinvested). A similar economic concern is displayed by the ĽSNS, which focuses on reducing unemployment in Slovakia.

Figure 11.2: The Number of Legislative Terms (1990-2016)



Source: European Election Database and authors' data

The dominant themes in populist discourse – nationalism and anti-elitism – are not embraced or used to a similar extent by the six political actors investigated here. Two of the parties (Úsvit and UPR) are quite moderate in their nationalist approach and they have no explicit statement about the elites. They have isolated references to corruption but do not point to elites as being the beneficiaries of such practices. Úsvit has a slightly higher tendency than the UPR to refer to the dichotomy *people vs elites* by expressing its support for direct democracy in which people are given a direct say in decision-making. The other four parties have strong nationalist messages combined with religious (for example, the UPR or ĽSNS), cultural (the PP-DD) or territorial messages (Jobbik).

The variation in their approach increases in terms of the role of the state and anti-international perspectives. The ideological fuzziness that is placed under the broad umbrella of populism is quite visible when the differences between the ways in which these parties see the state are discussed. Ataka and the PP-DD favour a strong state that provides a series of goods for its citizens and goes beyond the usual bundle of public goods. According to these parties, the state is responsible for the welfare of its citizens and its degree of assistance and subsidies for them should be extensive; this is very visible in the case of the PP-DD, which favours state controlled resources and extensive provision of goods to citizens (Gherghina and Miscoiu 2014: 191–192). Jobbik and the ĽSNS believe state involvement should be moderate: Jobbik considers the state should be active in the process of industrialisation and in providing a framework that allows ethnic minorities to live peacefully within the country; the ĽSNS refers to a certain level of welfare provided by the state but emphasises the individual responsibility of citizens. The Slovakian party refers to people who refuse to work as parasites and claims that such individuals should not be entitled to receive any assistance. Úsvit and the UPR advocate in favour of a minimal state in which taxes should be lower and the authorities should be mainly concerned with the provision of public goods. Among these, education is highly valued by both parties.

In terms of anti-international discourse, Ataka and the ĽSNS are against international organisations. Both argue against NATO, which they see as a disruptive organisation, Ataka has issues with the IMF (due to the loans provided to Bulgaria), while the ĽSNS takes issue with the EU. The UPR is another party that argues against the EU, having particular problems with the centralised way in which decisions take place within European institutions. As previously ex-

plained, Jobbik favours selective cooperation with some of the big economic countries in Europe and does not launch a direct attack against the EU or any international organisation in its most recent policy programme. The remaining two parties do not have an aversion towards international organisations: Úsvit opens its programme with a statement regarding cooperation between members and non-members of the EU, explicitly mentioning that it is “for a free Europe without barriers regarding the movement of goods, services, investment and people”; the PP-DD does not display an anti-international attitude due to the high level of consensus among the Romanian public regarding the country’s membership of international organisations.

This short qualitative content analysis of party programmes has illustrated a diversity of approaches towards several issues that lie at the core of populist developments in Central and Eastern Europe. For a more nuanced view, the following section delves into the ambivalent relationship between discourse and practice, using several populist parties and leaders from the region as examples.

The Ambivalent Relationship Between Discourse and Practice: Populism’s Two Major Contradictions

As far as the relationship between the populist discourse and its political practice is concerned, one of the most current analytical efforts was to measure the distance between the two and to celebrate (or more rarely to deplore) the apparent incapacity of populist leaders to keep their (electoral) promises (Arditi 2005: 72–74). Such approaches present populist discourses in purely instrumental terms: discourses are simply meant to support a populist platform for achieving a higher score in elections and have no structuring effects on that populist party’s ideology or strategy. Although this is not the place to present the discourse theory’s argument concerning the constitutive effects of discourses (Miscoiu 2012), we will just underline the fact that the diversity of populism throughout the world (including Central and Eastern Europe) should be considered not only as an effect of the cultural variety of our planet but also as a consequence of the permanent metamorphosis of the shapes of populism – an operation where the discursive dimension plays a key role (or even the central role).

This section analyses two major aspects in order to assess the nature of Central and Eastern European populism. The first is the apparent contradiction between, on the one hand, its denunciation of representative democracy as illegitimate and anti-popular and, on the other, its struggle to obtain higher numbers of elected officials in various local, regional, national and even transnational assemblies. Originally, populism railed against people’s political representation both as a principle of organisation and especially as a practice. In a nutshell, this stance is mainly due to two reasons (Taggart 2002). First, populism is opposed to the very concept of representation and builds its entire argument on the idea that the people are not representable and that parliaments are simply not representative. As we have seen in some of the cases of post-communist countries, such as Romania or Slovakia, the ‘left-wing’ populists of the former communist parties’ radical factions depicted the parliaments in terms of ‘great national as-

semblies', which, during the communist period, were entirely controlled by the states' authoritative leader.⁶

Then, it claimed that this lack of representativeness is due to the structural impossibility of the establishment elite understanding and supporting the needs and demands of the people. In Central and Eastern Europe, this discourse is more noticeable in the aftermath of European Union integration, after the middle of the 2000s rather than in the 1990s, and mainly denounces the Europeanised and cosmopolitan elite. In Hungary by the end of the 2000s, Viktor Orbán had campaigned precisely against the increasing gap between the internationalised elite, made up of the liberal and socialist leaders, and the 'national people' that his neo-conservative party pretended to represent.

On the other hand, it is precisely the distance between the people and their allegedly non-representative politicians that motivates populist parties to deploy various office-seeking strategies. The populists accuse the establishment parties' pacts of banning them from parliament using different technical tools (such as high thresholds, two round majority electoral systems or gerrymandering) or by building *cordon sanitaire*-like coalitions in order to prevent the election of some populist MPs. Thus, being present in parliament equals having at least partially defeated the 'system'. For instance, in 1992 and 1996, the accession of his national populist Romanian party in the Parliament facilitated the emergence of Corneliu Vadim Tudor as a politician; later on, he succeeded in qualifying for the second round of the 2000 presidential election and consolidating his party as the second political force of the Romanian spectrum (Miscoiu 2015). Moreover, the populists are generally among those MPs who extensively use the tribunes of parliament to increase their public visibility, for instance by tackling governments or by provoking conflicts during the legislature's sessions. This was the case with the far right populist party Ataka in Bulgaria, whose leader, Volen Sidorov, used the entrance of his party into Parliament in 2005 to calibrate his assaults on precarious Bulgarian institutions in a more legitimate way (Novakovic 2013).

Finally, as far as local councils or regional assemblies are concerned, several Central and Eastern European populist politicians were able to emerge as national leaders after having gained (sometimes partial) control of municipal or provincial legislatures' majorities. Consequently, the opportunity to be locally elected as a member of the legislature or as leader of the executive and to attack the mainstream parties from a more visible position appeals to a skilful populist leader, who seeks national recognition.

The second major contradiction is the one between the discourses that demand more power for the people and those projecting a new political order based on strong leadership and top-down management. In fact, on the one hand, populism's main claim is that the establishment's elites pretend to govern for the people, while they rule for themselves. In order to make a rhetorical difference, the populists pretend to restore the people's role within the decision-making system by various means. First, they favour direct democracy and the multiplication of popular referenda as tools for increasing the people's participation in decision-making processes. For example, one of the points of the 2006 campaign by the Slovakian populist leader,

⁶ This was the case with Ion Iliescu in Romania and Vladimír Mečiar in Slovakia. The first qualified the second post-1989 parliament as "having almost no popular support, as opposed to the President, who is the genuine incarnation of the will of the people".

Robert Fico, was to introduce a general referendum on issues such as the reintroduction of the death penalty and the reintroduction of severe punishments against recidivist offenders.

Then, they claim there is a need to involve the people in policymaking processes, too. This includes some fields that have never been subjected to popular scrutiny and validation through voting before (and that generally constitutions prevent them from being made the object of referenda or non-institutional participatory debates), such as the administration of the judicial system or the level of taxation. Finally, populism pretends that the exclusion of the people from the systems of governance is due to their capacity to take much more reasonable decisions favouring themselves than those taken by the elites. Well entrenched in the people's everlasting cultural heritage, 'popular good sense' allegedly contrasts with 'elites' hypocritical refinement' and allows the 'genuine people' to know better what to do for themselves. The good sense discourse was, for instance, one of the main discursive ingredients of one of the emerging leaders of the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia, Oldřich Bubeníček, who, by mixing populism and anti-neo-liberalism, succeeded in becoming the first regional governor belonging to this party.

However, on the other hand, populism underlines the necessity of promoting strong leadership in order to deeply reform the political system more than the other currents. To start with, in order to gather the popular forces on a common platform, there is a need for a charismatic leader (generally issued from the people and able to understand their needs and fight for their demands) (Pombeni 2007). This stance goes hand in hand with populism's lack of trust in any institutional framework, including the populist movement's structures, and with its insistence on a direct relationship between the people and its leader. For example, one of the main topics of Traian Băsescu's 2004 and 2009 populist presidential campaigns was to show that an authentic popular leader stands above (and most frequently against) any institutional system. Then, the people's good sense needs orientation in order to become effective and to transform itself into public policy. This transformation cannot take place without the energetic action of a strong leader, who is capable of galvanising and shaping the popular will and imposing it on the establishment. For instance, in 2009, the leader of the right-wing populist movement GERB, Boyko Borisov, claimed that the measures of his would-be Bulgarian government would materialise the natural good sense of the people in such a way that the 'normal hierarchical order' would prevail once again (Miscoiu 2014).

To conclude, the inner contradictions of the Central and Eastern European forms of populism could be seen as related to the tougher constraints the populist leaders of the region have to face: unlike their Western counterparts, who are free to attack democracy and liberalism *per se*, they cannot afford to openly rail against liberal and democratic principles because of the frustration people accumulated under the communist period (Mudde 2002: 222–223). Consequently, they have to permanently invent alternative rhetorical strategies in order to mobilise the people against liberal democracy and the price they pay is their confrontation with this series of fundamental contradictions.

Conclusion

Populism has been regularly used to analyse post-communist party politics. It has often been framed as a general contestation of post-communism together with the exclusionary claims of domestic minorities as well as any groups perceived as a potential source of disharmony (that is, sexual minorities or, more recently, immigrants). As such, the literature on populism consensually assessed post-communist populism as predominantly right-wing with an ethnic-based and exclusivist identity. On these grounds, the literature on populism has suggested a variety of possible explanations for the proliferation of populism. So far, most approaches have focused on the importance of historical legacies, the socio-economic side effects of the transition to democracy, political opportunity structures, or elements linked to post-communist structural (for example, limited civic and social participation) and cognitive aspects (for example, limited trust in political institutions, partial tolerance towards different people and incomplete trust in others).

This chapter has provided an overview of populist parties across post-communist Europe over the last 26 years, with a focus on six countries Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia covering 17 political parties. Although rightfully depicted as a particularly fertile breeding ground for populism, our analysis has illustrated that, with the exception of Jobbik in 2014 and the PRM in 2000, none of these parties has achieved the electoral success of Western radical right parties. In addition, very few radical right parties have been involved in post-communist governments. We can hence conclude by identifying these parties' diffuse electoral success with a couple of electoral peaks spread across the region. Still, for those familiar with post-communist party politics, nationalist discourses and anti-establishment stances have been common features across the region since the early 1990s. The apparent contradiction is explained by the strategic shift of the mainstream parties on dimensions common to the populist framework, in particular in the aftermath of their countries' EU membership. This last element has further diminished the opportunities for these parties to gain influence over the governmental agenda. The second section's qualitative content analysis illustrated the heterogeneity of the post-communist populist family, with a focus on six radical right parties. The analysis of the programmes of Ataka in Bulgaria, Úsvit in the Czech Republic, Jobbik in Hungary, the UPR in Poland, the PP-DD in Romania and the LSNS in Slovakia showed a variety of discourses, reflecting the heterogeneity of the forms taken by populism in the region. The analysis of the relationship between discourse and practice reveals a strategic use of populist themes by post-communist political actors (parties, party leaders or heads of state).

Over time, the Central and Eastern European countries appear as challenging empirical laboratories seeking to capture the essence of a heterogeneous type of populism. Such a type, with only few exceptions, has never challenged the democratic settings and rarely moved away from fringe politics. Chameleonic by definition, the populist parties in this region have been subject to different programmatic mutations across time. The result, after more than two decades, is the existence of a diverse array of parties that combine nationalist and anti-elite rhetoric with issues insufficiently (and inefficiently) addressed by the mainstream parties. They have gradually become a voice of protest in spite of their limited continuity in the political arena.

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CHAPTER 12:

ENTREPRENEURIAL POPULISM AND THE RADICAL CENTRE: EXAMPLES FROM AUSTRIA AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Reinhard Heinisch and Steven Saxonberg

The international literature on populism has mostly paid attention to radical right-wing populism and, to a lesser extent, leftist populism. However, as the phenomenon of populism has grown and proliferated, we have seen a greater diversity of manifestations of populism. An important new variant of populism has arisen in Europe that we call ‘entrepreneurial populism’. By this we mean primarily political formations competing for public office that are led by charismatic business leaders, who claim that their ability to run businesses successfully means they will also be able to run government well. While in the past similar parties have appeared in political systems that were centred on personalities or where the political systems were in turmoil, such as in Italy prior to Berlusconi, recently two such parties garnered enough votes to achieve parliamentary representation where these conditions do not apply. The parties *ANO 2011* (ANO) and *Team Stronach für Österreich* (Team Stronach for Austria – TS) entered the Czech and Austrian parliaments respectively in 2013 and were thus successful in countries that are *prima facie* unlikely candidates for this phenomenon. Moreover, Austria and the Czech Republic have otherwise not shown any convergent trends in party politics.

Entrepreneurial populism is emerging as part of a broader populist phenomenon, which can be seen by the fact that over the past decade other non-radical protest parties have entered national and/or regional legislatures in these two countries: *Věci veřejné* (Public Affairs) in 2010 and *Úsvit přímé demokracie* (Dawn of Direct Democracy) in 2013 as well as *Bündnis Zukunft Österreich* (Alliance for the Future of Austria/(BZÖ) in 2006 and 2008 respectively. In each case, these formations pursued an anti-elitist message and purported to act on behalf of the ‘common people’. Yet, despite presenting themselves as anti-establishment parties, they also sought to distinguish themselves from radical right-wing populist parties by signalling a willingness to join centrist governments, and generally did not engage in racist or ethnocentric rhetoric. We may perhaps consider these parties as belonging to the ‘radical populist centre’.

All this suggests that despite the substantial differences between Austrian and Czech party politics, important demand-side factors are present in both countries that explain the willingness of a significant segment of voters to embrace such parties. In this chapter, we will explore the rise of entrepreneurial populism in general and examine the Austrian and the Czech cases specifically as two empirical examples. We are especially interested in understanding why voters find the message of entrepreneurial populists persuasive. Austria and the Czech Republic make good comparisons because although the two countries share some fundamental characteristics—comparable size, economic development, a shared history and formal political mode—, they have both had rather distinct patterns of party behaviour and electoral politics as well as different political legacies (Heinisch 2003; Saxonberg 2003).

Conceptualising Entrepreneurial Populism

In the era of Donald Trump, one is tempted to view the populist billionaire businessman turned president as the quintessential embodiment of entrepreneurial populism. However, while significant aspects of Trump's agenda and appeal relate to him being a successful businessman and celebrity and although his 'drain-the-swamp' philosophy underscores his role as a political outsider and change agent, in other respects he resembles the radical right-wing populists we find in Europe and elsewhere. In fact, from the start, he framed his election campaign in terms of racist, nativist, and nationalist issues by broadly labelling Mexican immigrants as rapists and drug dealers. Therefore, it remains debatable to what extent Trump fits the concepts of entrepreneurial populism, which is more centrist in orientation and the subject of this chapter.

We consider Ross Perot, who ran as a third party candidate in the 1992 US presidential elections, to be the first well-known archetype of this phenomenon. More recently, business tycoons turned political leaders have won elections in Thailand (Thaksin Shinawatra), Georgia (Bidzina Ivanishvili) and the Ukraine (Yulia Tymoshenko and Petro Poroshenko) (cf., Mizuno and Phongpaichit 2009; Sakwa 2013). In the European context, the most famous case is undoubtedly Silvio Berlusconi. His party, *Forza Italia* has been classified in terms of party politics as a business-firm party, which distinguishes itself from its more common conceptual cousin, the cartel party, by generating its revenue from the private sector, whereas the latter extracts resources chiefly from the state (Krouwel 1999: 261).

In business-firm parties, elected officials often do not consider political power an end in itself, but have other motives, such as advancing business interests. The party leader is the face of the party and acts very much like the chief executive, running the party like a firm (Hopkin and Paolucci 1999). Such parties are less oriented toward interest groups, but instead employ modern demand-oriented marketing techniques to "sell policy products wrapped in the most attractive package" (Krouwel 1999: 261). Conceptually, the business-firm party is a descendant of the electoral-professional party (Panebianco 1988), which shares a weak ideological orientation and no particular attachment to voter groups with the former. Their de-emphasis of ideology and their catch-all nature make them embrace broadly popular ideas to succeed in the electoral market place, while seeking to protect the economic interests and revenue sources of the business side of the party.

Another conceptual precursor to entrepreneurial populism is the businessperson as a political entrepreneur in the sense of Dahl's "self-made man" (Dahl 1961: 25), whose social status and financial resources allow him to command special political attention, especially in personalised political systems. In this manner, economic resources can be converted into political capital to achieve outcomes in the political area that benefit an entrepreneur's business or business in general.

In the case of both ANO and Team Stronach, we recognise aspects of the aforementioned characteristics. Both parties are headed by successful businessmen who draw on their personal wealth and their firm's fortune to advance political ambitions. They run their parties like businesses and act as change agents in the sense that they, too, talk about changing the rules. Yet, it is less clear what draws voters to these parties, because the Austrian and the Czech cases are rather different from those where we have seen such parties emerge. The tradition of business

leaders going into politics might be well-established in American politics, which are characterised by the domination of charismatic personalities over organisationally weak parties. But the Czech Republic and Austria have rather strong party systems. It is also not so surprising that strong leaders, who command loyalties, would emerge in political systems with strong clientelistic political cultures, such as Thailand and Georgia's. To the extent that we see clientelism in Austria and the Czech Republic, however, it is mostly associated with the established parties not political newcomers. The rationale that political systems undergoing sweeping change may provide opportunities for political entrepreneurs clearly applies to Italy and Silvio Berlusconi following the Tangentopoli scandal and the resulting systemic crisis in 1994. However, in all these cases, the systemic crisis was far more extreme and thus the underlying conditions are rather different from those in Austria and the Czech Republic.

In short, these factors do not seem to provide a clear starting point for an investigation except for some general observations. It seems that all entrepreneurial populists have in common that they are catch-call and eschew a well-defined ideological framework. Instead, they exhibit clear convictions about who is best fit to rule and how the country should be governed. More than typical business-firm or businessperson parties, entrepreneurial populists claim to be anti-elitists and direct themselves to 'the people' as a whole. They point specifically to wholesale corruption and incompetence on the part of the political elites as the chief source of national problems.

In this respect, entrepreneurial populists meet two widely accepted criteria that identify parties as populist. Accordingly, we define entrepreneurial populist parties as those that, like all populist parties, embrace a common man/woman ethos, purport to represent 'the people' as a unified whole (Canovan 1981: 265) and claim the people are so poorly served by the existing political system that sweeping change is necessary. This focus on the 'people' versus the 'elite' is seen as the core criterion in populism (Mudde 2004; Albertazzi und McDonnell 2008: 4; Hawkins 2009; Rovira Kaltwasser 2014; Rooduijn 2014). Populism pits virtuous and homogeneous people against elites and dangerous 'others', who are together "depicted as depriving (or attempting to deprive) the sovereign people of their rights, values, prosperity, identity and voice" (Albertazzi and McDonnell 2008: 4). Along with a common man/woman ethos and the "centrality of the purported popular will", as Decker (2000: 45) put it, populism is also characterised by opportunistic and frequently inconsistent programmatic positions—Taggart (2004: 4) referred to this as populism's "empty heart"—as well as by a strong preference for plebiscitary politics, direct and emotional appeals to the population, and the reduction of political issues to simple choices and ambivalent claims. This book expresses the opportunistic rather than dogmatic nature of populism in a previous chapter by defining populism in terms of the ambivalence of the claims populist actors make not only about the people and elites, which remain vaguely defined categories, but also about the state, democracy and societal groups such as women (see Dingler et al. in this volume).

Thus, like other populists, entrepreneurial populists take aim at unaccountable elites and pursue a catch-all strategy by making ambivalent claims and offering popular but vague proposals on a number of salient policy issues. The policy area where entrepreneurial populist parties appear to be most specific is the economy. Their positions are generally pro-business and favour economic deregulation, privatisation and less taxation. They also take a firm stance against state interference in entrepreneurial decision-making.

Although the policy solutions favoured by entrepreneurial populists draw on neo-liberal ideas, entrepreneurial populists are neither merely neo-liberal business parties nor small government liberals. In fact, they often want to increase support for social welfare programmes, which they claim they can afford to do without increasing taxes because they will make the government work more ‘efficiently’. Thus, in their public rhetoric they argue for a more fundamental reform of the political system but remain generally vague about specific policy proposals (for example, ‘reining in the power of bureaucrats’, ‘hard work has to pay off again’). Like protest parties in general, entrepreneurial populists profess to be beyond traditional politics and distance themselves sharply from the (old) mainstream parties, whom they portray as corrupt and generally alike. This is to say that like other protest parties, they follow the strategy of “De-Differentiation” (Schedler 1996: 294), denying that there are important differences among their political opponents. Instead, the appeal of entrepreneurial populist leaders is centred on their personal character and managerial savvy in transcending previously intractable problems.

However, what sets entrepreneurial populists apart are two important characteristics: Their tendency a) to be more pragmatic and engage in practical policymaking, and b) to show less verbal aggressiveness and relative moderation in their discourse on race, culture and ethnicity. Even in situations where entrepreneurial populists are critical of the status quo, they are generally less xenophobic, less Europhobic and less chauvinistic than is typical of radical populist parties. Thus, we find little evidence that entrepreneurial populists are particularly connected to the radical, xenophobic populist movements, such as the Austrian Freedom Party, the French National Front, the Italian Northern League and the Belgian Flemish Block, that have made headway in changing the political landscape of Europe.

Mudde (2007) differentiates between radical right-wing populist parties (which oppose liberal democracy) and non-radical populist rightist parties (which accept liberal democracy). In fact there is great variation in right-wing populist parties in Europe. For example, parties such as *Partij voor de Vrijheid* in the Netherlands and *Fremskrittspartiet* in Norway appear to accept democratic principles, but have a staunch anti-EU and anti-immigrant stance, whereas entrepreneurial populist parties seem to be more centrist, not necessarily xenophobic and not always anti-EU. Instead, they operate on the notion that the country can be saved by entrepreneurship because it is not beholden to entrenched interests and old ideological divides.

They also appear to be focused on seeking office or at least clearly proclaim their willingness to join other parties in government. This too, is different from the more radical populists, where similar efforts have been ancillary to voter-seeking strategies and have resulted time and again in problems because the radical nature of these parties made governing difficult (cf. Heinisch 2003). For this reason, other populist parties have preferred to stay away from government and exercise influence from behind by supporting conservative parties in staying in office.

By comparison, the logic of entrepreneurial populism rests on the very ability to showcase superior executive decision-making and thus be in a position to demonstrate this ability. This *raison d'être* changes the entire political dynamic because the leader in a right-wing populist party is measured by their ability to garner votes and build electoral support—being in opposition and distinct from ‘those in power’ is part of the party’s identity. However, in entrepreneurial populism the leader is also measured by their ability to execute or help execute policies in the

manner outlined in the campaign. This, in turn, should also be reflected in the kinds of voters that support entrepreneurial populists.

Case Description

Almost simultaneously, parties advocating entrepreneurship as a remedy to the nation's problems have emerged in Austria and the Czech Republic. They are catch-all, tend to be rather market-liberal, but without rejecting generous social policies, and are not xenophobic or mobilise support based on cultural identity—for an overview of the Austrian and Czech political parties and their electoral performance, see Tables 12.1a and 12.1b at the end of this segment.

The Austrian Case—Synopsis

In 2012, the Austro-Canadian billionaire, Frank Stronach, announced that he was fed up with what he called the corrupt rule of party apparatchiks in Austria and formed a new party. Well financed, it performed extremely well in three state elections achieving 11.3 per cent, 9.8 per cent and 8.3 per cent of the vote respectively. In fact, for most of 2012 and 2013 Team Stronach polled between 8 per cent and 12 per cent nationally, which is extraordinary for a new political party as it drew voters away from all parties (SORA 2013a). In the end, Team Stronach received 'only' 5.7 per cent of the votes and 11 seats in parliament. Yet, there was little indication that entrepreneurial populism had suddenly fallen out of favour with voters. Instead, the party leader, Stronach, made several major verbal gaffes in the final phase in the campaign, which caused his party to lose ground. Stronach's Canadian background, political inexperience and ignorance of certain political conventions eventually became a liability. Yet, it is not difficult to see how a more experienced and professional campaign management team would have avoided the tactical errors committed in the final weeks of the campaign. Despite his later blunders, exit polls indicated the party supporters were motivated by the belief that it was "time for change" (45 per cent), as well as Stronach's personality (38 per cent) and his business competence (38 per cent) (SORA 2013b).

The Czech Case—Synopsis

In the Czech Republic, a more 'traditional' type of radical right, xenophobic populist party—the Republicans—emerged in the early 1990s, but they quickly disappeared after failing to make it back into parliament in the 1998 elections. At the same time, a tradition arose in which small market liberal parties surfaced as alternatives to the more dominant market liberal party, *Občanská demokratická strana* (ODS), then led by the charismatic economist Václav Klaus. This includes *Občanská demokratická aliance* (ODA) (in parliament from 1992-1998), *Unie svobody* (US) (in parliament from 1998–2006) and now TOP09 (in parliament from 2010 to the present). Surveys showed that the voters of these parties placed themselves to the left of the ODS, while the actual leaders of these parties placed themselves to the right of the ODS, or at least considered themselves to be market liberal rather than sharing the centrist,

social liberal views of their voters (cf. Kitschelt et al. 1999 for data). Consistent with our argument that voters are not as attracted by the market liberal philosophy as by a desire for change and centrist economic policies, these smaller market liberal parties quickly disappeared (ODA, US) or quickly suffered a great loss of seats in parliament (TOP09) (Saxonberg und Sirovatka 2014). In short, the likely explanation is that voters initially supported them not because they wanted a market liberal alternative to the market liberal ODS, but rather because they were hoping that these new parties would be more social liberal and bring about a change of the political status quo (cf. Saxonberg und Sirovatka 2009).

Table 12.1a: Elections for the Austrian National Parliament (Lower House)

Year of Election		Political Parties ¹							
		Greens	Social Democrats (SPÖ)	People's Party (ÖVP)	Freedom Party (FPÖ)	Alliance Future Austria (BZÖ)	Liberals	NEOS	Team Stronach
2002	% of votes	9.5	36.5	42.3	10.0 ³	-	-	-	-
	% of seats	9.3	37.7	43.2	9.8	-	-	-	-
2006	% of votes	11.1	35.3	34.3	11.0	4.1	-	-	-
	% of seats	11.5	37.2	36.1	11.5	3.8	-	-	-
2008	% of votes	10.4	29.3	26.0	17.5	10.7	-	-	-
	% of seats	10.9	31.1	27.9	18.6	11.5	-	-	-
2013	% of votes	12.4	26.8	24.0	20.5	-	-	5.0	5.7
	% of seats	13.1	28.4	25.7	21.9	-	-	5	6

¹ Only parties which received seats in parliament are included in the table. The parties are ordered along the left-right dimension. The grey cells indicate the parties forming the government after the respective elections.

² Legislative and government periods do not always correspond exactly in Austria. General elections often take place at the end of the calendar year, that is why most new governments only take office at the beginning of the following year (this was, e.g., the case in 1987, 1996, 2000, 2003 and 2007).

³ The second ÖVP-FPÖ cabinet lasted only until April 2005, when the BZÖ formally replaced the FPÖ as the ÖVP's coalition partner, without new elections being called.

Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.

Thus, as these smaller, market liberal parties have had short lifespans, political entrepreneurs in recent years have switched to a more populist strategy that might capture the support of the more centrist voters. Rather than trying to build distinctively social liberal policies that would place them in the centre of the political spectrum, these new leaders have tried to combine market liberal issues (such as low taxes) with issues that would gain wider support, such as advocating generous social policies, and claiming that they would fight corruption and even introduce more direct democracy. Similarly to Berlusconi's party, one businessman dominates ANO. As a businessman, he takes up rather market liberal economic themes, such as opposing tax increases, but he learned from the failure of the previous market liberal competitors to the ODS. In a country where support for generous social policies is rather high (for example, Saxonberg 2005; Saxonberg und Sirovatka 2014), he probably concluded that his party would follow the same fate as previous smaller market liberal alternatives to the ODS. Since there is

no room for so many market liberal parties—especially since the market liberal TOP09 remained in parliament despite losing about one third of its voters in the last election—and since most of the voters are clearly negative towards the recent austerity policies and prefer more centrist policies, ANO has become a ‘catch-all party’ that tries to combine market liberal issues (such as low taxes) with promises of increasing support for social policies (such as taking away fees from the healthcare system). Such policies appear contradictory, but he claims social policies can be made more generous by making government work more efficiently. Thus, the party is following the Berlusconi tradition of claiming that as successful businessmen, they could run any organisation—including government—efficiently. They are like saviours who can liberate the country from corruption and poor management.

Table 12.1b: Elections for the Czech National Parliament (Lower House)

		Political Parties ¹									
Election Year		Social Democratic Party (CSSD)	Civic Democratic Party (ODS)	Communist Party (KSCM)	KDU-CSL-US-DEU	Christian & Dem. Union-Czechoslovak Peop. Party (KDU-CSL)	Green Party (SZ)	TOP 09	Public Affairs (VV)	ANO 2011	Dawn of Direct Democracy (Usvit)
2002	% of votes	30.2	24.47	18.51	14.27	-	-	-	-	-	-
	% of seats	35	29	20.5	15.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
2006	% of votes	32.32	35.38 ²	12.81	-	7.23	6.29	-	-	-	-
	% of seats	37	40.5	13	-	6.5	3	-	-	-	-
2010	% of votes	22.08	20.22	11.27	-	-	-	16.7	10.88	-	-
	% of seats	28	26.5	13	-	-	-	20.5	12	-	-
2013	% of votes	20.45	7.72	14.91	-	6.78	-	11.99	-	18.65	6.88
	% of seats	25	8	16.5	-	7	-	13	-	23.5	7

¹ Only parties which received seats in parliament are included in the table.

² Between 2006 and 2010 the Czech Republic had three different governments. A minority government of the ODS from 4.9.2006 till 9.1.2007 followed by a CSSD-KDU-CSL-SZ coalition. After the resignation of the cabinet a technocrat government was formed (8.5.2009 – 25.6.2010).

Grey coloring indicates participation in government.

Source: Czech Statistical Office (http://www.volby.cz/index_en.htm)

Explaining Entrepreneurial Populism – Argument and Hypotheses

There have been no noteworthy convergent political trends in Austria and the Czech Republic: Whereas the Austrian Conservatives (ÖVP) have been all but the staunchest supporters of European integration, the Czech Conservatives (ODS) have been ardent critics of European integration. While Austria's dominant parties of the centre-left and centre-right have tended towards cooperation and political convergence, the main Czech parties of the left and right have preferred competition and divergence. While a radical far right populist party emerged and blossomed in Austria, it did so in the Czech Republic only briefly in the 1990s. At the same time, neither country is especially known for embracing economic liberalism or entrepreneurship, least of all Austria. Neither case can be said to have weak institutions and a party system, which would otherwise facilitate personalistic politics.

In both countries, those discontented with the political status quo would seem to find any protest sentiments already well served. In Austria, there is a major radical populist opposition party (Freedom Party) and a centre-left anti-establishment Green Party. In the Czech Republic, there is even a wider range of choices available, including a market liberal anti-corruption party (TOP09), a far leftist anti-system party (Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia) and an anti-corruption conservative liberal party (SNK European Democrats). Unlike Austria, the main Czech leftist and conservative parties have alternated in government, thus providing clear alternative choices. Yet, despite these differences, both political systems converge with the appearance of entrepreneurial populist parties. Identifying common factors in otherwise divergent cases sheds light on the causes of entrepreneurial populism.

Despite their many differences, both countries can be said to be suffering from a political crisis, primarily involving the established mainstream parties, that is prompting voters to search for new political choices. In Austria, the maintenance of grand coalitions between the Social Democrats and Christian Democrats can give the electorate the feeling that there are no important differences between the main parties. Meanwhile, in the Czech Republic the previously dominant parties, the Social Democrats and the ODS, have reputations for putting corruption and power ahead of ideology. So although they have not formed coalitions at the national level, there still seems to be a widely held perception that the two parties do not differ much in practice (Saxonberg and Sirovatka 2014). Moreover, these two parties have quite often formed coalitions at the local and municipal levels. In addition, from 1998 to 2002 the Social Democrats ruled with the support of the ODS in parliament (Saxonberg 1999). This explanation fits well with the arguments put forth by Katz und Mair (1995) about former mass parties turning into cartel parties which, through the penetration of state institutions, can extract resources to such an extent that they become relatively immune to voter input.

Why would such voters then not avail themselves of other party political choices? The likely answer is that voting for the other parties would not make much of a difference, or they considered these parties to be too extremist in other respects (people who want radical political change are not necessarily extreme xenophobes or racists). Therefore, we argue that it is the political crisis that renders the existing main parties undesirable to many voters, while radical populist parties, market liberal reform parties and other niche parties also remain unattractive to these voters. This, in turn, causes them to search for a new political alternative and provides a window of opportunity for entrepreneurial populists.

Voters who are political centrists but who favour radical change are drawn to capable and credible change agents, especially if they feel that otherwise it *does not matter* which party one votes for because nothing will change. In Austria, the long history of grand coalitions would support this view, whereas Czech voters are likely to conclude that it *does not matter* which party one votes for because the main parties (the ODS and Social Democrats) are more interested in gaining private wealth through corruption than in running the country. Thus, surveys in both countries consistently show low levels of trust in the government or in political parties (for Austria, see SORA 2013b¹; APA/OGM 2012; for the Czech Republic, see Mishler und Rose 1997; Saxonberg und Sirovatka 2014; Vlachová 2001).

¹ See especially the table: “Parteien wollen nur Stimmen der WählerInnen, ihre Anliegen interessieren sie nicht“ (*Parties just want the votes but don't care about the voters' concerns*).

We may therefore summarise our argument as follows: First, a new form of populist parties has emerged; and second, at least in Austria and the Czech Republic, their voting base comprises (mostly middle-class) voters who are more centrist in orientation, normally would have voted for moderate mainstream parties and are not in favour of dismantling the existing welfare state. However, they are looking for a political actor most likely to effect change. By contrast, entrepreneurial populist parties are less attractive to rather marginalised, less well educated (typically male) voters, who are drawn more to the xenophobic types of populist parties. It is the desire for ‘radical’ but not ‘extremist’ change on the part of voters that provides entrepreneurial populist parties of different stripes with the opportunity to compete successfully. However, those voters for whom charisma and leadership ability (typically in the form of demonstrable and tangible competence) are overriding concerns will gravitate towards the tycoon-led entrepreneurial populist parties.

Hypotheses

H1: Voters who perceive little distinction between the existing major parties of right and left are more likely to support EPPs.

Explanation: Populist parties often succeed in portraying the rest of the political spectrum as all the same and equally culpable for the undesirable status quo. As populists, the EPPs make no exception.

H2: Voters with middle-class backgrounds in terms of education and income are more likely to support EPPs rather than radical populist parties IF these voters are dissatisfied with the political status quo.

Explanation: The electoral niche that EPPs have found is to appeal to discontented middle-class voters.

H3: Voters whose social views are on the whole tolerant are more likely to support EPPs IF they are dissatisfied with the political status quo.

Explanation: Discontented middle-class voters desiring sweeping change are not necessarily intolerant and thus reject radical right-wing parties in favour of EPPs.

H4a: Voters who regard leadership as central are more likely to support tycoon-led EPPs.

H 4b: For voters supporting EPPs, the leader (charismatic leadership) is the primary motive for supporting such a tycoon-led EPP.

Explanation: Voters of EPPs are persuaded by the ability and personality of the leader/top candidate of EPPs to be a better steward of national politics.

H5: *Voters supporting EPPs display social liberal attitudes by supporting generous existing welfare states.*

Explanation: Supporters of EPPs differ from typical neo-liberal and pro-business voters in that they share the common man ethos of populist parties and thus welcome welfare state protection. The voters of EPPs accept the claim that current government revenues are not put to effective use, so EPPs can maintain or even improve welfare policies by making the system more effective and accountable.

Data Sources and Method

When testing our assumptions we relied on survey data from the Czech Republic and Austria. For the purposes of this paper, our empirical focus lay on ANO and Team Stronach given that for the Czech Republic, the overall tiny number of voters for Dawn did not provide us with a sufficient number of respondents to test our argument sufficiently. We also dropped the Austrian BZÖ from this analysis because the party failed to re-enter parliament. For the logistical regression analysis employed in this analysis, in the Czech case we used the most recently available public opinion survey before the 2013 elections, which was conducted in September, 2013 by the Centre for Research on Public Opinion (Centrum pro výzkum veřejného mínění) at the Institute of Sociology of the Czech Academy of Sciences (Politická orientace českých občanů – zřídí 2013). Since the survey was conducted one month before the election, it is the most accurately available survey of political opinions for the period around the elections. Unfortunately, no exit polls are publicly available, as they would provide even more reliable data. As is often the case, new parties—especially populist ones—tend to be underestimated in such polls, partially because some potential voters are afraid to admit their true voting intentions (as they might be aware that it is not considered ‘respectable’ to vote for these parties) and also partially because such parties tend to get the protest votes of people who were undecided until election day or right before it. Consequently, ANO only has the support of slightly more than 8% of the population in this survey although in the actual election they received over 18%.

In analysing social liberal values in the Czech Republic, we performed factor analysis and saw that there were two distinct dimensions: support for liberal economic policies and human rights, and support for increased welfare spending. In other words, social liberalism has a dimension of classical, rights-based liberalism and a dimension of supporting generous welfare policies (see Table 12.2).

In order to deal with missing variables, we performed multiple imputations (28 imputations) using the Stata ‘mi impute mvn’ command. Since none of the variables had complete observations, we eliminated the cases with missing observations if the number of missing observations was ten or under. Thus, we dropped missing cases for sex, support for state involvement in the economy, profession, education, and age-level. This brought the total number of cases down from 1029 to 1002. Then we used these variables to impute the scores for trusting the government, being satisfied with the political situation, trusting the representatives of the party one voted for, supporting the EU, and the factors liberalism and welfarism, using the variables:

professional worker, self-employment, clerk, pensioner, unemployed, housewife, manager, education, sex.

Table 12.2: *Factor Analysis I of Social Liberalism for the Czech Republic*

Variable	Factor Score: Economic Liberalism and Human Rights	Factor Score: Social Welfare	Kaiser-Meyer- Olkin measure of sampling adequacy
supporting human rights	.62	.24	.76
free enterprise	.75	-.25	.8
against state ownership	.68	-.3	.84
against the state guiding economic development	.52	-.28	.8
against the state guiding large enterprises	.67	-.16	.8
freedom of assembly	.66	.19	.76
state should guarantee jobs	-.06	.79	.71
state should provide social security	-.09	.81	.7
redistribution	-.14	.66	.76
overall			.78

In the case of Austria, we were not able to draw on a data set that was as detailed with respect to the questions we wanted to ask and for this paper had to rely on the Austrian National Election Study (AUTNES), specifically the Austrian National Election 2013: Voters and Voting Behaviour.² Whereas employing two different data sources is unfortunate, the indicators were sufficiently similar with respect to several key variables to allow us to test the main argument with respect to both cases. In the following, we will present our preliminary findings.

The Austrian survey did not ask questions about tolerance and private entrepreneurship in order to be able to create a two-dimensional scale as in the case of the Czech Republic. So, instead, we created a one-dimensional scale for welfare support, which included support for increased spending on education, healthcare, unemployment, pensions and welfare. The Cronbach alpha score of 0.58 is moderately acceptable (see Table 12.3).

Table 12.3: *Cronbach Alpha Test of Reliability for Austria*

Variable	alpha	alpha if item removed
spending on education	.6	.54
spending on healthcare	.67	.49
spending on unemployment	.59	.55
spending on pensions	.56	.56
spending on welfare	.65	.5
test scale		.58

2 See AUTNES Comparative Study of Electoral Systems Post-Election Survey 2013 – Questionnaire (German) http://www.cses.org/datacenter/module4/survey/AUT_2013_Untrans_German.pdf; for the data see: <https://dbk.gesis.org/DBKSearch/SDesc2.asp?no=5856&tab=0&ll=10¬abs=&af=&nf=1&search=AUTNES&search2=&db=E>

In performing the multiple imputations, we eliminated cases of when there were no observations, or if the number of missing observations was under ten, so that we could impute the scores of the variables with many missing observations using variables without any missing observations. This involved dropping missing observations from university education, profession parties making a difference and dissatisfaction with the way democracy is working and welfare attitudes. The imputations were made according to income group and Stronach being charismatic. The independent variables for the imputations also included gender, for which there were no missing cases, as well as the aforementioned variables after cases with missing observations were eliminated. We conducted 28 imputations. Since we did not want to do imputations for the dependent variables, this further brought down the number of cases to 907.

Hypotheses Test and Empirical Findings

In the following, we present our findings when testing our hypotheses. The first question related to the voters' perception that all major parties seem alike:

Hypothesis 1: Voters perceive little difference between parties

ANO voters are indeed more likely to be dissatisfied with the political situation and more likely to be distrustful of the government (cf. Table 12.4, Model 1); however, the relationship is not statistically significant. This is probably because Czech respondents in general were dissatisfied with the political situation and distrustful of the government regardless of political affiliation. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being very dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied, being satisfied with the political situation had a mean of 1.88, while trust in the government had a mean of 2.03.

Table 12.4: Logistic Models for the Czech Republic, Voting for ANO1

	Model 1	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 3a	Model 3b	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
<i>Hypothesis 1: Voters Perceive Little Difference Between Parties</i>								
trust government	-.25							-.21
satisfied with political situation	-.11							-.24
<i>Hypotheses 2: Supporters are from the Middle Class</i>								
education		.12**						.03
professional			.14					-.17
worker			-.6					-.2
self-employed			1.15*					.93
clerk			1.17*					.77
pensioner			-.35					-.62
unemployed			-1.29					-1.3
housewife			.51					.37
manager			.79					.43
<i>Hypothesis 3: More Likely to be Tolerant</i>								
EU support				.26				.19
liberalism					.27*			.25
<i>Hypothesis 4: Leadership Important</i>								
trust representatives of ANO						.57**		.78***
<i>Hypothesis 5: Support for Welfare</i>								
support welfare							-.22 ²	-.11
centrist (3-7 on scale of 1-10)							1.00***	1.28***
<i>Control Variable</i>								
sex								.05
age								.1
constant	-1.74***	-1.80***	-2.63***	-2.86***	-2.42***	-4.25***	-3.04***	-5.98***

Notes: (1) n=950, two imputed Variables

We also ran age-level and educational level as ordinal independent variables, getting scores for each level, but since it did not change the final results, for reasons of space, we chose to only report the coefficient for the entire variable. The one substantive difference is that when only using educational level as the independent variable it turns out that the lowest educational level (level 2) is the only level that is significantly correlated with voting for ANO (it is negatively correlated).

(2) Probability of .06.

In the case of Austria, the post-election survey includes the more direct question as to whether one thinks it matters who is governing. However, it turns out that there is no statistically significant relationship between voting for Team Stronach and believing that it does not make a difference who governs (see Table 12.5 Model 1). Nevertheless, there is a very significant relationship between voting for Team Stronach and being dissatisfied with the way democracy is functioning in Austria. While we cannot confirm this hypothesis, it is nonetheless clear that Austrian voters who support Team Stronach are politically unhappy and see no other party political alternatives.

Table 12.5: Logistic Models for Austria, Voting for Team Stronach

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
	coefficients	coefficients	coefficients	coefficients	coefficients
<i>H1: Perceive Little Difference Between Parties</i>					
make diff	.01				.09
not satisfied with democracy	.77**				.75**
<i>H2: Voters are Middle-Class</i>					
employee		-.43			-.17
manual		.85			.32
civil servant		-.42			-.21
Self-employed		.65			.53
income group		-.09			-.1
university educated		-.09			-.08
<i>Hypothesis 4: Leadership More Important</i>					
Stronach charismatic			.95***		.86***
<i>Hypothesis 5: Social Liberal Values</i>					
support welfare policies				-.58	-.45
<i>Control Variable</i>					
gender					-.58
constant	-5.75***	-3.63***	-6.83***	-1.83	-6.2

Hypothesis 2: Those with middle-class backgrounds are more likely to support EPPs

Even though educational level is statistically significant in the case of the Czech Republic (Table 12.4 Model 2a), being a professional is not significant (Model 2b); however, in contrast to the more xenophobic extremist parties, being a worker is not statistically significant. Furthermore, being self-employed or being an entrepreneur who hires other people is positively correlated with voting for ANO, which shows that entrepreneurially oriented people are more likely to vote for entrepreneurial populism than other voters. Being a clerk is also positively correlated with voting for ANO, which again shows that its voters tend to come from the middle and upper classes. Educational level no longer remains statistically significant when one controls for profession (results not shown), which indicates that being a clerk or self-employed are more important than being highly educated.

In the case of Austria (Table 12.5 Model 2), there is no statistically significant connection between having a university education and having voted for Team Stronach. Neither is there any significant correlation between one's profession and voting for the party. So even if this does not support our argument that voters for EPP parties are more likely to be well educated professionals, the fact that there is no statistically significant negative correlation at least disputes mainstream literature, which claims that voters for EPP parties come from less educated, more socially excluded groups.

Hypothesis 3: Voters are more likely to be tolerant

These new party leaders have not emphasised xenophobic positions, which is something that differentiates them from other populists. Thus, according to our calculations, Euroscepticism is actually lower among supporters of ANO than among the population in general, with only 19.8% of ANO supporters claiming that the EU has been bad for the country, compared to 27.3% among the entire adult population. However, this relationship is not statistically significant (Table 12.4, Model 3a).

Another way to measure tolerance is the question as to whether one believes the state should limit the right to freedom of assembly. There is actually a positive correlation between favouring the right to free assembly and voting for ANO, but the relationship is not statistically significant, so once again the hypothesis that voters for this EPP are more likely to be tolerant or at least not likely to be intolerant (since the relationship was not statistically significant) is supported. Furthermore, our scale of classic liberalism shows a statistically significant relationship between liberalism and voting for ANO (Table 12.4, Model 3a). Nevertheless, this relationship remains significant only at the 1-level after one controls for attitudes towards the EU (results not shown).

As the Austrian survey did not ask any questions dealing with tolerance or the EU, the issue will have to be revisited when new panel data taken before the elections become available.

Hypothesis 4: Leadership is more important for EEP voters

In the case of the Czech Republic, ANO voters are indeed much more likely to trust the party's representatives than voters of other parties (Table 12.4, Model 4).

The Austrian survey did not include a question about trusting party representatives, but it contained other questions that are useful. For example, over 47% of TS voters find Stronach charismatic, while only 28.6% do not find him charismatic and 23.8% find him a little bit charismatic. There is also a very strong correlation between voting for Team Stronach and believing that he is charismatic.

Hypothesis 5: Voters display social liberal attitudes

Our calculations show that supporters of ANO in the Czech Republic appear to be centrist with social liberal economic values. ANO voters overwhelmingly support relatively generous social policies. On the one hand, they want relatively generous social policies, as 55.9% of ANO voters think the state should be responsible for social security, while only 13.1% think people should take care of themselves. This indicates some support for a rather generous welfare state, but only 22% of ANO voters indicated that income should be relatively equally distributed. Thus, ANO voters are more centrist and social liberal than social democratic. This can also be seen by the fact that most put themselves in the centre. On a scale of 1-11, with 4-8 being the centre, a highly significant relationship emerges between being centrist and voting for ANO (see Table 12.4 Model 5).

Table 12.4, Model 5 actually shows a negative relationship between supporting increased welfare spending and voting for ANO, but this is because support for generous welfare policies in general is very strong in the country, rather than because ANO supporters are against relatively generous welfare policies.

Team Stronach's voters also support relatively generous welfare policies. 40% of TS's voters favour increased welfare spending, while only 15% favour decreased welfare spending (and 45% are satisfied with current levels). Similar results arise for questions on spending on specific programmes. For example, 50% of TS voters favour increased spending on pensions, while only 10% want to decrease spending; 45% support increased spending on healthcare, compared to 5% who favour cutting back spending. In the area of education, fully 84% of TS voters favour increased spending, while 16% think current levels are OK and 0% favour decreased spending. However, when it comes to unemployment benefits their views were more negative as only 10% favoured increased spending, compared to 35% who preferred decreased spending. Even though TS voters basically have a social liberal profile in their support for welfare spending, the relationship between voting for TS and supporting welfare spending is not statistically significant for any of these issues, as Austrian voters in general support generous welfare policies, thus leaving little variation between TS voters and voters for other parties.

The full model shows that in the case of the Czech Republic, placing oneself in the centre on a left-right scale and trusting the representatives of ANO were the only statistically significant variables. These confirm our hypotheses about the importance of leadership and the idea that entrepreneurial populist parties in Europe tend to attract centrist voters rather than extremists, as is the case with the more xenophobic types of populist parties. In the case of Austria, believing Stronach to be charismatic and being dissatisfied with the way democracy is functioning are the two variables that remain statistically significant in the full model. These confirm some of our hypotheses for entrepreneurial populists. On the other hand, these results would also confirm expectations about those who vote for more traditional populist parties.

Conclusion

We have conceptualised a new type of populist party that we dubbed entrepreneurial populist. The concept was derived from the literature on personalised parties and businessperson parties but is developed further by us linking it to contemporary theories on populism, which define such parties as having a thin centred ideology that is focused on a homogeneous, unified people threatened by unaccountable and sinister elites. Entrepreneurial parties are more moderate on sociocultural issues than radical populist parties and they are rather explicit about office-seeking. Why do voters who are generally not neo-liberal in orientation and who already have a range of protest party alternatives available support a business tycoon who claims that a country should be run like a business?

Our data indicate that our arguments correspond better to the Czech Republic. In both countries, the supporters of entrepreneurial populist parties were not neo-liberal in orientation and seemed drawn to the respective leader because of their dissatisfaction with the political status quo. In the Czech Republic, the positive relationship with education is significant and does indicate an electorate beyond the typical supporters of right-wing populist parties. In Austria, a relatively large share of workers flocked to support Stronach, which may have to do with his particular image as a successful working man and job creator. In no case do we find evidence that people are drawn to ANO and TS because of the usual sociocultural issues that fuel radical right-wing populist campaigns.

We chose to include this chapter in the handbook, although the data available were far from perfect, because it underlines the idea that populism does not have to be radical right-wing or left-wing but can be more centrist. After developing our conceptualisation, we presented an empirical illustration of this phenomenon in the Austrian and Czech context. Our hope is that this provides a solid foundation for further research not only on these cases but issues related to entrepreneurial populism as a whole.

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CHAPTER 13:

NEW POPULISM

Maria Elisabetta Lanzone

Introduction: A New Wave of Populism Pervades Europe

The political and socio-economic conditions in Western Europe—characterised both by the sunset of traditional ideologies and the economic crisis—have led to new forms of political mobilisation by parties outside the mainstream. Peripheral, disparate anti-establishment actors have recently received large electoral support across a number of European countries.

In Italy, the 2013 General Election represented an unprecedented case in the country's national political history. For the first time, a new party (the Five Star Movement – M5S) obtained more of the 25 per cent of the electoral consensus. Not even *Forza Italia* in 1994 earned similar results. Also, in the 2014 European elections, the M5S won 17 MEP seats. In Spain, the new party *Podemos* ('We Can') has five elected members in the European Parliament (EP) and won 20.7 per cent of the vote in the 2015 parliamentary elections, becoming the third largest party nationally, with 138 seats and two presidencies in Legislative Regional Parliaments, too. In a similar context, in Greece, a party like SYRIZA indicated a new trajectory in protest voting. Due to its electoral performance in the 2012 general elections, SYRIZA represents a previously unknown Greek political formation of the radical left, which has gained unprecedented visibility within the European public sphere (Stavrakakis and Katsambekis 2014). In general, these new phenomena indicate a new trajectory in the analysis of anti-establishment parties in opposition to mainstream parties. In fact, in more and more cases, it is possible to identify protest voting outside the right-wing area, even if the electoral success of right-wing populist parties persists in some countries, such as France, Denmark and the UK. All these political actors are often described under the general label of 'populism', which according to scholars, can be assumed to share common traits and intentions (Canovan 1981; Mény and Surel 2000; Taggart 1995; 2000; 2004). Certainly, these parties thrive on anti-establishment attitudes, political discontent and socio-economic unrest, while also mobilising the Eurosceptic vote in a large sense. Following Mudde, (2004) populism can be defined as a 'thin-centred ideology' that considers society to be ultimately separated into two antagonistic groups, the 'pure people' and the 'corrupt elite'. However, populism is able to attach itself to other ideological features, which can also be very diverse (such as nativism, nationalism and regionalism on the right and socialism on the left). So the development of the so-called 'new populist parties' is able to produce different effects in likewise different countries. This is just what is happening now. In the European context, populism has been predominantly associated with the radical right (Mudde 2007), but the recent electoral success of new parties such as SYRIZA in Greece, *Podemos* in Spain and the Five Star Movement in Italy attests to a new breed of populism located to the left of the political spectrum or outside the right-wing heritage. So the rise and the electoral success of these extremely diverse populist phenomena is sparking a renewed discussion about what populism is and which features may be common to both its left and right-

wing (or post-ideological) manifestations. Do these parties, as Woods (2014: 11) suggests, represent a case of ‘diverse but not disparate’ populism? Moreover, the broadly accepted distinction between left and right populism may be ill-suited to parties that often claim to be ‘neither left, nor right’, as is the case, for example, with the Italian Five Star Movement in Italy. Thus, an important question in contemporary debates on populism concerns the political and ideological characterisation of the current parties using a claim about the people to mobilise voters. As Laclau (2007) points out, the substance of populist politics appears as widely divergent, from right-wing xenophobia to egalitarian socialism, which impedes the identification of a common ideational core among diverging occurrences of populism.

For all these reasons, the first purpose of this chapter is to analyse different traits in the current expressions of populism, with a particular focus on Western Europe. In fact, for many decades the debate about ‘populism’ was reserved for the extra-democratic context, and the populist label was used specially to describe the extra-European regimes, such as the Argentinean model (and the Juan Perón regime). In the mass party era, especially in Western European democracies, the populist message was only considered as flash in the pan. In fact, the main forms of political participation were inside the party and the examples of populist forces were only outlined by episodic forms of democratic degeneracy (Mény and Surel 2000). For example, we could remember the case of the Ordinary Man in Italy and the *Poujade Movement* in France. Other populist expressions were often captured by extreme right-wing forms of politics and were put at the service of authoritarian regimes and ideologies. So this chapter aims to describe relationships between Europe and contemporary new expressions of populism.

Who are the new ‘people’ and the new ‘elite’ (political/cultural/economic/all)? What are in particular the analogies and differences between contemporary populist parties? Which traits do different political subjects in different countries have in common? A second aspect of interest relates to the political and ideological characterisation of the same parties and the extent to which they may represent ‘post-ideological’ expressions of populism in the current political landscape. So the following paragraph (the second) will describe two contemporary examples of new protest parties which are clearly left-wing: the Spanish *Podemos* and the Greek SYRIZA. The first question relates to their populist nature: Why is it possible to consider these parties populist? What are the analogies and differences between the two cases? Also, is it possible for them to have common traits with other examples of populist forces across Europe? In particular, we want to look comparatively at these various occurrences of populism and conduct an analysis considering the populist core in the most important contemporary populist parties outside the traditional right-wing arena. In the third section, we consider another specific case of contemporary European populism, that of the Italian Five Star Movement. This political subject represents an unprecedented case of populism with heterogeneous traits. In the fourth part of the chapter, we will consider the current debate on the concept of populism: can it be considered an ideology, a strategy, a communication style or all of those? In the conclusion (the fifth section), we will attempt to summarise contemporary tendencies in populist expression. We will consider the variation of current populist phenomena illustrating different effects in different countries and institutional contexts. In general, we will remark on the need to redefine the concept of ‘populism’ and the importance of increasingly linking the rise of new populist organisations with the periods of strong socio-economic crisis.

Understanding Contemporary Left-wing Populism in Spain and Greece

As we mentioned before, the rise of protest parties with unseen traits suggests a new variant of populism, which is located outside the right-wing tradition. According to Mudde (2015), the recent electoral success of some left-wing populist parties has given the debate on populism in Western Europe new impetus: 'Until now, populism was almost exclusively linked to the radical right, leading to an incorrect conflation of populism and xenophobia. In its original form, populism is an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogenous and antagonistic groups (pure people vs. corrupt elite), and argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people'. Practically, in the development of their electoral project, populist parties almost always combine it with other ideologies, such as 'nativism' on the right and 'socialism' on the left (Mudde 2015: 1).

Of course, 'the people' remains a central element in any conception of populism. However, beyond a general claim about 'the people', it is possible to identify a great deal of variation in interpretations of that same concept. Context, history and leadership style play key roles in giving content to the abstraction of 'the people' in current populism. As Kriesi (2014: 364) argues, 'it is impossible to arrive at a clear-cut definition of the phenomenon without giving the people a more specific meaning'. In this section, we suggest that it is the ideological core of populism that provides 'the more specific meaning' to populism. Exactly because it is a thin-centred ideology, populism attaches its restricted core to other ideological features, and it can therefore be found across political cleavages. In the European context, populism has been predominantly associated with the radical right, but more recently the rise of new parties, such as *Podemos* in Spain or SYRIZA in Greece, indicates the development of a new variant of populism, which produces a new debate. Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2013) suggest that the populist left tends to have an economically inclusive notion of the people (inclusionary populism), while the populist radical right exhibits cultural views based predominantly on exclusionary ethno-nationalist notions (exclusionary populism). So we will now consider the case of a new party in Spain as an example of contemporary left-wing populism strictly related to its national context. Then, we will take into consideration the case of SYRIZA in Greece in order to compare the two proposals.

Recently, a large academic debate with no general consensus started on the populist nature of a new political phenomenon in Spain: the rise of *Podemos*. However, there are now some contributions on the 'populist hypothesis' regarding its agenda and its strategies (Gómez-Reino and Llamazares 2015). Certainly, the party arose with the intention of protesting and proposes a strong political message of rupture and change directed against the economic and political establishment (the 'caste') to 'common citizens', but at the same time it defines itself as a left-wing force with clear affiliations to post-Marxist ideology and with references to Gramsci's vocabulary.

Despite the enormous discontent and the lack of political legitimacy brought about by the crisis, it was not easy to create a new 'us' in Spain (Rendueles and Sola 2015: 21). The formation of an inclusive national popular identity should not resort to the memory of the long-lived dictatorship regime. Also, the concept of *patria* ('homeland') was not an effective way to create a new collective entity. Moreover, Spain is characterised by a delicate multinational context, with disputed identities and territorial conflicts in places such as Catalonia and the Basque

Country. In this framework, the notions chosen by *Podemos* were a particular meaning of the ‘people’ (*el pueblo*) opposed to the ‘caste’ (*la casta*). The caste – as in the case of the Italian M5S – is a collective made up of politicians, big corporations, the media, speculators and privileged groups in general. It is a diffuse category at the disposal of anyone to express their outrage towards the establishment with (Gomez-Reino and Llamazares 2015). The caste became the best enemy against which *Podemos* supporters define themselves. The emergence of the concept of *el pueblo* appears more controversial: the multinational character of Spain and its quite recent dictatorship past make it difficult for the party to use this concept in a ‘positive’ and ‘emancipatory way’ (Mouffe 2011: 111; Errejón 2012: 441). The Francoist use of the terms *nación* (nation) and *pueblo* especially leads us to consider its claim of being for the people in a negative way. So *Podemos* – in a first conception (in a political sense) – has constructed a concept centred on *la gente*. This is still a concept about the people but with more pluralistic connotations and fewer ‘ancient’ ideological references. With the expression *la gente de este país* (‘people of this country’), *Podemos* proposes a type of popular sovereignty which is always in opposition to the privileged, the previously cited *la casta* (Errejón and Mouffe 2015: 126). The same concept of popular sovereignty can be replaced by *la mayoría social*, or *la ciudadanía* (‘citizenship’). So the main goal of the party is to construct an inclusive political project and not an exclusionary identity-based community. For these reasons, this Spanish party has detached itself from other current examples of populism in Western Europe (the French NF, for instance). In *Podemos*’ claims of being for the people, a reference to a society based on cultural or ethnic identity is totally absent. Actually, the party embraces the project of a politically integrated and solidary country, it defends immigrants and socially marginalised sectors of society, and it proposes a political agenda strongly based on social rights.

The affinities of *Podemos* with left-wing populism are confirmed by some similarities with other examples, such as *Chavismo* in Latin America and especially with SYRIZA in Greece, which we will analyse in the second part of this section. In fact, in an affective register, the message of *Podemos* seeks to attract massive support by stimulating feelings of joy and hope (*ilusión*), by striving for ‘victory’ and by inspiring confidence in the possibility of imminent rupture. Additionally, as opposed to what happens in right-wing populism, ‘the feelings of anger and fear nourished by job insecurity are projected onto the “domestic caste” rather than onto immigrants’ (Kioupkiolis 2016: 103). In particular, *Podemos* arose from the protest movements of the *Indignados* and it was able to catalyse citizens’ distrust from a leftist point of view. So this new Spanish party was able to use the cleavage between left and right in favour of the antagonism between common people and the corrupt elites. For all these reasons, it placed its strategies in a new style of populism that has favoured left-wing parties in other countries, too. In this framework, it is possible to retrace another important element in *Podemos*’ populist strategies: the party never renounced its leftist identity. Using an evident left-oriented lexicon, *Podemos* has managed to position itself at the left of the ideological spectrum, also as a careful and strategic measure (Errejón and Mouffe 2015). Actually, in Europe there are some examples of populist forces (also parties with clearly right-wing ideas) using the effective slogan ‘neither right nor left’. This is precisely the case with the French *Front National* (FN – *ni gauche, ni droite*) and the Italian Five Star Movement. However, similar rhetoric in Spain risks evoking associations with the fascism of the 1930s and the subsequent long-lived regime, or a more general ‘anti-politics’ sentiment, which is interpreted in a negative way by a large section

of voters. So declaring its affiliation to the left appears to be an effective strategy for *Podemos* in Spain.

SYRIZA was initially founded as an electoral coalition (alliance) of radical left political parties and extra-parliamentarian organisations in 2004. Its main constituent, *Synaspismos* (founded in 1992), originates in the Greek Euro-communist tradition. In May 2012, it became a political party led by Alexis Tsipras. It is now the largest party in the Hellenic Parliament, with party chairman Tsipras serving as Prime Minister from 26th January 2015 to 20th August 2015 and from 21st September 2015 to the present. Due to its impressive electoral performance in the two general elections of May and June 2012, SYRIZA gained unprecedented visibility in the European public sphere, which was anxiously following developments at one of the epicentres of its deep economic crisis. Within a very short period, SYRIZA had managed to climb from 4.60 to 26.89 per cent of the vote, performing an electoral leap rather unique in modern Greece (Stavrakakis and Katsambekis 2014).

Today, literature offers very few contributions regarding SYRIZA as an example of populism. However, Stavrakakis and Katsambekis (2014) proposed an impressive contribution in this sense. First of all, the question is: ‘Do we accept the populist characterisation of SYRIZA? Is the discourse articulated by SYRIZA and by its leader Alexis Tsipras a populist one? Does it fulfil the two criteria highlighted by Laclau (2007), namely a central reference to “the people” and an equivalent antagonistic discursive logic?’ According again to Stavrakakis and Katsambekis (2014: 124), Greece is no stranger to populism. The country’s recent history, following the democratic transition marking the end of a seven-year military dictatorship (1967–1974), has been marked by populist movements of all kinds, ranging from the popular democratic left to the religious far right. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the political stage was dominated by PASOK’s populism, which put forward the demands of the so-called ‘non-privileged’ for social justice, popular sovereignty and national independence against an establishment accused of monopolising political access and economic privilege in various ways since the end of the Greek Civil War (1946–1949). However, today’s re-emergence of ‘populism’ comes in a completely new context, indicating a new tendency to the left. After three years of austerity measures and massive budget cuts, the country, which entered the Eurozone in 2001, is facing one of the most difficult moments in its contemporary history. In the context of the global economic crisis, Greek’s debt and deficit were declared unsustainable and the austerity measures were demanded by the EU, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Against this background, the Greek radical left, SYRIZA, managed to appeal to and mobilise a noteworthy section of the voters.

In their research, Stavrakakis and Katsambekis (2014) noted that ‘the people’ in SYRIZA’s discourse did not occupy a central position: ‘Its presence was rather indirect, through synecdoche and metonymy. Signifiers such as “youth”, “movements” or simply “society” were largely preferred; mass youth mobilisations against university reforms (2007) and a strong identification with social movement structures and activities thus overdetermined SYRIZA’s discourse.’ However, the unprecedented economic, social and political crisis in Greece has initiated a twofold process that has transformed both its discourse and its constituency. So the ‘people’ increasingly became a central element in SYRIZA’s discourse. At the same time, SYRIZA’s discourse was clearly articulated on the basis of a dichotomous schema, with the antagonistic pattern ‘us/the people against them/the establishment’ being the dominant one. So the authors concluded that SYRIZA’s discourse is a populist one. The problem remains the definition of

this concept of the people in the sense of SYRIZA. Without doubt, in *Podemos* the reference to the same concept is clearer, as is its meaning. However, the point of contact between *Podemos* and SYRIZA is to be found in their power to resist austerity measures and defend democratic and social rights. The ‘people’ of the two leftist parties is presented as plural, inclusive and active. Also, it is possible to underline the fact that the emerging protest movements/parties from the left have especially arisen in countries strongly affected by the politics of austerity and the economic crisis. This is precisely the case in Spain and Greece.

An Unprecedented Example of Populism: The Case of the Italian Five Star Movement

Another example of contemporary European populism with unseen traits is the Italian Five Star Movement. The M5S probably represents the most important novelty in the Italy’s political landscape since the 1990s. Founded in 2009 by the comedian Beppe Grillo, in the 2013 general elections it became the largest single party in the lower house, obtaining the 25.6 per cent of the votes. Not even *Forza Italia* in 1994 earned similar results: on that occasion, Berlusconi’s party achieved only 21 per cent of the electorate’s approval. Precisely in this period, a new vacuum was created by the decline of the ‘Berlusconian era’: the vast majority of the existing parties were confronted with a new type of crisis and they attempted to reorganise themselves. From this breakable framework emerged a new political organisation, the M5S, marked by a strong protest sentiment. Literature on populism nowadays accepts a general definition of the M5S as an example of post-ideological populism (Lanzone 2015) or ‘web-populism’ (Corbetta 2013; Tarchi 2015). However there is no consensus over the conceptions of the people contained in its specific political project. What kind of populist claim does the party propose? What is moreover the nature of the antagonistic relationship contained in the M5S populist message? And more specifically, is it possible to categorise the party’s populist claim along the traditional left/right dimension? So, under these circumstances, the protest vote for the M5S appears to be a new populist answer to the citizens’ needs for renewal of the political class. However, the party’s characteristics show some contradictory elements that distinguish this case from other examples of European and Italian populism in the contemporary landscape.

At first sight, the M5S is not a typical case of ‘thick’ populism, such as the French *Front National*. Certainly in its political project it is possible to retrace strong anti-system characteristics right away. Also, the party proposes a populist message as a political strategy. Its analysis of populism as an ideology and in particular its identification of the three conceptions of the people (political; cultural and economic) appears more controversial. With its effective slogan ‘the parties are dead’ and with the statement ‘It is necessary to bring back the country to the people’s will’¹, Grillo’s party resolutely declares its populist purpose (in a political sense) and its distrust of traditional parties. In addition to this ‘war’ against the parties, the M5S also emphasises its general opposition to the traditional media, that they are responsible for and ‘abettors’ of politicians’ scandals and their corruption. So there is no distinction between party power and old media power. The opposition to the traditional media is part of a wider project

1 http://www.beppegrillo.it/2011/11/i_partiti_sono_morti.html (date accessed: 21st October 2016).

of the elite's denigration. So in the M5S's populist claim it is possible to retrace a strong and broad appeal to the sovereign people, with an opposition towards the political class (political elite) in particular and traditional political institutions in general. Instead, this party maintains a slightly ambiguous position with regard to the class-people claim (social and economic populism), and in this project especially the cultural (identity) claim is totally absent. So a strong predominance of its first claim of standing for the sovereign people emerges in its analysis of its conceptions of the people. This peculiarity probably detaches this example from other cases of contemporary populism: in fact, several important populist parties have included all three people conceptions in their projects. For example, in the Italian context, the Northern League, during its long electoral path, expressed all three (Biorcio 2003). This specific nature of the M5S probably represents a weakness, too. The global political project proposed by the Five Stars took advantage of a strong sociopolitical crisis, and protest voting has been one of the main reasons for them mobilising a large section of the electorate (those 'disappointed' by current politics) with no clear ideological tendencies. So it is now very difficult to characterise the ideologies embodied by this party. Certainly, its purposes are not motivated by ethno-nationalism, which is instead appropriate for a description of right-wing populism. To confirm the M5S has no clear ideological position on the traditional left-right dimension of competition, there is now some data regarding its voters and its members. As suggested by Bordignon and Ceccarini (2013), the M5S started as a left-wing pro-environment party before turning to a more 'catch-all' strategy, attracting voters from both sides of the political spectrum. Also, the party progressively incorporated a larger number of former right-wing supporters. Pedrazzani and Pinto (2015) observed a similar trend in their polling analysis: they underlined a significant increase in the proportion of party voters leaning to the right of the political axis, especially before the 2013 legislative elections. A high degree of heterogeneity also emerges at the level of party membership. The results of a web survey (2012-2013) pointed out an increase in its right-wing members (Lanzone 2015: 99). After 2011, a large portion of M5S supporters declared their support for right-wing ideologies. For example, in 2009 only 13 per cent of members declared they advocated rightist values; in 2013 that percentage has risen to about 30. It is possible to interpret this gravitation to the right-wing political spectrum by taking into account the anti-EU stance proposed by the M5S since the 2014 European Elections. The party's decision to join the EFDD European Party Group (Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy) has probably contributed to this change. The same group was formed following the 2009 EU Parliamentary election, declaring its strong hostility to European integration and advocating the preservation of nationalistic and anti-immigration attitudes. In the current parliamentary term, the EFDD group has been rejuvenated with significant changes to membership and with some modifications to its statute, too. In general, the EPG maintains its opposition towards EU integration and 'favours open, transparent, democratic and accountable cooperation among sovereign European States and rejects the bureaucratisation of Europe and the creation of a single centralised European superstate'². So the EU alliance between the M5S and UKIP (the most important national delegation in 2014) leads us to reconsider the ideological stance of the Italian delegation. The decision of the M5S to be a member of the EFDD represents a new phase in its party history. At the same time, it is possible to combine this choice with a strategic operation.

2 EPG Statute, p. 3, Political Platform.

However, among party members a significant number (over 30 per cent) has also chosen not to declare their ideological position. This is a position in line with the party slogan of ‘neither of the right nor of the left’. So the M5S remains a party characterised by an unclear ideological stance, which we can define as a kind of ‘post-ideological populism’. Their membership and their voters, too, maintain a high level of heterogeneity. This aspect has been one of the main factors in the party’s successful results in terms of electoral approval, but, at the same time (especially over long periods), the absence of ‘ideological cement’ may become a weakness for the party’s stability and cohesion.

Populism Is Everywhere? Current Debates on the Concept of Populism

According to the notorious scheme proposed by Mény and Surel (2000), there are three conditions that historically have aided the emergence of populism: a progressive weakening of the traditional apparatus of mediation (the political parties) around which the representative democracy was structured; the continuous growth of the personalisation of power with the predominance of ‘personal parties’ (Calise 2010; 2015); and the development of the media’s influence (the so-called ‘video-politics’). Under these circumstances, and according again to Mény and Surel (2000; 2002), any democratic political system now appears able to be swamped by a surge of populism. So in this volatile framework, populism becomes an element which democracy should live with for a long period: a symptom of the crisis of the representative mechanisms. Also, it appears to be completely inherent in the institution of democracy and no longer an anti-democratic phenomenon.

However, taking into consideration these aspects, the following question remains crucial: What are we talking about when we talk about ‘populism’? In this respect, Moffitt (2016) argues for the need to rethink the concept of populism. While still based on the classic divide between the people and the elite, populism’s reliance on new media technologies and the personalisation of politics leads us to redefine the concept. Moffitt (2016) contends that populism is not one entity, but a political style that is performed, embodied and enacted by different political actors and across different cultural contexts. This new understanding makes sense of populism in a time when the media pervades political life, a sense of crisis prevails and populism has gone truly global (Moffitt 2016).

So this section proposes a conceptualisation of new populism by distinguishing between global populist projects (born as anti-system parties), a populist style and populist rhetoric, which characterise some mainstream parties, too. According to De La Torre (2014), when citizens demand ‘power to the people’, they evoke corrupt politicians, imperialists or oligarchies that have appropriated power from its legitimate owners. These stereotypical narratives belie the vague and often contradictory definitions of the concept of the people and the many motives of those who use populism as a political tool. Under a similar perspective, Rolfe (2016) places the general request for power to the people in a context of permanent tensions between insiders and outsiders, between the political class and the populace, which are inherent in representative democracy. Since 2014, Europe has been pervaded by a strong wave of protest voting.

In this context of tension, it is possible to retrace some elements propagated by both mainstream and new parties. The financial crisis, the refugee crisis and terrorism have exacerbated

the welfare conditions of many European citizens, contributing to the aggravation of their distrust regarding political representation in general. These critical issues have catalysed some political consensus towards political parties that are characterised by populist references (Albertazzi and McDonnell 2008; Kriesi 2014). Even though research on European populism has been traditionally focused on anti-system parties, especially on the right (De Raadt, Hollanders and Krouwel 2004), there are other mainstream parties (on the centre-left, too), which have been involved in this process of ‘populisation’ of politics (Cranmer 2011; Jagers and Walgrave 2007). In this political framework, the situation in Italy deserves special emphasis, due to the communication style, the anti-political roots and the spread of populist activities that go back to the early 1990s (Biorcio 2007; 2015; Luengo 2016). In recent years, the growing discontent with mainstream parties (Bordignon 2014a; Roncarolo 2014) reached its peak with the success achieved by the M5S, but, at the same time, it has encouraged existing parties to reorganise themselves around new strategies using slogans and rhetoric that are more ‘popular’ and thus more able to be linked to populist phenomena. The success achieved by political actors traditionally considered populist has started a sort of emulative process of their populist communication style, which results in their political parties being accused of being populist (Mudde 2004). The adoption of a populist communication style seems to be the key to getting closer to citizens, often playing on anti-political feelings (Aalberg et al. 2017). So populism also becomes a style, a language and a discourse that corresponds to media needs and the mediatisation process (Diamanti 2010; Mazzoleni 2014; Bracciale and Martella 2016).

Conclusion: New Populism for a ‘New Politics’?

In this chapter, we have considered current expressions of populism in Western Europe. First of all, we identified a new wave of populism strictly related to protest voting and the economic crisis. However, the ‘thin’ definition of populism characterised by a general opposition between ‘the people’ and ‘the elite’ now appears inappropriate for an effective analysis on contemporary examples of populism as an ideology and as a political strategy, too.

A first tendency of current populist parties relates to their attaching themselves to ideologies and to their ideological placement along the left/right political spectrum. In fact, for a long time populism was especially combined with right-wing phenomena often attached to nationalism or other nativist ideologies. Recent events in some European countries, however, have triggered a large debate on examples of populism which have emerged outside the right-wing tradition. In this context—characterised by socio-economic crisis, citizens’ distrust and electorate volatility—the Italian Five Star Movement represents a very distinctive case in the contemporary political landscape. The party strongly claims itself to represent citizens in general and is opposed in its political agenda to the caste and the existing political class. In its original project, its reference to the people as a nation or a specific ethnic community is totally absent. However, inside the party (which remains very heterogeneous) there are some different positions. Since 2014, party leadership has taken a stand against EU policies and the refugee crisis with quite exclusionary ideas. Its claim to the class-people is ambiguous and it leads the party to a post-ideological stance with not clear placement across the traditional right-wing spectrum (Lanzone 2014; 2015). Parties like SYRIZA in Greece and *Podemos* in Spain, on the other hand, represent two cases clearly embedded in the left-wing tradition. In particular, they

propose an inclusionary version of populism (Katsambekis 2016). So an extremely relevant aspect in the analysis of new populism is the distinction between the different claims about the people deployed by the parties that want to use the opposition ‘people vs. elite’ in their political projects. This perspective allows us to categorise different examples in different countries in order to retrace analogies and differences between contemporary cases of populism (Pappas 2016).

Taking again into account the breakable contemporary context, a second important aspect in the debate on populism is related to political communication and the style of some contemporary parties. In fact, the previously cited ‘mediatisation’ of politics and also the process of personalisation are able to influence strategies among the mainstream parties, too. Also, the recent electoral success of protest parties has encouraged the most important mainstream parties to adopt their strategies. In particular, the Italian context has worked again as a ‘political laboratory’ for populism and its development. For example, the recent changes in the leadership of the Democratic Party (PD) conduce to a populist style especially in communication strategies (Biorcio 2015; Bordignon 2014b). So it is possible to underline the presence of a form of populist political communication able to interest all contemporary parties (Aalberg et al. 2017). However, it is crucial to separate this last tendency from populism as a global political project (ideology and strategy) with its different claims about the people.

In general, these two main tendencies in contemporary political systems enable us to embrace the assumption that ‘populism is here to stay’, even in Europe (Zaslove 2008; 2011). However, it is possible (and necessary, too) to separate different types of populism and to redefine the same concept of ‘populism’. First of all, it is crucial to separate two very different conceptualisations of the ‘people’: one inclusive, democratic and emancipatory, which is typical of left-wing parties; the second, which is characteristic of right-wing parties, is racially, ethnically and often authoritarian, too (Stavrakakis and Katsambekis 2014). Also, in times of economic and political crisis, we can identify a new form of populism outside the left/right tradition. In the same context, populist parties’ arch-enemy became ‘the caste’ and corruptive politicians in general. So the point of contact with all these new populist phenomena remains crisis: austerity policies and corruption that are able to produce new animosity between the people and the elites. For all the reasons described in this chapter, the countries more able to be affected by this new wave of populism are Spain, Greece and Italy. The same countries are affected by the strong socio-economic crisis from 2007-2008.

Another important distinction is that between a populist political organisation (a party and/or movement born with populist aims which proposes a clash between the people and the elite in different ways – political, economic and cultural), a political strategy able to evolve along time and space and a political communication style that is also able to interest mainstream and more traditional parties. In general, today evidence shows how the framework has been significantly changed and that traditional research orientations in the study of European populism should also be completely reviewed.

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The Americas

CHAPTER 14:

CONTEMPORARY POPULISM IN THE UNITED STATES

Sandra Vergari

Introduction

The term ‘populism’ appears frequently in discussions of the 2016 United States presidential election campaigns. Was Democratic Party candidate Senator Bernie Sanders a populist? Was the Republican Party presidential nominee Donald J. Trump, Jr. a populist? What about the Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton? Journalists and pundits casually toss the term ‘populism’ around, while scholars disagree on how to define populism, whether particular politicians qualify for the label and the implications of populism for democracy. Some scholars view populism as a negative force that appeals primarily to ignorant, uneducated populations and threatens democracy. However, there is no singular form of populism. The research literature on populism focuses largely (but not exclusively) on right-wing and authoritarian variants of populism, yet populism can also be moderate and left-wing. The nature and consequences of populism vary depending on the economic, social and political contexts in which it occurs.

This chapter examines contemporary populism in the United States with a focus on the 2016 presidential campaigns. First, I review populism definitions in the research literature and present the conceptualisation used in this chapter. Second, I discuss the historical context of US populism. Third, I examine factors that make populism a viable force in contemporary US politics. I argue that a crisis of political representation created a window of opportunity for populist appeals in 2016. Fourth, I discuss populism and the 2016 presidential campaigns of Sanders, Trump, and Clinton. Finally, I present conclusions and suggestions for future research.

Defining Populism

There are three main approaches to populism research: populism as a political ideology, discursive political style and political strategy (Gidron and Bonikowski 2013). First, according to Mudde (2004), populism is “a thin-centred ideology” that views society as divided into two homogeneous, antagonistic groups of the “pure people” and the “corrupt elite.” Mudde (2014: 433) argues that populism is “fundamentally anti-pluralist” and therefore contrary to liberal democracy. Mueller (2016) agrees, asserting that populists not only criticise elites but also claim that they are the only legitimate representatives of the people. During his nomination acceptance speech at the 2016 Republican National Convention, populist candidate Trump declared: “Nobody knows the system better than me, which is why I alone can fix it.” Rovira Kaltwasser (2014) also offers arguments in favour of Mudde’s approach.

Consistent with Mudde's framework, Inglehart and Norris (2016) maintain that three key features of populism are anti-establishment sentiment, authoritarianism and nativism. They observe "anti-establishment populist challenges to the legitimacy of liberal democracy" and potential disruptions to long-established patterns of party competition (31). They characterise populism in sweeping terms as a "syndrome" that "favours mono-culturalism over multiculturalism, national self-interest over international cooperation and development aid, closed borders over the free flow of peoples, ideas, labour and capital, and traditionalism over progressive and liberal social values" (7). Inglehart and Norris (2016: 7) suggest that populism might be described as "xenophobic authoritarianism".

In contrast to Mudde's framework, a second approach to populism focuses on discursive style. Aslanidis (2016), for example, rejects populism as an ideology, proposing instead that populism is best viewed as a discursive frame. According to the populist frame, "corrupt elites" have unjustly usurped the sovereign authority of the "noble People" and this problem can be solved when the people are mobilised in order to regain power (Aslanidis 2016: 99). Bonikowski and Gidron (2016) also reject conceptualisations of populism as a stable ideological property of political actors. Instead, they view populism as an attribute of political claims, asserting that it is "a discursive strategy that juxtaposes the virtuous populace with a corrupt elite and views the former as the sole legitimate source of political power" (Aslanidis 2016: 1593). They argue that political challengers, especially those with legitimate claims as outsiders, are most likely to rely on populism as a strategic tool. Moffitt and Tormey (2014) and Moffitt (2016) view populism as a political style with three key features: appeals to the people versus the elite, culturally defined 'bad manners' in the rhetoric of populist actors and the perception of a crisis or threat requiring decisive, urgent action.

The third approach is populism as a political strategy. Like Moffitt, Roberts (2014) emphasises the notion of crisis but views populism as "a specific type of response to crises of political representation" (2014: 141). Rather than focusing on discursive criteria, Roberts argues that populism is a "political strategy for appealing to mass constituencies where representative institutions are weak or discredited, and where various forms of social exclusion or political marginalisation leave citizens alienated from such institutions" (ibid.).

Jansen (2014) combines elements of the second and third approaches, viewing populist mobilisation as a sustained political project that blends populist rhetoric and popular mobilisation. He argues that populism is a form of political practice that "mobilises ordinarily marginalised social sectors into publicly visible and contentious political action, while articulating an antielite, nationalist rhetoric that valorises ordinary people" (167).

"There is no set of features that exclusively defines movements, parties, and people that are called populist" (Judis 2016: 13). Judis (2016) characterises populism as a logic or way of thinking about politics rather than an ideology. He distinguishes between left-wing and right-wing populism. Left-wing populism emphasises the people versus the elite establishment, whereby the bottom and middle are aligned against the top. Left-wing populism differs from socialism and is not necessarily opposed to capitalism. According to Judis (2016), right-wing populism focuses on the people versus the elite, but right-wing populists also accuse the elite of supporting an 'out-group', such as immigrants. Both forms of populism embrace democratic competition for power (Judis 2016). Conflict between the people and the elite is at the heart of populism. Populists advance particular demands that define this conflict and do not think

that those currently in power will address the demands (Judis 2016). Populist candidates and parties “signal that the prevailing political ideology isn’t working and needs repair, and the standard worldview is breaking down” (Judis 2016: 17). Next, I discuss the approach to populism used in this chapter.

In the United States context, it is useful to view populism as a political strategy employed by outsider candidates for elective office. Pundits and the electorate view the outsider as having credibility as someone who exists outside of the dominant, elite political establishment. The candidate enjoys credibility as having operated in the past and/or as operating now outside the control of the elite establishment. Outsider candidates may rely on populist claims partly because such claims demonstrate a strong contrast to establishment candidates and are more likely to be viewed as more credible when uttered by an outsider than by an establishment insider (Bonikowski and Gidron 2016).

The outsider candidate characterises members of the elite political establishment as corrupt and mobilises voters to challenge establishment power. Voters are mobilised to reclaim the power they previously delegated to incumbent elites and to delegate that power to the outsider candidate and, possibly, to candidates for other offices endorsed by the outsider. Advocates of policy change often assert the existence of a crisis that demands action (Kingdon 2010). The outsider populist often promotes the notion of a crisis in the economic, social and/or political arenas. Examples from the 2016 US presidential campaigns include candidate declared crises in campaign finance, trade, employment and wages, healthcare, opioid drug addiction, national security, immigration, crime, police shootings, programmes for military veterans and post-secondary education finance.

The outsider populist candidate uses the mass media and social media (for example, Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, Instagram and YouTube) strategies to gain attention and mobilise support. Social media enable populists to communicate directly with supporters rather than having messages mediated by the traditional mass media. The outsider also encourages small dollar donations from millions of contributors. In doing so, the candidate demonstrates broad support and challenges the power of elite establishment money in the political system.

Historical Context of Populism in the United States

A type of populist politics that began in the US in the 1800s has since reappeared periodically (Judis 2016).¹ While US populism can be traced back to the American Revolution, the People’s Party of the early 1890s established a new precedent. The populist farmers’ alliances and People’s Party had “a profound effect” on US politics between 1885 and 1894 and were “an early sign of the inadequacy of the two parties’ view of government and the economy” (Judis 2016: 28). Later, many populist proposals, such as a graduated income tax, were included in Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal.

William Jennings Bryan ran for president in 1896, 1900 and 1908. During the 1896 Democratic Party Convention, Bryan delivered his famous Cross of Gold speech, in which he chal-

1 This section of the chapter draws heavily from Judis’ (2016) concise history of US populism.

lenged the gold standard and promoted silver as part of a bimetallic monetary standard favoured by silver miners and some farmers. The People's Party endorsed Bryan in 1896.

Louisiana Democrat Huey Long campaigned for governor with populist themes and was elected in 1928. He was governor until 1932 and subsequently served as US Senator. In 1934, Long delivered a radio address promoting his Share our Wealth plan, whereby no family would live in poverty. Local political organisations called Share our Wealth clubs proliferated. Long's most active supporters were members of the middle class "who feared that they would be cast down by the Depression into the ranks of the very poor" (Judis 2016: 31). Roosevelt and his fellow Democrats were concerned about Long running on a third party ticket and tilting the 1936 election in favour of the Republicans. Long pushed those in power to address public concerns about unequal wealth and power and create programmes that became long-standing "pillars of American policy" (Judis 2016: 32). In 1935, Congress began to adopt the 'Second New Deal', a series of policies and programmes that addressed inequality and were more liberal than the original New Deal. These included the Social Security Act, the National Labour Relations Act and a major national public works project to provide jobs for the unemployed. Long announced his candidacy for US president in August 1935 and was assassinated in September 1935.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Governor George Wallace of Alabama was a populist who held a mixture of left-wing and right-wing positions (Judis 2016). He ran for president four times between 1964 and 1976 and served four terms as Alabama governor. His initial base was among voters who identified as middle class and perceived a conflict with those above and below. Wallace and his followers had New Deal liberal positions on many issues but not on racial issues. In his 1963 inaugural address, Wallace declared "segregation forever". While campaigning for president in 1972, Wallace was shot, causing him to be paralysed from the waist down. Wallace's racial views later changed dramatically. In his 1982 gubernatorial election, he received strong support from Alabama's black voters. In 1985, Wallace was awarded an honorary degree from Tuskegee University, a historically black university.

More recent populists, including presidential candidates Ross Perot, Pat Buchanan, Bernie Sanders and Donald J. Trump, have challenged the US conception of neo-liberalism and its implications. As noted by Judis (2016), US neo-liberalism entails revisions to New Deal liberalism rather than its complete elimination. US neo-liberalism preserves the New Deal safety net yet emphasises market-based forces in government and society, such as privatisation and deregulation. In 1992, Texas businessman Ross Perot ran for president as a populist Independent, portraying himself as an "unpaid servant of the people against a corrupt government and inept corporate hierarchy" (Judis 2016: 47). Like populists to follow, Perot argued that the US should stop shipping jobs out of the country. During the 1992 campaign, he famously declared that the controversial North American Free Trade Agreement (later adopted in 1994) would result in "a giant sucking sound" of manufacturing jobs transferred from the US to Mexico. Perot received an impressive 19 per cent of the popular vote in 1992 (despite having dropped out and returned to the race) and ran again in 1996. Similarly, Pat Buchanan, who campaigned for the Republican nomination in 1992 and 1996, criticised the political and financial establishment, the North American Free Trade Agreement and illegal immigration. Perot and Buchanan gained attention and support because Democratic and Republican leaders "were ignoring popular concerns" about US manufacturing, immigration and government lobbying (Judis 2016: 46).

The Tea Party movement in the Republican Party and the short-lived Occupy Wall Street movement in 2011 on the left also challenged elements of neo-liberalism with populist themes. Both were decentralised movements that nonetheless influenced US political discourse. Tea Party rhetoric included concerns about people who had worked hard and ‘played by the rules’ yet were compelled to pay for entitlements for others perceived as less deserving, including people who had entered bad home mortgage deals and illegal immigrants. Occupy Wall Street emphasised ‘the 99 per cent’ battling against the greed and corruption of the elite one per cent.

The 2016 presidential campaign rhetoric of Sanders and Trump shared similarities with that of Perot, Buchanan, the Tea Party, Occupy Wall Street and earlier populists. For example, both Sanders and Trump criticised the North American Free Trade Agreement and promised new trade policies which would benefit US workers. Sanders railed against Wall Street and ‘the billionaire class’ for profiting from a ‘rigged’ system.² Trump proposed a five-year ban on congressional and White House officials becoming lobbyists after leaving government service and restrictions on foreign lobbying.³

Economic and Political Context of Contemporary US Populism

Numerous economic and political factors, including globalisation and a crisis of representation, make the contemporary US a hospitable context for populist candidates. In a June 2016 poll of registered voters, 84 per cent said that the economy was ‘very important’ to their vote in 2016. Terrorism was second at 80 per cent, followed by foreign policy (75 per cent), health-care (74 per cent), gun policy (72 per cent) and immigration (70 per cent) (Pew Research Center 2016). Globalisation has contributed to significant underemployment and wage stagnation in the US labour force. For example, some people who earned bachelor’s degrees are saddled with debt from student loans and cannot secure good jobs with good salaries. Some of these degree holders now sit in Chemistry 101 courses at two-year community colleges, pursuing new career paths in the healthcare sector.⁴

The United States lost 5.7 million manufacturing jobs from 1998-2013. These losses were caused by trade deficits with low-wage nations, such as China and Mexico, the Great Recession and a weak recovery (Scott 2015). Large US companies, including Disney and Toys ‘R’ Us, have replaced long-time, skilled US workers in accounting, computer technology and project management with foreign workers. Both Disney and Toys ‘R’ Us pressured US workers to train their own foreign replacements. The largest mutual life insurer in the US, New York Life, also had its long-time US workers train their foreign replacements as the company moved work to India (Preston 2015a; 2015b; 2016). Even the public sector is not immune to this dynamic. In 2016, the University of California San Francisco announced plans to lay off 17 per cent of its Information Technology staff, but not before this staff had trained their foreign replacements from India (Thibodeau 2016).

In 2016, air conditioner company Carrier announced that it was moving more than 2,000 jobs from Indiana to Mexico. Union leaders said Carrier would pay Mexican workers about \$3 per

² See Sanders’ campaign website at www.berniesanders.com.

³ See www.donaldjtrump.com/contract.

⁴ Thanks to Colin Henck, adjunct chemistry professor, Hudson Valley Community College, NY for this vignette.

hour compared to an average of more than \$20 per hour for the company's US workers (Carey 2016). Also in 2016, Ford Motor Company announced plans to shift all of its North American small car production to Mexico. Candy makers including Hershey and Brach's have shifted production from the US to Mexico due to cheaper labour (Hawley 2009). Critics have also blamed establishment elites for allegedly widespread abuses of the H-1B visa program that have led to foreign workers displacing US workers.

The preceding cases are sample illustrations of how globalisation has affected US workers across the labour force. Long-time workers in their 50s replaced by cheaper workers may find it especially difficult to secure new jobs with wages and benefits comparable to what they had before being replaced. In addition, analysts estimate that there are between 11 million and 12 million illegal immigrants in the US. Critics of the elite establishment, including some legal immigrants who dutifully met requirements for becoming US residents and citizens, have questioned why US immigration laws have not been enforced in an equitable manner.

In summary, US voters who have 'played by the rules' yet suffer from job loss, wage stagnation, high healthcare costs and grim prospects for a better standard of living may assign responsibility for their plight to a greedy, unresponsive establishment elite. This creates a window of opportunity for a populist candidate to convince such voters that someone cares and will act on their behalf to improve things.

In addition to formidable economic challenges, there is evidence of a crisis of political representation in the US. While Congress has received low approval ratings for decades, recent ratings of Congress from Americans across the political spectrum rank close to historic lows (McCarthy 2016). Political polarisation has also reached historic levels. Recent public opinion data indicate that "Republicans and Democrats are more divided along ideological lines—and partisan antipathy is deeper and more extensive—than at any point in the last two decades" (Pew Research Center 2014: 6). Political polarisation is strongest among the most politically active, while many with mixed ideological views are relatively uninvolved in politics. For example, 39 per cent of those with a mix of liberal and conservative views report that they vote regularly, compared to 78 per cent for consistent conservatives and 58 per cent for consistent liberals. Moreover, eight per cent of those with mixed ideological views report donating to a candidate or campaign group in recent years compared to 26 per cent for consistent conservatives and 31 per cent for consistent liberals (Pew Research Center 2014).

Establishment Barriers to Outsider Candidates

As discussed later, Trump, and to a lesser extent Sanders, can be characterised as outsiders in the 2016 presidential campaigns. However, both chose to run campaigns within the two-party system. The institutionalised two-party system in the US makes it extremely difficult for independents and third party candidates to gain attention and win office. Most states have strict requirements for ballot access and winner-takes-all systems that favour the two major parties. In 2016, Libertarian Party presidential candidate Gary Johnson was the first third party candidate in two decades to secure ballot access in all 50 states and the District of Columbia (D.C.). Green Party nominee Jill Stein secured ballot access in 44 states and D.C.⁵ In most states,

⁵ Stein was an eligible write-in candidate in three additional states.

write-in candidates must file ‘declaration of intent’ paperwork days or months prior to the election, and some states do not permit write-in candidates (National Association of Secretaries of State 2016). The mass media focus almost exclusively on candidates aligned with the two establishment parties. While social media technologies can help outsiders to mobilise support, institutionalised obstacles confronting independent and third party candidates remain formidable.

In order to qualify for participation in the presidential debates in the autumn of 2016, candidates had to achieve a minimum 15 per cent level of support in a polling average across several major national polls. On 16th September 2016, polling averages for the Democratic, Republican, Libertarian and Green Party candidates were: Hillary Clinton (43 per cent), Donald Trump (40.4 per cent), Gary Johnson (8.4 per cent) and Jill Stein (3.2 per cent). Thus, only Clinton, Trump and their vice-presidential running mates were permitted to participate in the presidential and vice-presidential debates, respectively (Commission on Presidential Debates 2016).

The 2016 Campaign: Will the Real Populist Please Stand Up?⁶

During a press conference in summer 2016 following a summit with the leaders of Mexico and Canada, US President Barack Obama received many Trump-related questions. Near the end of the conference, Obama said that he wanted to address “this whole issue of populism” and proceeded to deliver a self-described, six-minute “rant.” Casting populism in a favourable light, the president asserted that he was a populist, Bernie Sanders qualified for the title, and that Donald Trump was not a populist (though Obama did not cite Trump by name). Obama remarked:

“I’m not prepared to concede the notion that some of the rhetoric that’s been popping up is populist....Now, somebody else who has never shown any regard for workers...doesn’t suddenly become a populist because they say something controversial in order to win votes. That’s not the measure of populism. That’s nativism, or xenophobia, or worse. Or it’s just cynicism. So, I would just advise everybody to be careful about somebody attributing to whoever pops up at a time of economic anxiety the label that they’re populist.”

Obama asserted that Sanders “genuinely deserves the title” of populism because he has been “in the vineyards fighting” on economic issues. He added: “Somebody who labels ‘us versus them’ or engages in rhetoric about how we’re going to look after ourselves and take it to the other guy, that’s not the definition of populism” (White House 2016).

Consistent with Roberts’ (2014) concept of crisis of political representation, Oliver and Rahn (2016) argue that the Trump phenomenon is the result of a representation crisis. As in the case of earlier populists, voter concerns are not well reflected in the positions and actions of the two major parties. Thus, “the opportunity for a Donald Trump presidency is ultimately rooted in a failure of the Republican Party to incorporate a wide range of constituencies” (Oliver and

⁶ U.S. television game show *To Tell The Truth* features three people claiming to be the same person with a special skill or job; two are imposters and one is sworn to tell the truth. At the end of the game, the host says “Will the real [truth teller’s name] please stand up?”

Rahn 2016: 202). The results of the 2016 General Election, in which Clinton ostensibly enjoyed numerous advantages as an establishment insider, also suggest a failure of the Democratic Party.

At its core, populism is anti the elite establishment, and populist candidates have credibility as outsiders. Focusing on outsider status as a central element of the definition of a populist, Trump is a populist, Sanders qualified for the label during the 2016 nomination process and Clinton was not a populist. While Trump has enjoyed lifelong membership in the country's economically elite class, he was not a politician prior to the 2016 presidential campaign. Moreover, many establishment Republicans charged that Trump was a 'Republican in Name Only' (RINO) and not a true conservative.

Operating within the two-party establishment system, Sanders received more than 12 million votes in the caucus and primary elections for the Democratic presidential nomination and is a long-time US senator. However, Sanders is also the longest serving Independent in US Senate history and is one of only two Independents in Congress. In the eyes of many observers, Sanders lost much of his credibility as an outsider when he endorsed Clinton during the 2016 Democratic National Convention and began campaigning for her the following September.

Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton is a long-time member of the establishment and does not have a history of operating outside establishment power. Establishment elites facilitated Clinton's run for US Senator in New York even though Clinton was neither a native resident nor a long-time resident of the state. She was elected US Senator from New York in 2000, re-elected in 2006 and first ran for president in 2008. In 2009, Clinton left the US Senate to become US Secretary of State in the Obama Administration, serving in that role until 2013. Thus, while some of Clinton's campaign rhetoric embodied populist themes, she lacked credibility in attempting to pose as a populist.

During the 2016 presidential nomination and election campaigns, Clinton was criticised for not being more accessible to the press. In contrast, Trump was highly accessible to the press, holding 'news conferences' and participating in many interviews with the mass media. A 'showman' with years of experience hosting his former reality television series, *The Apprentice* and *The Celebrity Apprentice*, Trump strategically attracted plentiful free publicity from the mass media during the campaign. One of Clinton's main campaign slogans was "I'm with her." The Trump campaign, seeking to portray him as the populist candidate aligned with the people, subsequently adopted the slogan: "I'm with you."

Clinton's campaign appearances were often tightly scripted affairs as she read from teleprompters and 'stayed on script.' In contrast, for many months of his campaign, Trump was known for speaking off script.⁷ While this was a risky practice with numerous negative consequences, it also likely made Trump more authentic in the eyes of his supporters. This dynamic is related to the concept of 'bad manners' discussed by Moffitt and Tormey (2014) and Moffitt (2016).

Throughout the nomination and election campaigns, Trump delivered rhetoric that displayed culturally defined 'bad manners'. Portraying himself as a champion in the fight against political correctness, Trump engaged in name-calling, mocked people's physical features, questioned the hero status of Vietnam prisoner of war Senator John McCain, proposed a temporary ban

7 During later stages of the campaign, Trump began to read from a teleprompter more often.

on Muslims entering the US, implied that his own ‘sacrifices’ were comparable to that of a Muslim veteran who died in the Iraq War, made references to gun violence against Clinton and more.

Both Trump and Sanders secured substantial campaign donations from small dollar donors. A Republican who led digital fundraising under George W. Bush noted that, due to Trump’s ability to both self-finance his campaign and secure tens of millions of dollars in small donations, the establishment elite could not use the threat of withholding funds as leverage over Trump. Trump’s fundraising from small dollar donors far exceeded small donations to 2012 Republican nominee Mitt Romney, who relied more heavily on large contributions (Confesorre and Corasaniti 2016).

During the Democratic nomination process, about two-thirds of donations to the Sanders campaign were from small dollar donors compared to one-fifth of Clinton’s donations (Mehta et al. 2016). The Sanders campaign emphasised populist themes. He criticised Clinton’s support from the Wall Street establishment and charged that Clinton should release transcripts of paid speeches she had delivered in closed-door appearances before elite establishment audiences.

Establishment powers within the Democratic Party strongly favoured nominating Clinton over Sanders. Shortly before the Democratic National Convention, Democratic National Committee (DNC) emails publicised by the hacking website WikiLeaks revealed DNC bias against Sanders. While DNC officials and the Clinton campaign had asserted that the Democratic primary and caucus processes were open and fair, DNC emails revealed official efforts to help Clinton and hamper Sanders. Following these revelations, DNC head Debbie Wasserman Schultz resigned, and there were additional firings and resignations among DNC officials.

Winning the Democratic nomination required 2,382 delegates.⁸ Clinton secured 2,807 delegate votes, while Sanders secured 1,894. Clinton received 602 of 712 superdelegate votes, while Sanders received only 48 superdelegate votes. The superdelegates were establishment party leaders and elected officials who could vote however they wanted at the Democratic Party convention. Sanders argued that the superdelegate system gave too much power to establishment elites and pushed successfully for reform of the system. Beginning in 2020, two-thirds of Democratic superdelegates will have to vote the way their respective states voted. In the popular vote for the Democratic nomination, Clinton received about 16 million votes and Sanders received about 12 million votes. On the Republican side, Trump beat a large group of 16 mostly establishment Republican Party candidates for the nomination. He received more than 13 million votes.⁹ Winning the Republican nomination required 1,237 delegate votes and Trump secured 1,543 delegates.¹⁰

At 8:00 p.m. on Election Day, 8th November 2016, the *New York Times*’ live election forecast web page predicted that Clinton had an 80 per cent chance of winning the election. A few hours later, Trump had prevailed in a victory that caught many pollsters and pundits by surprise. Trump secured 306 electors who pledged to vote for him in the Electoral College and almost 63 million (46 per cent) in the popular vote. Clinton secured 232 electors who pledged to vote for her in the Electoral College and almost 66 million (48 per cent) popular votes.

⁸ Nomination election data in this section are from Real Clear Politics: www.realclearpolitics.com.

⁹ Ted Cruz received 7.6 million votes, John Kasich, 4.2 million, and Marco Rubio received 3.5 million votes.

¹⁰ Cruz received 559 delegates, Rubio, 165, and Kasich, 161.

While Clinton won the popular vote, the 538 electors of the Electoral College determine the winner. When the electors cast their votes on 19th December, 2016, the winner had to secure at least 270 votes. Political parties choose their slate of electors in each state but the US Constitution does not require electors to vote for their party's candidate. In rare cases, a 'faithless elector' votes for someone other than the party nominee. In 2016, seven electors voted for someone other than their party's candidate, a historic number. Two Texas Republican electors voted for John Kasich and Ron Paul respectively, rather than for Trump. In Washington State, three Democratic electors voted for Colin L. Powell, the former US Secretary of State, rather than for Clinton. A fourth Washington Democratic elector voted for Faith Spotted Eagle, a Native American activist, and a Democratic elector in Hawaii voted for Sanders (Schmidt and Andrews 2016).

Some analysts have speculated that voter education level was a key factor in the election. Exit poll data suggested that the vote among the college educated was closer than some had predicted: 49 per cent of college graduates voted for Clinton and 45 per cent for Trump. Trump received 49 per cent of the vote among white college graduates compared to 45 per cent for Clinton. Among whites with lower education levels, 67 per cent voted for Trump and 28 per cent for Clinton. Both Clinton and Trump had high unfavourability levels. About 11 per cent of voters thought Trump was unfavourable but still voted for him (Supiano 2016). Clinton received strong support from blacks and Latinos but at lower levels than Barack Obama received in 2012; Trump received slightly stronger support from these two groups compared to Mitt Romney in 2012 (Luhby 2016). Trump's victory demonstrated that many voters wanted major change rather than the status quo establishment represented by Clinton.

Conclusions and Future Research

During the campaign, Trump criticised the Carrier air conditioning company for plans to move Indiana jobs to Mexico and the Ford Motor Company for plans to build a new plant in Mexico for small car production. Shortly following the 2016 election and before Trump took office, he took credit for major announcements from both companies. In late November 2016, President-Elect Trump, Vice President-Elect and Indiana Governor Mike Pence, and Carrier announced a deal to keep about 1,000 jobs in Indiana rather than moving them to Mexico. As part of the deal, Indiana provided \$7 million in tax breaks and Carrier would invest \$16 million in its Indiana facilities. Carrier's parent company, United Technologies, earns about ten per cent of its revenue from the US federal government, especially from military contracts (Schwartz 2016a; 2016b). Some observers have suggested that Carrier was motivated by concerns about these contracts.

In January 2017, the Ford Motor Company announced that it had cancelled plans to build a \$1.6 billion plant in Mexico and would instead invest \$700 million in an existing Michigan plant, including the creation of 700 new jobs. Ford CEO, Mark Fields, framed the decision as "a vote of confidence for President-elect Trump and some of the policies that they [sic] may be pursuing." Fields added that the "primary reason" for the decision was reduced consumer demand for small cars (Snavelly and Gardner 2017).

The Carrier and Ford announcements were scrutinised by critics and did not represent holistic national economic, workforce and trade policies. However, the two cases received national attention and held huge symbolic value for Trump. They offered hope to many that positive change might be possible under a Trump presidency.

Populism is a political strategy employed by outsider candidates for elective office. Economic and political conditions in the US made it a favourable setting for the populist political strategies of Sanders and Trump. The economic impacts of globalisation, combined with political polarisation and a crisis of political representation, led to historic support for both candidates. The fact that Libertarian candidate Gary Johnson secured nationwide ballot access and garnered support in opinion polls approaching ten per cent offers further evidence of voter dissatisfaction with establishment elites.

In future research on populism in the US, it would be useful to examine the extent to which candidates for Congress, governor, state lawmaker and mayor adopt populist strategies. Second, there is a need for additional studies of how populists approach the traditional mass media and use newer social media. Following Election Day, Trump frequently continued to communicate his views on Twitter. Twitter enabled Trump to control his message and speak directly to the public. Third, researchers might assess whether the dynamics and results of the 2016 presidential campaigns convince the two establishment parties to address the crisis of political representation in tangible, productive ways.

Fourth, populism scholars might take care to manage researcher bias. It is important to avoid sitting atop one's own comfortable, elitist perch while casting disparaging glances down upon 'ignorant masses' who support diverse populist candidates. In assessing concerns about immigration voiced by politicians and voters, for example, some analysts frame these concerns as unquestionably rooted in nativist, xenophobic dispositions. The research literature on populism would benefit from more nuanced examinations of immigration issues in a given context. Using a reasonable person standard, some concerns about immigration might be classified as legitimate, rational and without mean-spirited intent. In turn, there may be consensus that some claims are best classified as nativist and xenophobic.

Finally, candidates employing populist strategies do not compose a neatly homogeneous class of political actors. Political dynamics and the implications of populist strategies differ across economic, social and political contexts. The research literature would benefit from additional analyses of the positive and negative implications of populism for democracy.

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CHAPTER 15:

POPULISM AND DEMOCRATIC REPRESENTATION IN LATIN AMERICA

Saskia P. Ruth and Kirk A. Hawkins

"The concept of representation ... is a continuing tension between ideal and achievement. This tension should lead us neither to abandon the ideal, retreating to an operational definition that accepts whatever those usually designated as representatives do; not to abandon its institutionalisation and withdraw from political reality." (Pitkin 1967: 240)

What is the relationship between populism and what political scientists refer to as democratic representation? At first glance, the question seems redundant since the study of populism and democracy already has a rich tradition. For over two decades, political scientists have studied the mixed effects of populism on democracy, as well as the origins of populism in the principle of popular sovereignty (Canovan 1999; Urbinati 1998; Mair 2002; Mény and Surel 2002; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012a). However, most of this literature considers only the relationship between populism and *liberal* democracy, the latter defined in procedural terms as contestation, participation and a set of supporting institutions designed to uphold individual liberties and minority rights.

The study of democratic representation gets at something broader than the institutions of liberal democracy, although there are clear points of intersection. If we take as our starting point Dahl's definition of democracy as "the quality of being completely or almost completely responsive to its citizens" (Dahl 1971: 2), then democratic representation refers to the relationship between the inputs and outputs of democratic institutions, liberal or otherwise, and whether or not they embody this responsiveness. Although this responsiveness can mean several things, which we outline below, most scholars see it as a core characteristic of modern democracies (Manin et al. 1999b). Democracy, in Hannah Pitkin's words, "re-presents" citizens and their aspirations (1967). In saying this, we accept the fundamental distinction enshrined by Dahl and others between democratic procedure and policy outcomes, and we sympathise with the claim that liberal procedures are most likely to achieve congruence between policy outcomes and popular inputs (Collier and Levitsky 1997; Schumpeter 1950). But democratic representation and liberal institution are not the same, and liberalism's claim to superior representation must be defended.

One of the challengers to liberalism's claim is populism. Populist parties and movements assert that political elites have failed in their duty to represent the people and that they have done so systematically, protected by liberal institutions. Populists do not so much claim that liberal institutions are inherently bad—who is against freedom?—as they argue that they are insufficient to the task of representation. Only by removing elites and transforming institutions to ensure broad representation can freedoms be fully enjoyed. Thus, populism claims to remedy the lack of correspondence between government outputs and citizens' preferences.

In this chapter, we assess the scholarly literature on populism and democratic representation and develop a clearer theory on their relationship, based on a so-called ideational approach to populism. This theory draws on the work of others, especially Pitkin (1967) and her framework of representation. We argue that populism's impact on democratic representation is more ambiguous than some of the literature suggests and populists themselves claim. Populist ideas do remedy some of liberalism's representational failures; where these failures are greatest, populism is most likely to be electorally successful and have its maximum impact. But populist ideas in practice also have strong tendencies towards exclusion that make any project at building democratic representation difficult. The impact of these ideas depends much less on the ideological flavour of populism (left or right), as some of the literature on populism asserts, as it does on the size of populist coalitions and the strength of their opponents.

We study the relationship between populism and representation with a specific focus on the Latin American region. We do so for two reasons. First, the region has been prominent in scholarly literature and informs much of our thinking on the association between populism and representation; it seems fitting to start here. But second and more importantly, left-wing populists in the region are thought to be important examples of democratic inclusiveness, and thus provide the 'most likely' cases for testing our argument. Our descriptive analysis shows that left-wing populists do not always achieve their lofty goals, and that they are more capable of providing some types of representation than others. At the end of the chapter, we suggest some ways forward as scholars apply these insights from Latin America to Europe and elsewhere.

The Poorly Studied Relationship between Populism and Democratic Representation

What is democratic representation? In this chapter, we draw from the classic framework laid out by Pitkin (1967) in *The Concept of Representation*. Pitkin sees representation as a possible function of any government, but a crucial one for democracy. This function can be conceptualised in four different ways. The first refers to a mere formalistic view on representation, which alludes to procedural definitions of democracy, seeing elections as instruments that enable citizens to authorise elected officials and hold them accountable for their actions (see also Powell 2000; Manin et al. 1999a). The other three views on representation, on the other hand, focus on the content of the representative link between citizens and their representatives: descriptive, symbolic and substantive representation. Pitkin (1967) argues that from a descriptive view of representation, the link between a citizen and its representative is based on resemblance (see also Mansbridge 1999); for instance, "it depends on the representative's characteristics, on what he *is* or *is like*, on being something rather than doing something" (1967: 61, *italics original*). Relatedly, symbolic representation is also referred to as an act of *standing for* something; however, in this view the representative does not have to be a person or resemble the represented (as in the type of descriptive representation). Instead, the represented may be a group or a whole nation who are represented via a symbol, for example a political leader or a flag (see Pitkin 1967: 92ff). The idea is that the group is dignified, or recognised in a normatively positive way as helping to constitute the democratic sovereign. Substantive representation, in contrast, is defined as "the nature of the activity itself, what goes on during represent-

ing, the substance or content of acting for others, as distinct from its external and formal trappings” (Pitkin 1967: 114). While the former two views on representation centre on representing through mirroring either the different parts of society based on identity or class markers or through symbolising the society as a whole, the latter centres on representation as acting in the interest of citizens (see also Saward 2008). This latter view lies at the heart of most theories on democracy, although envisioned institutionally in many different ways (Dahl 1971; Manin et al. 1999b; Schmitter and Karl 1991; Riker and Ordeshook 1968). Underlying this is the broader claim that democracy can be conceived of in part as an institutionalised effort at representation. We return to these views below when we flesh out our theory on populism and representation.

What is populism? In line with what we and others call an ideational approach (Hawkins and Rovira Kaltwasser 2017; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2017), or what is elsewhere referred to in this volume as a frame based on ambivalent claims, we define populism as *a political discourse that posits a struggle between a unified will of the common people and a conspiring elite*. Whether referring to populism as a discourse, discursive frame or thin-centred ideology, all scholars using this approach see populist ideas as the main driving force behind the (un)democratic behaviour of populist leaders and followers, providing the motivating force for their policy choices (Heinisch and Mazzoleni in this volume; Rooduijn 2014).

But whether expressed in these minimal terms or in the other ways mentioned in this handbook, nearly all definitions see populist discourse as a crucial component of the parties and movements that we think of as populist. And the important point is that these political actors are ultimately making an argument not for any particular set of institutions but for the ideal of democratic representation (see also Caramani 2017). For populist actors, the citizens are the rightful sovereign, and the government should reflect their interests and identities. As such, the rise of populism is closely related to a perceived ‘crisis of representation’ (Kriesi 2014; Mair 2002; Taggart 2002), for instance, the claim that governments have ceased to be representative: citizens’ interests are consistently harmed (substantive representation), and their views and voices are suppressed, fragmented and delegitimated (descriptive and symbolic representation). This lack of representation is the result of selfish machinations by the very elite that was supposed to be representing the people; hence, a drastic response is required, one that can restore a rightful representative government. Liberal institutions, such as nominally competitive elections, are still important for registering the voice of the people (formal representation), but they may be temporarily compromised as the people struggle against the domination of powerful elites who manipulate these rules. Ultimately, the function of democratic government is to represent the people, and liberal institutions (or any other set of policies—note this, economists!) are means to this end.

Over the past two centuries, actual populist parties and movements have won elective office in many countries, both as principled opposition parties as well as to the highest government positions. Naturally, the question is whether these populists are effective at improving representation and, furthermore, whether we should have expected them to be so. One answer to these questions comes from Latin Americanists, who have historically taken a positive view of populism and representation. If we ignore the voice of some early naysayers who saw populism as a sham that ultimately failed to deliver on its promises (Di Tella 1965; Dornbusch and Edwards 1991; Germani 1978; Ianni 1975; Weffort 1978), we find a number of scholars who see populist forces in a positive light precisely because those forces increased not just for-

mal representation (especially through extension of the franchise and the legalisation of civil society organisations created by middle and lower sectors) but descriptive, symbolic and ultimately substantive representation. Populist forces have brought excluded racial, socio-economic and gender-based groups into elected positions while redistributing important state benefits, all while rhetorically dignifying popular voices and acknowledging them as part of ‘the people’. The products of these governments—in the early twentieth century, *radicalism*; in the mid-twentieth century, *Peronismo*, *Varguismo* and *Velasquismo*; and in recent decades, *Chavismo* and its Bolivarian allies—have supposedly brought profound changes that reduced inequality and heralded critical junctures in these countries’ democratic institutional histories (Chalmers et al. 1997; Collier and Collier 1991; Laclau 2006; Drake 1978; Stein 1980).

However, many of these studies on Latin America have not focused primarily on populism, and those that do often use older, structuralist definitions of populism, which make it hard to pinpoint whether it was populism that brought about these changes or some traditional ideological component of the leader’s programmatic vision. Furthermore, most of these studies have selected on the dependent variable, identifying and analysing cases of populism that brought about successful change, while ignoring other populist movements that failed at these attempts, or non-populist movements that brought about the same improvements through pluralist means.

European scholars, in contrast, are more focused specifically on populism, and most of them use ideational or political-institutional definitions that, at least in theory, would allow them to analyse these connections. Most of their work studies the relationship of populism to democracy’s liberal elements, especially contestation and occasionally participation. As Huber and Schimpf outline (in this volume), this literature either sees populism as an entirely negative force (Abts and Rummens 2007; Urbinati 1998) or as both a threat to and a corrective for liberal democracy (Arditi 2004; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012a; Panizza 2005). On the one hand, populism’s presumption of a unified popular will closes off the space required for opposition, and its faith in popular know-how, together with the assumption of charismatic leadership, encourages the elimination of independent government institutions; thus, contestation declines (Panizza 2005; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012a; Albertazzi and McDonnell 2008; Houle and Kenny forthcoming; Huber and Schimpf 2015; Allred et al. 2015). On the other hand, populism can have a beneficial effect on democratic participation, insofar as it incorporates the views of previously ignored segments of the electorate or mobilises their vote. Furthermore, the negative impact of populism on contestation is not always a given; it is more likely when populists are in government and have the ability to capture and control institutions, while populist challengers may force incumbent traditional parties to become more attentive without having a direct, negative impact on the political system (Heinisch 2003; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012a; Otjes 2012; Allred et al. 2015; Ruth forthcoming; Ruth and Welp 2014).

Although these more recent arguments have obvious implications for democratic representation, the scholars who make them avoid framing their claims in these terms. Instead, they focus on the procedural elements of liberal definitions, or what Mény and Surel (2002) call the “constitutional” pillar of liberal democracy. The focus on liberal democracy is valuable, and we contribute to this conversation in some of our own work elsewhere (Allred et al. 2015; Ruth forthcoming). But it struggles to address questions about democratic representation, be-

cause liberal arguments frequently leave untested the assumption that liberal institutions achieve the goal of connecting popular inputs with outputs or outcomes.

One exception to this trend is the work of Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2013).¹ Although their book (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012b) conceives of this impact in liberal terms, in a later article they reconceive of this impact more broadly in terms of democratic *inclusion* and *exclusion*. Their focus on material, political and symbolic inclusion (or exclusion) roughly parallels Pitkin's notions of substantive, descriptive and symbolic representation. Specifically, an inclusive regime represents the material interests of citizens (substantive representation), accords them political participation in a way that ensures they have a real voice in how government is constituted (formal representation and descriptive representation), and dignifies them symbolically by making clear that they are part of 'the people' (symbolic representation). Through a rough comparison of four countries, Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2013) show that populist regimes in Latin America (Hugo Chávez's Bolivarian movement in Venezuela and Evo Morales' MAS in Bolivia) are much more inclusive than populists in Europe (the Front National in France and the Freedom Party in Austria). This behaviour reflects the ideology of these actors (left versus right), which in turn derives from the different situations of these countries in terms of class stratification and the relative sizes of the lower strata.

Although Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser's work is a clear step forward in the study of populism and representation, they do not engage Pitkin's framework directly. In particular, they stop short of providing an explanation for populism's effects in each of these three areas of inclusiveness. That is, they describe the effects with reference to their four cases, but they do not propose a clear set of causal mechanisms linking populist ideas to representational consequences. Consequently, they struggle to explain whether leftist ideology is the decisive factor in explaining the impact of these actors on representation.

A Theory of Populism and Democratic Representation

Our argument is that populist ideas per se matter for representation. Although these ideas interact with other features of the political environment, the ideas themselves have significant, traceable effects that are at least partially independent of the populists' left-wing or right-wing ideology. Hence, to explain the impact of populism on democratic representation we build on the *ideational* approach defined earlier. This approach does not discard the impact of material constraints, but sees those constraints as moderators of populist ideas (Hawkins and Rovira Kaltwasser 2014). And while it does not claim that politicians always use the discourse sincerely, it assumes that the support of voters generally forces politicians who do use the discourse to act as if they were sincere.

Using the ideational approach, we start more or less as other scholars have, with an appreciation of the likely *positive* effects of populism on representation. Populism is essentially an argument that traditional political actors are undermining democratic representation, and populist actors make some effort to rectify this gap in the link between representatives and citizens. We can identify two aspects of populist ideas and their connection to the material environment that—irrespective of the region or host ideology—should influence populism's rela-

1 See also Caramani (2017) for a theoretical demarcation between populism, technocracy and party government.

tionship to representation. The first is that—as the literature on populism and liberal democracy already argues—populism is never an entirely benign force. While the literature on populism and liberalism frequently emphasises the impact of charismatic leadership and populist ideas on horizontal accountability and the quality of electoral contestation, here we draw attention to its impact on civil liberties and minority rights. Populism may champion unrepresented sectors of citizens, but it also vilifies what it perceives as the elite and their cronies. Once in power, populists promise to systematically exclude them, for instance, to ‘unrepresent’ them in all four ways: formally (by circumventing legal rights, especially the vote or the right to form political associations and run for office), descriptively (by removing them and ‘their kind’ from office), symbolically (through rhetoric that dehumanises them) and substantively (by imposing conditionality on government benefits or rewriting policy to systematically disadvantage former insiders). Thus, populism is good for democratic representation of ‘the people’ but bad for that of ‘the elite’.

This leads to a second aspect of populism’s impact on democratic representation: size. Actual populist movements rarely represent a majority, and they certainly do not represent all of the citizenry. It matters how large ‘the people’ and ‘the elite’ are. Smaller, niche populist parties such as radical right-wing populists in Western Europe are more likely to alienate large segments of the citizenry, while larger majoritarian movements that win office with supermajorities, such as those in Latin America or Southern Europe, may in fact improve representation for much of the population. Thus, the benefits of populism for democratic representation should be greater (but still incomplete) where populists win complete control of government through free and fair elections, because it is in these countries where the representational gap is greatest.

Although this provides our background argument, we also expect populism to have distinct, specific consequences for different types of representation. Starting with *formal representation*, or the way in which institutional arrangements provide authorisation and accountability, we expect populism to be somewhat negative—but not entirely. As some critics have argued, populism has a difficult relationship with formal representative institutions, seeing elections as imperfect means of knowing the popular will, and discounting the importance of institutions that enshrine minority rights or enforce a separation of powers (see, for example, Caramani 2017). Relatedly, Taggart points out that populists “challenge the functioning of representative democracy ... while at the same time championing the virtues of representation” (2004: 269). However, we disagree with arguments which claim that populism leads inexorably to fully autocratic or even totalitarian regimes that eschew competitive elections in favour of purely plebiscitary, symbolic experiences (Abts and Rummens 2007; Urbinati 1998). Populist actors mainly argue against horizontal accountability mechanisms – which are a core principle of liberal constitutionalism – and in favour of expanding vertical accountability mechanisms, especially majoritarian ones (Taggart 2004; Ruth forthcoming; Ruth and Welp 2014). They value the seal of popular approval that only a formally open, competitive election can provide, and they frequently champion direct participatory mechanisms such as recall, initiative and referenda—including those that can be initiated by citizens (Ruth and Welp 2014). Thus, we see ambivalence among populists towards formal democratic institutions. The quality of electoral competition may decline (as defenders of the liberal perspective have empirically demonstrated), but committed populists should support regular elections in which there is still some pos-

sibility of the populist incumbent losing. The result is hybrid democracy rather than outright autocracy or totalitarianism (Levitsky and Loxton 2013; Allred et al. 2015).

In terms of *descriptive* and *symbolic representation*—the ways in which representatives ‘stand for’ the represented either as a person that resembles them or as a signifier—we expect populists to do unambiguously well. This is not because populism is really all that inclusive (again, even highly popular populists vilify a non-insignificant subset of the population) but a matter of demographics. Most of the traditional political class comes from an intellectual and economic elite that embodies a small segment of society. There are few secretaries or plumbers who win public office, and when race or identity-based categories overlap with economic ones, whole segments of the population may go unseen in government. The populist emphasis on the virtues of ordinary citizens and their know-how, together with its tendency to exclude the most privileged sectors, means that a populist movement in power may bring a more diverse cross-section of the population into office and celebrate their democratic virtues in its rhetoric (see also Caramani 2017, Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2013). This is not to say that the size of the coalition is unimportant. Populist niche parties will naturally draw on a smaller cross-section of the population than a majoritarian populist party, and their definition of ‘the people’ will accordingly shrink. But trading a few Ivy League lawyers for members of the middle class, even if they are white and male, may represent a dramatic improvement for a population craving leaders that look more like them.

Finally, we expect populist parties and movements to have very mixed consequences for *substantive representation*—the actions taken by representatives in the interest of the represented. On the one hand, populist parties and movements raise high expectations about the performance of democratic systems, since populist actors usually campaign for complex and extensive policy change (see Ruth forthcoming). In line with the inclusive way of defining ‘the people’ in Latin America, this should lead to increased welfare spending on the poor, while the same logic applies to welfare chauvinism by the rather exclusivist populist parties in Europe (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2013; 2015). However, the success of these programmes depends not only on the reallocation of public resources but on the efficient and impartial implementation of these funds, for instance their distributive impact. Governing populist parties in Latin America often behave like clientelistic systems of representation, distributing goods and services conditionally, based on partisan rather than universalistic criteria (Ruth 2012; Kitschelt et al. 2010). The result can be negative for groups that oppose the government in elections, at least some of which are not from the wealthiest sectors. While we expect majoritarian populist coalitions like those in Latin America to be better than niche parties at redistributing wealth or changing the policy agenda to address broadly felt needs, the conditional, partisan logic of their policymaking makes them unlikely to offer fully public goods.

Empirical Analysis: Patterns of Populism and Representation in Latin America

To subject these arguments to a first empirical test, we now turn to the descriptive analysis of contemporary representative governments (both populist and non-populist) in contemporary Latin America (1999–2014). We focus on Latin America not only because this is traditionally one of the most widely studied regions in terms of populism, but because it offers a number of

contemporary populists in power, almost all of which are leftist. These are majoritarian movements that represent ‘easy’ cases for competing arguments that generally see these as inclusive. In contrast, our expectation is that the impact of these left populists will be much more varied.

To measure the degree of populism we rely on a unique polity-level dataset that captures the populist discourse of chief executives (see Hawkins 2009; Hawkins and Kocijan 2013; Allred et al. 2015). This dataset covers 36 Latin American leaders in 18 countries from 1999 until 2014. Thus, it captures much of the current variation of populist and non-populist regimes in Latin America. The indicator measures populist discourse through a human-coded content analysis of political speeches, using the ideational definition mentioned above as its point of comparison. The score for each leader is an average of four speeches using a quota sample to ensure comparability across chief executives; sampling techniques and the coding procedure (including the rubric and anchor texts) can be found in Hawkins (2009) and Hawkins and Kocijan (2013). The interval scale runs from 0 (no populism) to 2 (intense populism). By way of note, intercoder reliability for the codes is quite high,² and correlations with other data from scholarly literature are also high (Hawkins and Castanho Silva 2015). The measure of the populist discourse has a mean of 0.35 and a standard deviation of 0.47 in our sample.

To measure the different types of political representation discussed above, we build on several other sources. To capture formal and descriptive representation, we use data from the Democracy Barometer project (DB, Merkel et al. 2016). This project provides panel data (countries and years) on a variety of institutional and behavioural measures capturing different principles and functions of democracy, including several aspects of representation, and is available for 18 Latin American countries with more than 250,000 inhabitants (Merkel et al. 2016). Hence, it covers all the chief executives included in our populist discourse dataset. More specifically, we use the following three composite indicators from the DB dataset, which most closely resemble the democratic aspects theorised above: First, we measure *formal representation* through two aggregated indices of the structural opportunities for the inclusion of citizen preferences into the political process (items REP_SR1 and REP_SR2), such as electoral disproportionality, a high number of parliamentary seats and direct democratic institutions (Bühlmann et al. 2012; Bochsler and Hug 2015; Merkel et al. 2016). Second, we measure *descriptive representation* through, on the one hand, an aggregated index of political participation (item PARTICIP) which contains different indicators that capture both the effectiveness of institutional and non-institutional forms of participation – for example, rules facilitating participation or the frequency of petitions—as well as the equality of participation rights and their use among different segments of society—for example, the percentage of registered voters or the distribution of turnout according to education and income (Paxton et al. 2003; Teorell 2006). On the other hand, we use an index of descriptive representation (item REP_DR) that captures the access to political office for ethnic and structural minorities, including the absence of legal restrictions or constraints as well as the adequate representation of women and ethnic groups in national political institutions (see also Bochsler 2010; Hänni 2016).³

To capture *substantive representation*, we analyse the change in political output and outcome measures with respect to three important political issues that rank highest among the policy

2 The 2011 Latin American update has at least 89 percent agreement, a Cohen's kappa of between 0.66 and 0.72, and a Krippendorff's alpha of 0.75 to 0.82, depending on the coders (Hawkins 2012). All of these are moderate to high levels of reliability (Krippendorff 2013, 241-242, Landis and Koch 1977).

3 For a detailed description of the indicators included and the construction of the indices, see (Merkel et al. 2016)

priorities of Latin American citizens. According to the AmericasBarometer regional report from 2004 until 2014, three issues constantly figured among the top policy priorities of Latin American citizens: the role of the state in tackling economic problems (including unemployment, poverty and shortages of basic services), the prevention of crime and violence, and the problem of political and economic corruption (Zechmeister 2014). To capture the development of these three issues, we use data on social spending (as a percentage of total public spending) from CEPALSTAT (ECLAC 2016), data on intentional homicides (per 100,000 people) from the World Development Indicators database (The World Bank 2016)⁴ and data on the control of corruption from the Worldwide Governance Indicators project (Kaufmann and Kraay 2016). For all of these indicators, we calculate the change over time for each chief executive's first term (as well as completed consecutive terms, if applicable). We use the year before an incumbent assumed office and their last year in office as reference points⁵.

Note that, to the best of our knowledge, we are not aware of any dataset that captures the degree of *symbolic representation*. We suspect that the populist discourse dataset we use captures at least some aspects of symbolic representation. Many of these political leaders become symbols of the popular will themselves and their rhetoric typically identifies previously excluded groups as part of that will (Hawkins 2009). For example, in this passage from a speech used in our coder training, Evo Morales of Bolivia reacts to perceived attempts to symbolically exclude indigenous peoples from the category of legitimate citizens:

They have tried to impose policies of hunger and poverty on the Bolivian people. Above all, the 'rule of law' means the accusations that we, the Quechuas, Aymaras and Guaranties of Bolivia keep hearing from our governments: that we are narcos, that we are anarchists. This uprising of the Bolivian people has been not only about gas and hydrocarbons, but an intersection of many issues: discrimination, marginalisation, and most importantly, the failure of neo-liberalism.

Likewise, in a 2010 speech to a Tea Party convention (also used in coder training), former Republican vice-presidential candidate Sarah Palin applauds the "real people—not politicians, not inside-the-Beltway professionals—[who] come out and stand up and speak out for common-sense conservative principles." For her, these 'real people' are:

everyday Americans who grow our food and run our small businesses, teach our kids, and fight our wars. They're folks in small towns and cities across this great nation who saw what was happening.

However, describing this rhetorical effort and measuring its impact requires a more systematic analysis than we can provide here.

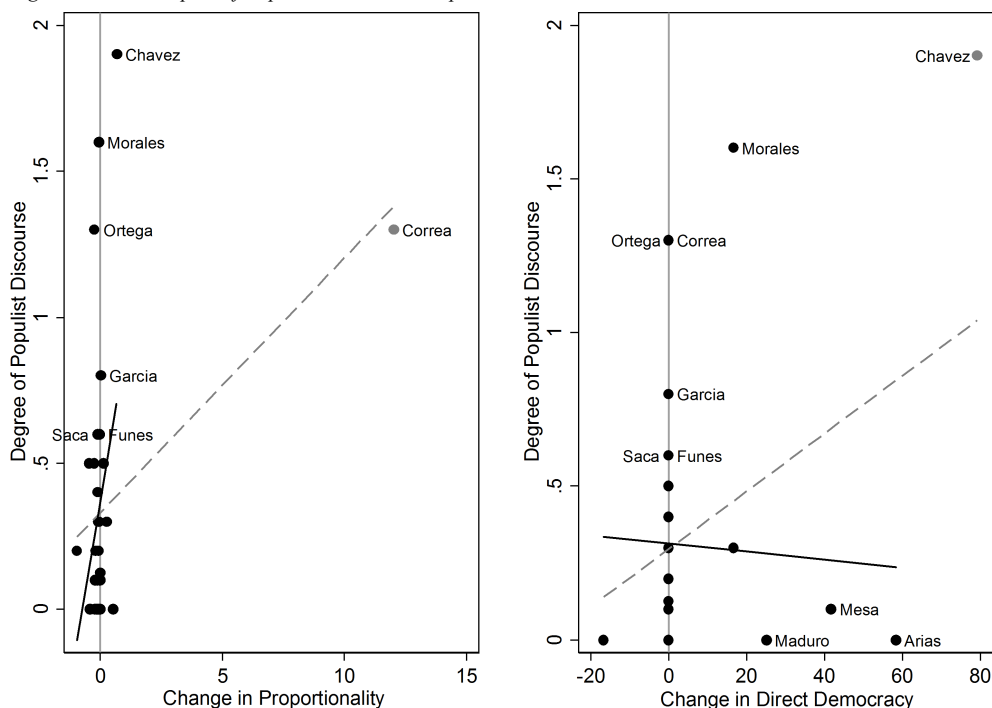
⁴ Note that data on homicides was not available for the whole period under study, which results in missing data for the following five cases: Kirchner (ARG), Fernandez de Kirchner (ARG), Mesa (BOL), Lula (BRA) and Lagos (CHL).

⁵ In case an incumbent assumed office after 30th June, we use the same year as the reference point. Likewise, we use the previous year as a reference point if an incumbent left office before 1st July.

Formal Representation

Figure 15.1 shows the bivariate correlations for the degree of populism and two indicators capturing vertical accountability mechanisms: the proportionality of electoral institutions (left panel) and the provision of direct democratic institutions (right panel). While we initially find a positive correlation between populism and these two measures of formal representation, the direction and significance of each correlation is highly dependent on one individual case. Ultimately, the relationship is largely nil.

Figure 15.1: The Impact of Populism on Formal Representation



Source: Change in Proportionality includes the number of electoral districts and parliamentary seats per inhabitant (DB item REP_SR1, Merkel et al. 2016). Change in Direct Democracy includes the provisions for direct democratic instruments and the absence of participation and approval quorums (DB item REP_SR2, Merkel et al. 2016). See Table 1 in the appendix for more information on the individual cases. Note that dashed correlation lines are based on all cases while the solid line in the left panel excludes the case of Correa and the solid line in the right panel excludes the case of Chavez.

With respect to the proportionality of representation, the case of Rafael Correa in Ecuador drives the relationship. The Ecuadorian electoral system reform introduced through the new constitution in 2009 increased both the number of seats in the legislature and introduced the election of some legislators in a nationwide district through proportional representation (Bowen 2010). Paradoxically this increase in the proportionality of the electoral system led to the continued majority control of the president's party (*Alianza PAIS*) in the unicameral congress, a situation unprecedented in the highly fragmented and polarised Ecuadorian party

system before 2009 (Mejía Acosta and Polga-Hecimovich 2011; Mejía Acosta 2006). While other countries in the region experienced electoral reforms as well, these reforms did not lead to a considerable increase in the proportionality of electoral rules. Moreover, many reforms rather strengthened majoritarian vertical electoral accountability through the abolition of presidential re-election bans, a trend that took place under both populist and non-populist rule and was rather related to the popularity of presidents than their populist discourse (Corrales 2016). In line with the expansion of consecutive presidential re-election rules, the introduction of direct democratic instruments is also considered to strengthen vertical accountability in a majoritarian way (Breuer 2007).

As can be seen in Figure 15.1 (right panel), with respect to the provision of direct democratic mechanisms, the correlation is highly dependent on the case of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, who introduced several direct democratic mechanisms for the first time in this country through the writing of a new constitution in 2000, shortly after his rise to power. If we exclude this influential observation, the relationship changes signs and becomes insignificant. This highlights the importance of being cautious with respect to generalisations based on only a few cases and the need to compare populists to non-populist cases as well. For example, we find Ricardo Maduro in Honduras (a non-populist) also increased the provision of direct democratic mechanisms in his country (Altman 2011). Moreover, the provision of direct democratic mechanisms does not necessarily mean that these instruments are activated. As can be seen with respect to the introduction of direct democratic mechanisms in Bolivia (by Morales and his predecessor Carlos Mesa), apart from the use of these instruments in the approval process of the constitution in 2009, these instruments have not (yet) been used effectively to influence policymaking in a bottom-up process (see Welp and Ruth 2017). Hence, while individual cases may improve the structural opportunities for citizens to introduce their preferences into the political process, we cannot identify a clear pattern between the two concepts and the degree of a chief executive's discourse.

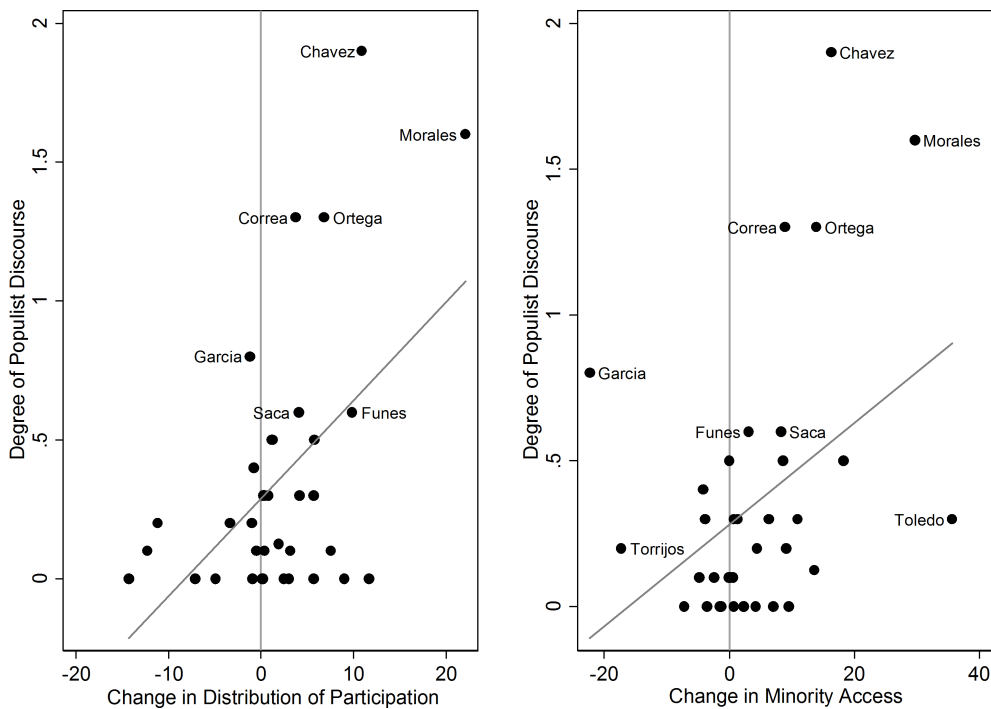
Descriptive Representation

Figure 15.2 (left panel) shows the bivariate association between the degree of populism and the change in the effectiveness and equality of participation at the end of a president's (combined consecutive) term (mirroring Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser's (2013) dimension of political inclusion). Here, as we expected, the relationship is highly positive.

With the exception of Alan García's second presidential term in Peru, all populist presidents have a considerable positive association with democratic participation (including both electoral and non-institutional). The correlation is positive and moderately strong with a correlation coefficient of $r=0.51$ (at the 99% confidence level). Moreover, these changes are by no means minor, as the case of Morales in Bolivia indicates. Morales considerably improved the effectiveness and equality of participation by including large groups of marginalised voters, for instance, ethnic minorities, low income voters, and women (Madrid 2008; Rousseau 2010). Considering the range of the participation function in our sample (which runs from a minimum of 36 to a maximum of 63), an increase by more than 20 points is a substantial improvement in the quality of participation. Figure 15.2 (right panel) shows the relationship between populism and the political representation of ethnic groups and other structural minorities.

Again we find a significant positive correlation between populism and descriptive representation ($r=0.40$, $p<0.05$). In line with our findings on participation, this association is considerably dampened by the case of García in Peru. If we exclude the observation for García, the correlation increases to 0.52, significant at the 99% confidence level. All other populist presidents affect descriptive representation in a positive way (irrespective of their ideological leanings).

Figure 15.2: *The Impact of Populism on Descriptive Representation*



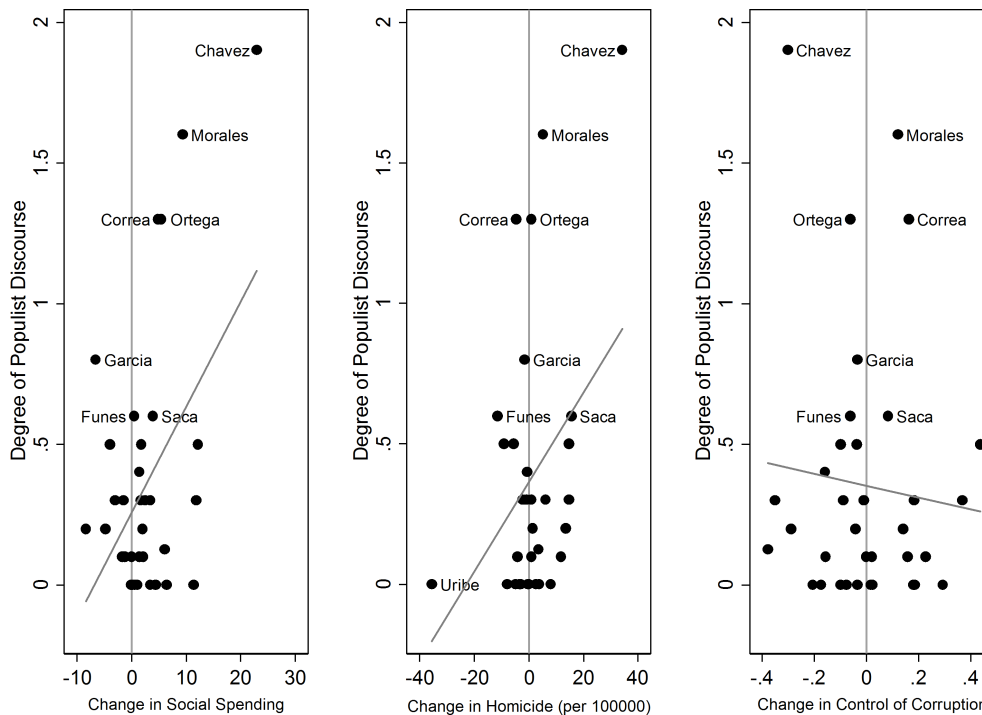
Source: Change in Distribution of Participation includes the equality and effectiveness of formal and non-formal participation according to education, income, gender and age (DB item PARTICIP, Merkel et al. 2016). Change in Minority Access refers to an index of the adequate representation and access to power of women and ethnic minorities (DB item REP_DR, Merkel et al. 2016). See Table 1 in the appendix for more information on the individual cases.

These patterns also reveal another potential finding. In line with the case study literature, we find that García—who had already governed the country as a left-wing populist president in the 1980's (Graham 1990)—ran for office in 2006 for a second time deploying a populist discourse. However, he abandoned his populist appeal right after assuming office for his second term and took a turn to the right, especially with respect to economic policies (Schmidt 2007). Hence, Figure 15.2 potentially highlights the distinction between a sincere and a strategic use of the populist discourse (Heinisch and Mazzoleni in this volume; Weyland 2001; Mair 2002).

Substantive Representation

As expected, we also find a mixed pattern with respect to substantive representation. To begin with, Figure 15.3 (left panel) shows that presidents with a strong populist discourse tend to considerably increase social spending (as a percentage of total public spending). Note that social spending is not significantly correlated with left-right ideology; in separate calculations, we find that the correlation between ideology and social spending is only moderately negative ($r=-0.248$, $p=-.145$)—for instance, the more leftist a president, the higher the change in social spending—but the correlation falls short of conventional significance levels in our sample. In contrast, with respect to crime we find that populist presidents are associated with an *increase* in homicides in their countries ($r=0.36$, $p<0.05$). Populists in Latin America do not have a strong track record of improving public safety. Finally, we find a mixed pattern with respect to the control of corruption (Figure 15.3, right panel); we can find improvements and setbacks in the control of corruption for both populist and non-populist presidents. This latter finding is especially disappointing for proponents of these governments, given that one of the main claims for representation that populist challengers make is to replace the ‘corrupt elite’.

Figure 15.3: The Impact of Populism on Substantive Representation



Source: Change in Social Spending captures the change in social spending as a percentage of total public spending (CEPALSTAT, ECLAC 2016). Change in Homicides captures intentional homicides per 100,000 inhabitants (The World Bank 2016). Change in Control of Corruption captures the perceived extent to which public power is exercised for private or political gain (WGI, Kaufmann and Kraay 2016). See Table 1 in the appendix for more information on the individual cases.

These results are echoed in the case study literature on populism in power. For example, while Correa introduced redistributive social policies that benefited the poor, these fell short of tackling the highly unequal distribution of income and property in the country (de la Torre and Ortiz Lemos 2016). Moreover, his top-down style of governing sidelined large groups in society that contested his leadership, such as indigenous social movements and conservative sub-national movements (de la Torre 2013; Eaton 2014; 2011). In a similar fashion, the Morales administration has considerably increased spending to the poor as part of a progressive economic policy agenda (Gray Molina 2010). Nevertheless, Morales has also increased the nationalisation of natural resources to finance social spending, which remains a highly contested issue between the government and its opposition (Eaton 2014). Both of these substantive changes took place in a highly conflictive and polarised political context, in which both sides denied their opponents the right to make legitimate, representative claims (Gray Molina 2010; Schilling-Vacaflor 2011). Perhaps the case that best highlights these ambiguities is that of Chávez in Venezuela. His government redirected billions of dollars in oil revenues to a series of social programmes and community development projects designed to advance participatory democracy. Although these programmes had palpable effects on poverty levels, reducing them by over 50% in only a few years (Weisbrot 2008), several studies find evidence of partisan conditionality in the distribution of programme benefits (Handlin 2016; Hawkins et al. 2011; Penfold-Becerra 2007). Furthermore, the ultimate impact of these programmes on key outcomes such as literacy rates is highly disputed (Ortega and Rodríguez 2008), and weak management of funds contributed to an increase in corruption during this period, as is evident in the data point for Chávez in Figure 15.3 (right panel).

Conclusion

Our chapter shows that the concept of representation proposed by Pitkin (1967) serves as a useful analytical tool for theorising the ambiguous relationship between democratic representation and populism. In doing so, we seek to augment the current focus of the literature on the institutions of liberal democracy. If we look more closely at the multiple aspects of representation, we may find that populism influences some of them positively but not others; this influence depends more heavily on the nature of populist ideas and the size of the coalitions that embody them than on left-right ideology or region. In particular, our analysis shows that the degree of the populist discourse of Latin American presidents is positively correlated with descriptive representation, including for example the political inclusion of minorities. But the relationship is more ambiguous with respect to formal and substantive representation. Thus, even in a region with predominantly left-wing populism representing large numbers of excluded citizens, the effects of populism on representation are mixed.

However, our goal in exploring the relationship of populism to democratic representation empirically is to do more than present another dataset; we want to provide future directions for research. We see three such avenues. First, while our analysis forms a first step in understanding the empirical connection between these concepts, we still lack adequate measures for all types of democratic representation, especially symbolic and substantive representation. Future research needs to tackle this data availability problem and generate indicators that more closely resemble the theoretical concepts.

Second, while we concentrated our analysis on a most likely region—Latin America—scholars need to test these arguments across regions and time. Contemporary Latin America has a number of unique features that might confound our results, such as presidentialism, and represents a narrow band of variation for testing crucial causal factors, such as coalition size. Inequality, class divisions and low levels of good governance have historically created much stronger populist movements. And while a region of left-wing populists represent an important set of cases for testing older arguments, which tend to see populism in a uniform light, minoritarian right-wing populists represent an equally important set of cases for testing our own theory with its mixed predictions. Obvious possibilities are to include European and US cases of populist parties (in government and in opposition) and to compare contemporary cases of populism with historical ones.

Finally, taking Pitkin's (1967) own suggestion seriously, future research has to highlight how different types of representation are related to each other to identify the overall effect of populism on democratic representation. For example, how do different formal representative procedures increase or constrain the potential positive and negative effects of populist government on descriptive and substantive representation? Are descriptive and substantive representation interrelated? And does symbolic representation increase the legitimacy of substantive outputs of the democratic process?

Appendix

Table 15.1: Sample of Latin American Presidents

Country	President	Years in Office	Populism Score
Argentina	Néstor Kirchner	2003–2007	0.2
	Cristina Fernández de Kirchner	2007–2015	0.0
Bolivia	Carlos Mesa	2003–2005	0.1
	Evo Morales	2006–2015	1.6
Brazil	Luiz Lula da Silva	2003–2010	0.3
	Dilma Rousseff	2011–2014	0.1
Chile	Ricardo Lagos	2000–2006	0.1
	Michelle Bachelet	2006–2010	0.0
	Sebastián Piñera	2010–2014	0.0
Colombia	Álvaro Uribe	2002–2010	0.0
	Manuel Santos	2010–2014	0.0
Costa Rica	Abel Pacheco	2002–2006	0.2
	Óscar Arias	2006–2010	0.0
	Laura Chinchilla	2010–2014	0.0
Dominican Republic	Leonel Fernández	2004–2012	0.3
Ecuador	Luis Palacio	2005–2007	0.4

Country	President	Years in Office	Populism Score
El Salvador	Rafael Correa	2007–2013	1.3
	Antonio Saca	2004–2009	0.6
	Mauricio Funes	2009–2014	0.6
Guatemala	Óscar Berger	2004–2008	0.0
	Álvaro Colom	2008–2012	0.1
Honduras	Ricardo Maduro	2002–2006	0.0
	Manuel Zelaya	2006–2009	0.5
	Porfirio Lobo	2010–2014	0.3
Mexico	Vicente Fox	2000–2006	0.3
	Felipe Calderón	2006–2012	0.1
Nicaragua	Enrique Bolaños	2002–2007	0.0
	Daniel Ortega	2007–2012	1.3
Panama	Martín Torrijos	2004–2009	0.2
	Ricardo Martinelli	2009–2014	0.5
Paraguay	Nicanor Duarte	2003–2008	0.5
	Fernando Lugo	2008–2012	0.0
Peru	Alejandro Toledo	2001–2006	0.3
	Alan García	2006–2011	0.8
Uruguay	Tabaré Vázquez	2005–2010	0.3
	José Mujica	2010–2015	0.1
Venezuela	Hugo Chávez	1999–2013	1.9

Source: Hawkins (2009), Hawkins and Kocijan (2013). Only completed terms are considered.

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CHAPTER 16:

POPULIST AND PROGRAMMATIC PARTIES IN LATIN AMERICAN PARTY SYSTEMS

María Esperanza Casullo and Flavia Freidenberg

Populism and stable party systems: can they coexist? The Latin American experience

Populism is often said to be antithetical to a stable democratic system (Weyland 2013). Populism is based on personalistic rule and charismatic authority, whereas a well-functioning democracy should be based on solid programmatic parties. Moreover, populist leaders compete for votes on the basis of emotional appeals (Kitschelt et al. 2010: 3), whereas political parties should compete by putting forward comprehensive programmes that clearly articulate public policy preferences in universalistic terms.¹

In particular, populism is often considered something akin to a political pathology that is especially prevalent in the semi-peripheral parts of the globe (Habermas 1989: 370), particularly—but not only—in Latin America. The normative-theoretical distinction between populism and an emphasis on programme is often discussed in connection with a complex historical narrative about modernisation and globalisation: Populism, it is said, is the norm in those areas of the globe that have yet to complete the transition from pre-modern forms of political organisation to fully rational ones; in time, all countries are said to advance towards a party democracy, which is the endpoint of the global process of political convergence into political modernity (Kitschelt et al. 2010).

The more frequent accounts of the prevalence of populism in semi-peripheral countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Turkey and India emphasise that in these countries the slow ‘normal’ trajectory towards political modernity was derailed by rapid state-led industrialisation in the early or mid-twentieth century. The sudden proliferation of factories caused urbanisation, which brought the displacement of rural workers into newly created metropolitan areas in search of higher paying industrial jobs. These migrant workers, cut off from their traditional political, cultural and even religious affiliations in the countryside, became ‘available’ masses that could be mobilised by smooth-talking demagogues. These rabble-rousers were carried to power by the waves of popular activism but were completely uninterested in advancing

1 It is commonly believed that voters who choose within the constraints of programmatic party systems can do so based on rational expectations about what each party will do if elected to office because policy preferences are explained in the relevant party platforms; however, voters that are forced to choose between non-programmatic parties lack these ideological indicators, so party elites have to replace them with something else: charismatic leaders and/or clientelistic appeals. “Various Latin American party systems are noted for having powerful political machines, [*sic*] that enforce discipline, [*sic*] through clientelistic rather than programmatic means; likewise, Latin American politicians working at the behest of feared or revered charismatic leaders show considerable unanimity.” (Kitschelt et al. 2010: 66)

democracy. The personalistic and authoritarian appeal of these demagogues was said to preclude the consolidation of programmatic party systems in those countries.

Though simplified here, this account was in fact the predominant explanation for the rise of mid-twentieth century populism for two decades (Lipset 1960; Di Tella 1965; Germani 1968; Cardoso and Faletto 1976; Hurtado 1977; Baykan 2016). However, the clear-cut normative and historical distinction between populism and liberal democracy came under criticism as the twentieth century ended and democracy expanded around the globe.

This has become even more evident in the last three decades after the so-called Third Wave of transitions from authoritarian to democratic rule took place in Southern and Eastern Europe, Latin America and Asia. With the successful extrication of Spain from authoritarian rule in 1974 (Linz 1989), countries as diverse as Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Chile, Bolivia and all of post-Communist Eastern Europe, plus many others, adopted multiparty political systems. They have been remarkably stable in their adherence to (at least formal) democratic stability. However, the expected withering away of populism in the semi-peripheral areas of the world that was supposed to take place as more and more countries adopted capitalism and democracy has not happened yet, and it is doubtful that this will ever happen. Rather, it seems as if in these new democracies populist and programmatic parties coexist (Cavarozzi and Casullo 2002) and that populism is one of the 'normal' ways in which political competition is conducted.

The second factor causing the re-evaluation of populism today is the fact that populist leaders and movements are enjoying great political success in the global core countries as well. A surge of populism appears to be taking place in Eastern and Western Europe as well as in the United States. The political importance of the Geert Wilder, Marine Le Pen, Nikolaos Michaloliakos, Pablo Iglesias, Nigel Farage, Donald Trump, and the success of populist right-wing parties in Austria and the Netherlands call into question the supposed immunity of advanced democratic systems to the temptation of populist leadership (Freidenberg 2007; Mudde 2007).

It is only natural that a well-deserved revaluation of global populist politics is taking place in political science under this new context (Moffitt 2016). For instance, some authors argue that populism is a reaction to the crisis of the institutionalised parties, which gives way to alternative forms of representation and parties (Roberts 1999; Weyland et al. 2010). Others go beyond this notion and push for the recognition that populism is not an antithetical impulse to democracy but a by-product of democracy itself, which coexists and competes with other modes of political identification in any democratic system (Canovan 1999; Panizza 2005).

The objective of this chapter is to answer the question of whether populism is a threat to the stability of party systems in Latin America (Zanatta 2008) or constitutes a political tradition that can coexist with democratic stability (De La Torre 2004) from a theoretical point of view. The chapter will argue that populism can, in fact, coexist with stable party systems. The argument then moves onto the second question: If we assume that populist parties and leaders compete and coexist with programmatic parties on a daily basis, how can this interaction be described and theorised? The main answer to this query is that populist and programmatic parties coexist in an ordinal relationship with each other with the result that the difference between the two types is largely a matter of degree and not of 'nature' or 'essence'. The fact that a party is 'more populist' or 'more programmatic' depends on strategic choices and the style of

leadership; parties can and do fluctuate between the two poles in different historical times as well.

The goal here is also to show that populist movements routinely evolve into populist parties in this region and that, moreover, these parties are as resilient and as effective in winning elections and governing as any other type of parties. Sometimes they succeed in performing these tasks and sometimes they fail, but they do not seem to be *a priori* condemned to do one thing or the other.

The Current State of Research into Populism and Political Representation

The first explanation about the emergence of populist movements and governments in the twentieth century emphasised the degree of modernisation of a given society (Germani 1968; Di Tella 1965). In this seminal approach, dubbed Modernisation Theory, populism was explained as an answer to the problems created by stunted or incomplete modernisation and was thus viewed as an ‘abnormal’ transition from traditional to modern politics in underdeveloped countries. Most mid-twentieth century scholars of populism viewed it as ‘deviant’ political behaviour that would have to be necessarily superseded in the course of the ‘normal’ historical evolution towards a more modern and ideological form of politics.² Populism was thus regarded as a deviant alternative to more modern forms of representation.

The US and especially Europe were considered the templates for the progressive realisation of democratic institutional development around the globe (Lerner 1958). In Europe, the process of political modernisation supposedly involved what Gino Germani called “the model of integration” (Germani 1963: 421; authors’ translation), meaning that the newly mobilised working classes were incorporated into the political system through a process characterised by widespread respect for the political norms and institutions. In Europe, the mass publics secured their inclusion in politics step by step by participating in liberal or working-class parties. The whole process helped to consolidate rather than undermine representative democracy.³ But Latin America followed a different path that led to ‘disintegrated’ forms of political action, of which populism was the main type. In the twentieth century, the new industrial classes began pushing for democratic incorporation in Latin America. Because the proper political instruments for such incorporation (the liberal or working-class parties of Europe and the US) were in short supply, the ‘available masses’ were recruited and manipulated by intra-elite factions or personalistic leaders that hoped to gain power based solely on their support. Thus, the incorporation of the masses into political life was achieved largely through informal and non-institutional means.⁴

The dominant narrative that identified populism with demagoguery and anti-democratic backwardness was promptly criticised. Defining the behaviour of the popular classes as being simply the unreflective expression of an amorphous, homogeneous whole went against the mere

² For a critique of such a mode of thinking, see Chatterjee (2004: 48).

³ In contrast, Charles Tilly makes the case that there were multiple trajectories to democracy within Europe itself, and that some European countries came to liberal democracy via a more contentious path than others. The prime example of the contentious path is France, of course (Tilly 2003).

⁴ With the notable exceptions of Costa Rica and Uruguay (Cavarozzi and Casullo 2002).

possibility of conducting an empirical analysis of populism centred on methodological individualism. Moreover, modernisation theories (both from the left and from the right) simply did not leave room either for the comprehension of the political and economic contexts within which such mobilisation happened or for understanding the contingent factors crucial in each particular case. The self-evidently elitist and even reactionary undertones when equating the popular sectors with undifferentiated ‘irrational masses’ became the basis for criticising this view of populism (Altamirano 2001).

In the 1960s, an alternative explanation of the origins of populism was introduced in the context of the emergence of Dependency Theory (O’Donnell 1972; Ianni 1975; Cardoso and Faletto 1976). Although Dependency Theory shared the identification of populism as one particular historical phase with the preceding Modernisation Theory, it parted ways with the latter in that it did not regard underdevelopment in teleological terms but rather viewed it in a more deterministic fashion as a historically necessary by-product of the relations of dependency that connect the centre (the industrialised nations) with the periphery (Latin America). Linear progress was impossible, they argued, and real modernisation would require the systemic change of the global relations of power.

Dependency Theory explained the adoption of import substitution policies as an effect of the favourable conditions brought about by the Great Depression and the Second World War. The implosion of the global trade networks allowed for higher degrees of economic autarchy as Latin American countries were forced to turn to their internal markets for economic growth. Imports-substitution industries bloomed, creating a new economic elite and a working class, in what Ianni has called “a class society” (1975). The rapid social changes caused the sudden destabilisation of the oligarchic systems of governance, which were intimately connected with the old capitalist order based on the exportation of commodities. In turn, this development disrupted the pre-existing social and political structures and gave way to the active mobilisation of groups that were previously passive (Germani 1963: 412). The mobilisation of these groups became a constitutive element of state formation in Latin America in the first half of the twentieth century. Populist leaders rose in response to the demands of the newly mobilised classes. Born out of mass activism, the new populist governments logically sought to strengthen the hand of the working classes by creating a new development model based on internal market-oriented industrialisation, the nationalisation of resources and increased economic state interventionism.

The populist governments that emerged during this period of relative economic autonomy were characterised by redistributive politics that channelled resources to the popular sectors in the hopes that state intervention would act as an effective mechanism for their social and political inclusion. It was thought the enhanced economic redistribution would prop up internal demand, which would spur economic investment in turn. The whole project was planned as an inter-class alliance between the working classes, the middle classes and the newly formed industrial bourgeoisies against the dominant factions of the previous oligarchic regimes. Nonetheless, the plan had its own major weakness. Sustaining the process required that the interests of the ‘national industrial bourgeoisie’ and the emergent urban working classes were, if not identical, at least complementary. Such complementarity, however, was far from natural since the bourgeoisie was supposed to retain economic control, the popular classes were expected to subordinate themselves willingly, and the state was supposed to control all decisions. These premises were always doubtful, to say the least. This model of development required a

high degree of anti-elite mobilisation on the part of the working class and, at the same time, that same mobilisation had to be kept within the limits that a strong state deemed compatible with capitalist development.

In this vision, the ‘populist state’ was the sole agent of development: a supreme entity acting simultaneously as the engine behind capitalist accumulation and guarantor of its social and political viability by activating and controlling of the popular bases of support. One hardly needs to emphasise that this Herculean task proved almost impossible once the stabilisation of the global order after World War II brought the prices of commodities down. Moreover, the old and new economic elites were in the end never fully supportive of the new political order, even though it arguably benefited them (Sidicaro 2002).

Although Dependency Theory was crucial in the development of a more nuanced and historicised understanding of populism, it was flawed in that it associated political populism with one particular development model, industrialisation through import substitution (ISI) (Viguera 1993: 61). Dependency theorists of populism did not take into account that there is no essential connection between populism and industrialisation or working class strength, or even with heightened state intervention. There have been agrarian populist movements along with leftist and rightist populist leaders, not to mention neo-liberal populist governments, which shrank rather than increased the size of the state.⁵

One of the earlier proponents of unlatching the study of populism from economics and development theories was Ernesto Laclau (1986) as he noted that populism was by no means unique to the underdeveloped world but had existed in core countries such as Italy (fascism and *Qualunquismo*) and the US and Russia (agrarian populism). Laclau centred his critique on the developmentalist division between ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ societies and on the deterministic understanding of social change that, explicitly or implicitly, underpins political functionalism (2005). A theory that attaches populism to one predetermined phase of historical evolution and restricts progress to economic growth simply cannot explain why there have been populist governments in countries that simply never had import substitution industrialisation (such as, for instance, José María Velasco Ibarra in Ecuador), or why populist governments sometimes pursue politics that generate de-industrialisation, as was the case with Brazil, Peru, Ecuador and Argentina in the nineties (Knight 1998; Roberts 1999).

The criticisms of the economic and sociological theories of populism opened a way for a radical rethinking of the theories of populism, which resulted in an open-ended political discussion that is still taking place. More and more voices began calling for the recognition of populism as a proper political phenomenon not wedded to one particular mode of economic development but used for advancing a variety of ideological agendas. These theories run the gamut from viewing populism as a sociocultural phenomenon (Ostiguy 1997, Ostiguy 2014), to defining it as a mode of identification (Panizza 2005), a practice for mobilisation (Jansen 2011) and a thin ideology (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012), among others.

5 The governments of Alberto Fujimori, Carlos Menem, Abdalá Bucaram Ortiz or Fernando Collor de Mello combined populist appeals with neoliberal policies that included deindustrialisation, the shrinking of the state, trade liberalisation and de-unionisation.) Conversely, state bureaucracies grew larger and unions grew stronger in many countries after 1930, as did protectionism, without the intervention of populist governments (Luebbert 1991).

Populism and Parties

If populist mobilisation is neither to be understood as a predetermined phase in a teleological process of modernisation nor as the political correlate of a certain model of economic development, the question still remains as *to what it is*. The next section will focus on two of the main contemporary theoretical answers to this question. They are the definition of populism as a political strategy based on the works of Kurt Weyland and the discursive theory of populism of Ernesto Laclau. They have been chosen because it is instructive to see how two definitions that operate with widely different epistemological and methodological foundations end up nonetheless at the same blind spot: They both construct a dichotomy between *populism* as a whole and *institutionalised party politics* as a more specific phenomenon—a theoretical assertion that is difficult to maintain without further qualification in the context of Latin American politics.

The first paradigm views populism as a *political strategy* that becomes more salient in times of representational crises. This recent explanation affirms that populist movements, parties and leaders emerge when the traditional parties become unable to represent the interests and preferences of the citizenry adequately. A crisis of representation can happen due to a variety of reasons, such as the inadequacy of electoral designs and regulations. It can also be due to parties becoming functionally unable to perceive or articulate what the citizenry demands for improving their lives' conditions at a particular time, which can itself be caused by demographic changes, rapid social mobility or other factors (Weyland 2001; Weyland et al. 2010). Populism is directly connected with internal or external shocks that lead to institutional weakening and a breakdown of representation (Roberts 1999; Roberts 2003). The systemic loss of representation is defined as a crisis brought forth by the inability of a party system to adapt itself to new social and economic realities and in which politicians no longer respond adequately to social demands under one particular set of game rules (Paramio 2006, 67).

In a crisis of representation, traditional parties lose votes rapidly because their own voters become disenchanted and their fealty becomes unmoored. This erosion of traditional loyalties is, at the same time, a cause and effect of the crisis. Voters feel that their demands are not being heard. If the demands of the citizenry go unanswered for an extended period of time, people will rally behind outsider political figures that promise to punish the traditional party elites ('la partidocracia' or 'partitocracy') that have betrayed them. In such a context, populist leaders will deploy an anti-political discourse that promises a radical refoundation of the political system which alters both the rules of political competence and the social configuration of the elites themselves.

From this perspective, the macroeconomic agenda of a government becomes secondary to the methods and instruments that a leader uses to accumulate and deploy power (Vilas 2003). According to Kurt Weyland, populism can be thought to happen when a personalistic individual leader is able to obtain the support of a large mass of the population and relies on it as the only source of legitimacy for their political project. Weyland defines populism as "a political strategy through which a personalistic leader seeks or exercises government power based on direct, unmediated, non-institutionalised support from large numbers of mostly unorganised followers" (Weyland 2001: 14). Charisma is an important component of populist leadership (Weyland 2001: 13, Freidenberg 2007: 35) because the leader's authority is based on the

deeply held popular conviction about his or her supernatural political ability. Such leaders are thought to govern in the name of the people, with whom they share some characteristics of ‘the common folk’. The particular bond between populist leaders and their followers is constructed in a top-down, paternalistic or plebiscitary manner without the mediation of formal institutions and organisations.

However, this definition of populism as an instrumental strategy can be scrutinised as well. Criticisms might be directed toward its reductionism: Its exclusive focus on the type of bond established between followers and their leader obfuscates the importance of other dimensions. This, in turn, may cause observers to mistake superficial similarities between disparate cases for conceptual identity. The excessive interest in the figure of the leader renders the expectations, demands and political culture of the followers largely invisible and of lesser importance, when in truth the followers of populist movements retain the ability of putting pressure on and negotiating with the leadership (James 1990; Levitsky 2001).

Even more relevant to the goals of this chapter is that the data do not seem to support the notion that populist authority is always antithetical to institutions. The relationship between populist leaders and political institutions is much more complicated than previously thought. Some populist governments created fundamental state institutions in their respective countries; some of these arrangements exist even to this day (New Deal institutions in the US, labour regulations and the public hospital system in Argentina, and national and state bureaucracies in Turkey).⁶

Populist leaders usually create their own parties as soon as they reach power or immediately before. While populist leaders do try to maintain control over their movement, many were explicitly interested in merging populist power with institutional forms, also including the creation of political parties. Such was the case, for instance, with Víctor Haya de La Torre and the Peruvian APRA, with Lázaro Cárdenas and the Mexican PRI, and with Juan Domingo Perón in Argentina (Knight 1998).

Along with the strategic approach to populism, there has also been the so-called *discursive* approach. The main figure of this school of thought was Ernesto Laclau, who gave ontological primacy to discourse, affirming that “discourse is the primary terrain of the constitution of objectivity as such” (Laclau 2005: 68). His expansive definition of populism viewed it “not as a type of movement ... but a political logic”; that is, a certain political productive dynamic (Laclau 2005: 117). Laclau does not see populism as a form of anti-democratic pathology but rather as the inevitable by-product of the processes of political institutionalisation, and a positive by-product at that. Political and bureaucratic institutions are unable by definition to process all social demands at once because their standard operating mode is to particularise the demands so that they can be dealt with one at a time. However, under certain conditions demands accumulate at the margins of the political system to such an extent that “an equivalential relation is established between them” (Laclau 2005: 73).

According to Laclau, a populist movement is created when the impersonal dynamics of discursive identity-formation processes unify the demands of seemingly disparate groups of people with the figure of a leader in a single chain of meaning (this is the “equivalential chain”).⁷ This

⁶ For Francis Delano Roosevelt as a populist, see Kazin (1998).

⁷ “(T)he symbolic unification of the group around an individuality (...) is inherent to the formation of a people” (Laclau 2005: 101)

process of identification creates a powerful political identity that can serve as the foundation and legitimisation of a transformative political praxis (Laclau 2005; Barros 2014).

In populism, 'the people' itself is a political creation and is, at the same time, the cause and the effect of the dichotomisation of the political space into two antagonistic camps:⁸ an 'us' (the people) that is identified as the heroic underdog (Panizza 2005: 3) and a 'them' which is defined as the *anti-people*, the elite. The leader's very existence *becomes* (there is a degree of impersonality to the process) the unifying symbol that makes the coalescence of a political identity possible.

For Laclau, populism is the main source of democratic innovation because it exists in direct contrast with the institutional day-to-day problem-solving that he regards not as politics but as administration.⁹ In his view, the dichotomisation of society into two antagonistically-related camps means that the people is defined (much like Ferdinand De Saussure's idea of oppositional value) as that which it is not; or as Pierre Ostiguy says: "For Laclau the people is, by definition, on the oppositional side of the antagonistic frontier, antagonistically confronting empowered institutionality and its administration (of demands). (...) *By definition this model or conceptualisation logically implies that cases of populism being institutionally in power cannot exist.*" (Ostiguy 2014: 346; authors' translation, emphasis added). As a consequence, Laclau arrives at a position that is strikingly similar to that of the strategic theory of populism, even if he does so via a different path. Both Weyland and Laclau argue that populism, whether defined as a personal strategy or as a collective identity, can only exist *in opposition* to institutional forms of representation.

The definitions of populism as a strategy or as a performative discourse theory could not be more diverse in terms of their epistemological premises and normative orientation; Weyland (2001) is much more critical of populist mobilisation, whereas Laclau was much more sympathetic, even going so far as to equate populism simply with democratic politics. However, both theories share a blind spot because a prominent feature of both Weyland and Laclau's theorisations is that they both leave no room for the contingent business of day-to-day politics. There is manipulation on the one hand and the impersonal pull of the logic equivalence on the other. In Laclau's case, the popular base of a populist movement does not seem to have much agency. On the contrary, populism is a personal *strategy*, but the question remains as to why that particular leader chose that particular strategy at that particular time, or why such strategies succeed or fail. They both pit populist mobilisation (anti-systemic, reactive and antagonistic) against political institutionality, which is thought to be programmatic and rule-oriented. For both of them populism exists to challenge established forms of representation and as such it is the *opposite* of political parties.

However, this logically coherent theoretical premise simply does not square with empirical evidence. The relations and connections between populist mobilisation, however defined, and programmatic parties are much more nuanced. Populist leaders create parties that are able to participate in and win elections all the time. These parties can, at times, challenge the leader and are even able to carry on after the founder's death (Mustapic 2002). What is more, it is

8 In Laclau's words: "So we have the formation of an internal frontier, a dichotomisation of the local political spectrum through the emergence of an equivalential chain of unsatisfied demands" (2005: 74).

9 Following Jacques Rancière's distinction between politics and "the police", which in English resonates with the distinction between politics and policy (Rancière 1996: 43).

not only the case that a populist party can transform itself into a programmatic party but that programmatic parties can become vessels for populist leaders as well.

Moreover, forms of populism have proven to be surprisingly resilient once they come to power. In the last decade and a half, South American left-wing populist movements have been remarkably successful in electoral terms, and they have shown themselves to be surprisingly *adept in the art of not only enduring but also achieving political and social change*. Latin American populist presidents have been able to reform the constitutions of their countries (Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, Rafael Correa in Ecuador and Evo Morales in Bolivia) and pass relevant legislation (such as the nationalisation of oil and gas in Bolivia, the nationalisation of the largest oil company and of the private pension funds, and the legalisation of egalitarian marriage in Argentina). These populist governments also deployed a panoply of expansive social policies that, backed by the revenue from a boom in commodity exports, reduced poverty and, even in some cases, inequality.¹⁰

The longest-running populist government of South America, Venezuelan Chavismo, came to power in 1998. It has managed to govern Venezuela for 18 years, and continues to do so even after Chávez's passing. Even in its present and highly problematic state, Chavismo has proven to be much more resilient than most observers would have expected. It has been able to reinvent itself over and over again and has surprised many observers by its ability to survive in the face of internal and external problems (including those of its own making) that have ranged from a dramatic drop in the price of oil, enormous economic problems including shortfalls in food supply, the unexpected death of a charismatic leader and increasing opposition pressure.

Evo Morales has governed Bolivia since 2005; Rafael Correa was elected in November of 2006. Néstor Kirchner and Cristina de Kirchner governed Argentina for twelve consecutive years, surpassing the mark of both Juan Domingo Perón (1946–1955, 1973–1974) and Carlos Menem (1989–1999) (who were, of course, also populists). In fact, one might say that in Argentina it has proven to be much more difficult for non-populists to govern effectively, if by 'effectively' we mean the ability to finish one's term in office. Álvaro Uribe, a right-wing populist, must be counted among the effective South American populist presidents (Fraschini 2014).¹¹

Far from being incapable or unwilling to build their own form of institutionality, movements and leaders in South America have shown that 'populist institutionality' is far from being an oxymoron. It is also not the case that this resilience is always or even often constructed *without or outside political parties*. In South America, the situation is often the reverse: Populist leaders invest a substantial amount of resources and efforts in party-building. Evo Morales is a charismatic leader, but there is no denying that his rise to the Bolivian presidency could hardly be comprehended without understanding the role played by the thick network of social movements, unions, *Cocalero* and indigenous organisations that propelled his candidacy forward (Sivak 2009; Cyr 2012; Durand Ochoa 2014). In the case of Chavismo, the mere survival of Nicolas Maduro's dysfunctional government rests partially upon the grassroots groups it creat-

10 A key factor in poverty reduction were the innovative conditional cash transfer policies, such as the Bono Juancito Pinto in Bolivia, the AUH in Argentina and other forms of transfers to women in Ecuador. For evidence of the impact of state policies on poverty reduction, see the 2016 Human Development Report published by the UNDP (PNUD 2016).

11 This is true of other regions: populist governments have proven to be resilient in Turkey (Baikan 2016), Italy and Poland.

ed (Velasco 2015). The party MÁS has proven to be equally dominant in Bolivia. Very much like Rafael Correa's PAÍS, the Bolivian MÁS has evolved from a loose network of anti-systemic social movements into a multi linkage party that combines linkages with unions, movements, clientelistic networks, state bureaucracies, and even middle class and business organisations.

For instance, if, according to Sartori's minimalistic definition, a political party is "any political group that presents at elections, and is capable of placing through elections, candidates for public office" (1976: 64), then there is simply no question that Peronism must be thought of as a very successful political party. Peronism has competed in every national election in Argentina since 1946 (except for the eighteen years when it was legally proscribed, between 1955 and 1973). From 1983 to today, Peronist candidates have won the presidency through the electoral votes in 1989, 1995, 2003, 2007 and 2011.¹² Peronism has held a majority in the Senate since 1983 and has been in the majority in the lower house of Congress in most election cycles as well. Peronists also govern most of the Argentine provinces.¹³ In Ecuador, Rafael Correa's *Alianza País* has proven to be an electoral juggernaut as well: His new party won the 2006, 2009 and 2013 national elections, the 2014 subnational elections, the popular consultation plebiscites and the Constitutional Convention election of 2007. He managed to do all that by coordinating many of the territorial bosses connected with territorial clientelistic networks called 'caciques', the indigenous movement (at least originally) and the 'forajidos' (or 'out-laws', as the groups that protested against former president Gutiérrez were called) who were unhappy with the previous government.

It is time to reject the notion that populist mobilisation is incompatible with party politics; reality shows us every day that this is not the case. As Carlos De La Torre, Kurt Weyland, and Pierre Ostiguy have shown, the populist appeal is not only compatible with party politics, it is an ever-present tool in the toolbox of aspiring politicians. According to Weber, modern political parties function as organisations that "provide themselves with a following through free recruitment, present themselves or their protégés as candidates for election, collect the financial means, and go out for vote-grabbing" (Weber 2009: 99). Political parties function as instruments for power and as forms of socialisation. Thus, both populist parties and programmatic parties can and do perform those functions in an effective manner. They seek power for their leaders, place some of their members in office and socialise their followers. They achieve these goals through different means. Populist parties build their day-to-day operation on the direct connection between its leader and its followers; the former determines the party's goals, chooses its strategic course, and prioritises relationships based on personal, direct clientelistic relations with the lower-level party officials and voters. Programmatic parties, by contrast, employ formal procedures to select candidates and set up party priorities.

In our analysis, we propose to differentiate between *populist parties* and *programmatic parties*. To quote a relatively straightforward definition of programmatic parties: "A political sys-

12 Before 1983, Peronism won the presidential elections of 1946, 1951 and 1973.

13 Non programmatic parties can participate in free elections, command votes in an impressive manner and be, in short, both resilient and successful; however, they achieve these things in a somewhat 'premodern' manner that does not advance the collective rational discussion of important common issues and is not anchored by consistent policy preferences; populist-clientelistic parties are personalistic and have only weak ideological principles. To quote Kitschelt et al: "Recent studies of Latin American legislatures find extremely high levels of party discipline in countries such as Argentina, Mexico and Venezuela that equal or rival those in advanced industrial democracies with parliamentary regimes, yet the attitudinal indicators explored in this volume show that these countries have only moderate levels of programmatic structure." (Kitschelt et al. 2010: 65).

tem is programmatic when the parties within it predominantly generate policy, mobilise support, and govern, on the basis of a consistent and coherent ideological position.” (IDEA 2011: 7). Programmatic parties have a structured and stable set of political positions that constitutes its political programme and through which it is publicly recognisable. They possess a certain degree of coherence and internal consensus about that shared programme and have a joint commitment to fulfilling at least some of those programmatic promises if and when the party finds itself in elected office. They pursue recruitment in such a way as to emphasise programmatic allegiance over other incentives. Populist parties are constructed around the authority and appeal of a charismatic leader, have a much weaker and fluctuating ideological programme, use clientelism and patronage to obtain votes, and can rely on a personalized mechanism for recruitment that is largely based on the leader’s vertical connections. The differences between programmatic and populist parties can be summarised in Table 16.1.

Table 16.1: Populist and Programmatic Models of Party Institutionalisation in Latin America

	Populist party institutionalization	Programmatic party institutionalization
Leadership	Open to charismatic outsiders	Favors insiders
Mediation	No organizational mediation between leader and followers	The organization mediates and coordinates between leader and followers
Relative autonomy of organization vis a vis the leader	No autonomy	Autonomy
Level of organizational systematicity	No systematicity Informal party organization	Systematicity and routinization of party procedures
Established recognizable repertoire of symbols and ideas	No repertoire except the exaltation of the leader	Core repertoire of symbols and narratives
Strategies for winning votes	Clientelism, patronage	Programmatic

In programmatic parties, the source of the linkages between the party and its followers is grounded in the common allegiance to the organisation and its programmes. In populist parties, however, the organisational mediation is weaker and the ideological enunciations are shallower, or they might not even exist. By comparison, populist parties are based on “emotional appeals to symbols, group identification or the charisma of the candidate” (Kitschelt et

al. 2010: 3; emphasis added) and they are usually formed as the electoral vehicle for a leader or a movement (Levitsky and Roberts 2013: 13).

These are ideal typologies that very rarely exist in a pure form in reality. Political parties—even the more institutionalised ones—must combine their programmatic dimension with the element of mobilisation and vice versa.¹⁴ However, in times of social upheaval and rapid political change, new political identities and parties are indeed created, and old ones die. Such a juncture happened in Latin America in the decade after the turn of the century when many, if not most, of the political systems of the region underwent systemic change.

Conclusions

Whether populist or programmatic, at the end of the day almost all parties are in it to win and have similar goals: to enhance their respective share of power (in terms of votes, executive offices and/or seats in parliament). Therefore, they must adapt their organisation to the conditions presented by the environment in which the party is situated, to the preferences of the voters, to the party's organisational capacities and to history. Under the conditions of electoral democracy, populist parties will strengthen their internal organisation so as to obtain votes for the leader.

Even in the context of a widespread political crisis that might even include the breakdown of the established political parties; political movements do not come to power in a vacuum and they seldom reshape the political map entirely. A populist government will have to come up with an electoral strategy to compete in elections or it will fail. One aspect that is often overlooked is that new populist parties usually end up recruiting officials and leaders from the 'old' parties who then are presented as 'politicians without a party.' If and when the populist movement is able to institutionalise itself into a populist party, a paradoxical reversion occurs: the former anti-systemic movement becomes the status quo and the former 'establishment' parties and politicians morph into the new challengers.¹⁵

When a populist leader is successful in establishing a new hegemony, opposition parties will reconstruct themselves and challenge the new order. Alternatively, some new party or parties will be created to fill that role. Populist parties have to perform a difficult balancing act, however, because even though they function better when they are more institutionalised, they cannot afford to completely lose their antagonistic edge. It is for this reason that populist parties have to try to retain their 'novelty' and freshness by continuing to denounce the old 'partitocracy' even though they are, in fact, 'the new old'.

14 Panebianco (1990) roots his definition of party institutionalisation on the notions of autonomy and systematicity of the party. However, autonomy and systematicity are two different dimensions which might operate in tandem or directly act against one another, depending on the context. In some cases, a lower degree of systematicity might actually increase the party's autonomy if the party operates within a largely informal party system (Freidenberg 2007). In other cases, a party can be systematically organised but operate with a low degree of autonomy, as has been the case with the Argentine far left parties.

15 The category of 'anti-systemic parties' is not chosen to refer to an implicit normative judgment. On the contrary, it is based on Sartori's suggestion that "a party is anti-systemic if it seeks to erode the legitimacy of the regime that it opposes" and if its opposition "is not derived from petty issues but based on principle". Thus, "anti-systemic opposition is guided by a belief system that does not share the values of the political order within which it is acting" (Sartori 1976: 166).

The relevant question must then be reframed from *how* populism is antithetical to parties to which factors allow a populist movement to transform itself into a populist party. This is not to say that there are no differences between programmatic and populist parties, but these two categories are not dichotomous but rather differ by degree. A populist movement can transform into a populist party and then into a programmatic one¹⁶ or, in turn, a programmatic party can give rise to populist leadership.¹⁷ There is, in sum, nothing essential or fixed about the nature of a party: the strategic choices made to occupy one place or the other in the spectrum have to do with internal and external factors, the demands of society and the relative positions of the other parties. These theoretical contentions are explored further and applied to empirical cases in Chapter 17 in this handbook.

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¹⁷ This is probably happening right now with the US Republican Party.

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PART III:
Emerging Challenges and New Research Agendas

CHAPTER 17:

POPULIST PARTIES OF LATIN AMERICA:

THE CASES OF ARGENTINA AND ECUADOR

María Esperanza Casullo and Flavia Freidenberg

Stable Populist Parties in Latin America: Peronism in Argentina and Alianza PAÍS in Ecuador

In Chapter 16 of this handbook, entitled “Populist and Programmatic Parties in Latin American Party Systems”, we presented the arguments that populism was compatible with party-building and stable party systems in Latin America. This chapter will present empirical evidence to sustain that theoretical claim. The rest of this chapter analyses two successful examples of populist party institutionalisation: Peronism in Argentina and Alianza PAÍS in Ecuador.

To do so, we have tried to balance the synchronic and diachronic dimensions in the analysis of the cases; that is, we have tried to treat Peronism and Alianza PAÍS as something more than data points that can be neatly classified into ‘programmatic’ or ‘populist’, as many scholars tend to do.¹ However, the dichotomous and synchronic distribution of cases is likely to mask two relevant phenomena. First, it might prioritise differences between the cases, thereby de-emphasising or overlooking similarities. Second, they obscure diachronic transformations in the parties themselves. Programmatic parties, movement parties and populist-machine parties are not immovable entities but modes of linkage-building that evolve and change over time. As Michael Coppedge suggests: “Most Latin American party-systems are changing, and changing often, in several dimensions at once, all on staggered timetables” (Coppedge 1998: 550). A party that starts more programmatically oriented can evolve into a more pragmatic, machine-like one and vice versa—in fact, political parties more often than not fluctuate between these two poles. Moreover, as Kurt Weyland and Carlos De la Torre argue, a populist ‘style’ of leadership and domination is part of ‘normal’ politics worldwide. Neo-populist leaders, such as Carlos Menem in Argentina, Álvaro Uribe in Colombia and Silvio Berlusconi in Italy, have utilised a variety of populist strategies without permanently eroding the democratic system (Weyland 2001; De La Torre 2004; Freidenberg 2007).

Any serious study of populism must be historical since there is not one form of populism but always different ones. Political parties are not static institutions but organic entities that are born, adapt, thrive and might also wither and die. The dichotomous classification of cases must be complemented by a more cyclical, Weberian and general vision. As was discussed in our theoretical analysis of party-based populism (see Chapter 16), populist movements originally generate political energy because they channel latent anti-party resentment: They rise

¹ For instance, Steven Levitsky and Kenneth Roberts created a set of four “boxes”. Governments can belong to “established party organisations” or “new political movements” on one dimension; on the other dimension, they can have a centralised or diffused locus of power (Levitsky and Roberts 2013: 13).

against the established order and against established modes of representation. However, once a populist movement wins power—as they will often do, since a populist movement propelled by a charismatic leader is usually politically very effective—it has but two choices: to transition into a legal-bureaucratic regime or to devolve back into society.² There is an element of contingency in the institutionalisation of charisma (and of populism itself) and it is incorrect to assume that one prescribed and uniform path exists for all cases.

Analysis should therefore switch from a focus on a dichotomous distinction between populism and parties (and the subsequent effort to classify all the empirical cases neatly into one or the other category) to the effort to comprehend the ‘cycle of institutionalisation’ of populist movements better and the conditions under which their transformation into a political party becomes more or less feasible.

However, the institutionalisation of a populist movement into a party presents unique challenges. A modern political party is a stable entity, structured around a common identity, with a well-defined programme, and a set of norms and procedures of internal organisation (be they written down or simply a set of guiding principles organically developed through history). A modern political party must be, according to Panebianco (1990), autonomous from its environment and it also must have some form of systematic internal procedures. By contrast, a populist movement is a much more amorphous entity, in which a disparate set of social groups with diverse, even contradictory, claims are united but which lacks a well-defined identity and ideology (Kitschelt et al. 2010). In a modern party, the loyalty of the partisans is—ideally at least—directed towards the ideology and history of that particular party, but the populist partisans lack such shared history, and thus their emotions—their aspirations and hopes—are directed towards the leader, who symbolises them. In a populist movement, the leader is the embodiment and sole signifier of the movement’s unity.

Yet to stabilise their rule, many populist leaders eventually seek to ‘routinise their charisma’—that is, to transfer some of the almost supernatural appeal of the leader into the symbols and images of the party itself. Also, “they often seek to consolidate a mass following by introducing elements of party organisation or clientelism” (Weyland 2001: 14). According to Weyland: “where party organisation congeals and constrains the leader’s latitude, turning him into a party functionary, or where proliferating clientelism transforms the relationship of leader and followers into a purely pragmatic exchange, political rule based on command over large numbers of followers eventually loses its populist character. Political success thus transforms populism into a different type of rule that rests on non-populist strategies. *Populist leadership therefore tends to be transitory. It either fails or, if successful, transcends itself.*” (Weyland 2001: 14; emphasis added).

There are examples of strong populist movements that have successfully transitioned into programmatic political parties (for instance, Peronism in Argentina and APRA in Perú). In the case of populist parties, the collective decision-making bodies (such as conventions, party councils and such) do little more than put the leader’s decision up for a plebiscite vote. The leader has ample leeway to choose the political strategy, selecting down-ballot candidates and

2 The later occurrence is the most likely outcome according to Max Weber, given the non-transferable nature of the leader’s charisma, and the anti-institutional drive of their charismatic mobilisation.) In fact, there have been a good number of populist movements that devolved back into society—the Russian populist movement and the American agrarian populism of the late nineteenth century come to mind (Kitching 1989; Goodwyn 1978).

designating their representatives for party positions. The party's convention or higher council will very seldom challenge those decisions but will function as a legitimating, performative body, without dissidence. The organisation, thus, cannot be said to be autonomous from the leader's designs. This does not equal saying that the organisation is not institutionalised—populist parties, such as Peronismo, have a resilient, if *sui generis* institutionalisation.

Populist parties have their own form of institutionality, which is indeed recognised and respected by their followers: it is based on the routinisation of *informal*, charismatic and hierarchical norms, rules and repertoires for action. Populist parties do undergo processes of routinisation and institutionalisation that allow them to withstand time and to acquire value as something that transcends the figure of the leader, which is one of Panebianco's key elements in defining party institutionalisation.

Populist parties rely on personalistic appeals, clientelism and informal networks for constructing linkages with voters. Their leaders present themselves as the embodiment of the people themselves and, acting in the people's name, define the symbolic universe, demarcate the adversary and determine friends and allies. The leader will often clash with established institutions that are seen as limiting its autonomy; however, the trust in the providential wisdom of the leader can only get the party so far in a competitive democratic party system. Most voters, even those that put great value in the figure of the leader, are bound to ask "what is in it for me?" sooner or later. For this reason, even populist parties tend to complement charismatic linkage with political clientelism and patronage. The bond of friendship and affection offered by the leader is underpinned by a myth of assistance, but it must be externalised in concrete practices (Freidenberg 2003). The leader's centrality is predicated on his or her unique position at the very centre of the party's territorial and clientelistic networks; the leader is the only node that binds all the different kinds of linkages together.

Peronism: The Transformation of a Charismatic Party

Argentine Peronism is the premier example of a populist movement with anti-systemic overtones that was able to transform itself into a populist party. The Peronist movement was born in 1945 as the expression of popular devotion for one of the most charismatic leaders that Latin America has ever produced: Juan Domingo Perón. Argentina was one of the South American countries in which import-substitution development had caused the most profound social changes. Industrialisation based on domestic consumption and the production of durable goods was relatively successful during the 1930s, and the newly built textile and metallurgical factories clustered around the outskirts of the city of Buenos Aires acted as magnets for immigrants from the interior provinces. Once relocated in the metropolitan areas, the new industrial working class rapidly came into contact with the already strong networks of union and political activism.³ Nonetheless, the new industrial workers faced seemingly insurmountable obstacles in their aspiration to achieve effective political inclusion.

The workers' demands for inclusion were not new, but they had been blocked by the authoritarian regime instituted by the coup of 1930. In 1943 there was another *coup* and Perón be-

3 As Juan Carlos Portantiero and Miguel Murmis have shown, those industrial workers were not "available masses" but belonged to manifold union organisations (Portantiero and Murmis 1971).

came a prominent figure in the new government. He became popular for his work as Secretary of Labour as he passed decrees that substantially expanded labour and social rights. Perón's popularity was deemed a threat by the upper echelons of his own government. He was subsequently deposed by force and put into jail. On 17th of October 1945, Buenos Aires was shocked when one million workers marched into the streets to demand Perón's release. He was freed and was elected president in February of 1946.

Perón's first government has always been considered a textbook case of classical populism. While seeking to expand industrialisation through nationalisation, state investment and central planning, he shored up the internal market through various redistributive measures. In the process, he created the very foundations of the Argentine welfare state, which for decades was among the most generous in the region. He strengthened the position of labour vis-a-vis the business elite by legalising union activism, passing pro-labour legislation and mandating tripartite mandatory bargaining for wages (Sidicaro 2002). Politically, Perón may certainly be viewed as a classical populist leader, who was deeply suspicious of political parties as he was fond of pointing out that his Partido Justicialista was little more than the 'electoral tool' ('*herramienta electoral*') of his movement, whose real 'vertebral spine' ('*columna vertebral*') was the labour movement. Perón always retained ample leeway to select down-ballot candidates, and the party itself was loosely institutionalised. Its internal council and convention certainly acted as a stamp of approval for the leader's decisions (Mustapic 2002).

However, the resilience of Peronism after Perón was ousted from power in a coup d'état in 1955 must caution us not to dismiss even the first form of Peronism as just a personal vehicle. The Peronist party was legally banned from 1955 to 1972, the leader of the movement was in exile during all those years, and yet Peronism as a political identity became stronger. Daniel James and Ana María Mustapic, among others, draw attention to the fact that the political institutions the Peronist regime created were the elements upon which the resilience of the Peronist identity was predicated. Whereas James (1990) focuses on lower level operatives and grassroots unions as the core agents of the party's survival, Mustapic (2002) emphasises the simultaneous loyalty and autonomy of union leaders. Another key element in the survival of Peronism that is often overlooked is the role performed by the provincial Peronist elites. As is typical of populist parties, 'old' leaders from local and provincial parties were incorporated into the 'new' party and some of them were able to bypass the proscription by founding 'neo Peronist' parties (Casullo and Pasetto 2016).

In the years when the party was banned, Peronism depended on its own form of hybrid institutionality to leverage different sources of power, combining more formal organisations, such as unions or local governments, with and a flexible and extensive informal network of grassroots militants and brokers. Levitsky has called this mixture "organised disorganisation" (2001) and Ostiguy talks about "dirty institutionality" (2014). Eventually, these loose structures became powerful enough, however, to challenge the leader during his exile.⁴

After the return to democracy in 1983, even deeper institutionalisation of the Peronist party was set in motion. After Raúl Alfonsín's victory in 1983 had discredited the Peronist 'old

4 The most salient case of a Peronist challenging Perón was the sixties union leader Augusto Timoteo Vandor, who went as far as proposing "Peronismo sin Perón". (He was murdered in suspicious circumstances.) Another important case was the neo-Peronist Southern governor Felipe Sapag, who in 1973 flatly refused to step down from his candidacy when Perón asked him to. He went on to win the election, and the party that he founded still rules the Patagonian province of Neuquén 53 years later.

guard' of union leaders, they were pushed aside and professional vote-seekers with executive experience, such as Antonio Cafiero, Carlos Menem, Eduardo Duhalde and José Manuel De La Sota, became the central players in the new game. Reinvigorated, Peronism was able to win the presidential elections in 1989 and 1995. Popular outsiders, such as the car racer Carlos Reutemann and the singer Ramón Ortega, were also welcome. It was defeated in 1999 only to transform itself one more time. This time it shed its neo-liberal identity and a new, more left-wing form of leadership came to power with Néstor and Cristina Kirchner. Once again, the flexible institutionalisation of Peronism allowed for the inclusion of social movements and organisations created during the crisis of neo-liberalism, such as 'piqueteros' (unemployed workers). After 12 years of dominating the government, Peronism was defeated in 2015 and it will likely undergo yet another transformation in the next few years.

It has been argued that populist parties may have an ideology but that it does not, per se, constitute a programme since they are long on emotional appeals (Weyland 2001; Laclau 2005) and antagonistic in their public performance (Ostiguy 2014) but short on clear, detailed policy proposals. However, Peronism continues to have a powerful symbolic core in the form of Juan Domingo Perón and his wife, Evita, their 'descamisados' (the 'shirtless', or industrial workers and peasants) and the 'martyr generation' of the 70s 'desaparecidos' ('disappeared' by the Military Dictatorship), along with the idea that only Peronism can govern the turbulent Argentina. It was developmentalist and nationalist under Perón, and recognisably and coherently neo-liberal under Menem; it was nationalist-popular under the Kirchners. Rather than having no ideology, it can be said to have had *serial ideologies*. This ideological component is important for constructing linkages with some key sectors in society, mainly youth groups typically from the urban and middle class (Natanson 2012; Vazquez and Vommario 2012). This coexists with and complements the movement's territorial and clientelistic linkages (Brusco et al. 2004: 83).

The Alianza PAIS: From a Movement of 'Outlaws' to a Hegemonic Party

Rafael Correa's style of leadership was forged in his direct confrontation with the political class and in the positions that his *movimiento forajido* ('outlaw movement', as those that mobilised against the previous president Lucio Gutiérrez called themselves) ended up adopting in 2005. Correa, an economist and academic had acquired a certain notoriety by being one of the leaders in the protests against the then president Gutiérrez. La Luna, a popular radio station which acted as the de facto speaker for the 'forajidos' movement, gave ample air time to Correa, and he became a vocal critic of the government. Correa was one of the first public voices to ask for Gutiérrez's dismissal. When the time came, Correa used the radio to rouse the anti-Gutiérrez sections of society and call on them to protest publicly after the local governments and provincial councils had failed in their attempt to remove the president. After the ousting of Lucio Gutiérrez in 2005, Rafael Correa was a minister in Alfredo Palacio's cabinet for four months. Rallying people behind the slogan "Que se vayan todos" ('Throw the Bums Out'), Correa became a candidate and the leader of the electoral campaign against partitocracy ("partidocracia") (Freidenberg 2015).

Correa, an academic with little political experience, decided to run for president. He campaigned with an ambitious platform for a 'Citizens' Revolution' that sought to combine his position as a radical outsider and his closeness to Bolivarian Chavismo (Chavismo also had an

ideological affinity with the social doctrine of Roman Catholicism). Correa sought to present himself as a person without a political past and a proponent of political change uncontaminated by political immobility. He even went so far as to run for president on his own, without assembling a congressional ballot. This act of defiance allowed him to position himself as somebody who was radically different from ‘the same old politicians’, even though his new party welcomed people from the same partitocracy that Correa was running against. His intention was to transform the Ecuadorian political landscape in a radical fashion, where ‘floating politicians’—politicians who did not feel compelled to fulfil campaign promises—coexisted with floating voters—electors who were unable to control them—and anything goes was the rule (Conaghan 1996).

However, Correa’s calls for a Citizens’ Revolution became more tempered during the second-round election. In the campaign before the vote, Correa’s discourse became ever more similar to that of his opponent, Álvaro Noboa, who ran on concrete promises, such as affordable housing and jobs. Correa unveiled a housing proposal (called Bono País) and he insisted that he would reform but not abandon the use of the US dollar as the national currency, which Noboa had hinted at leaving behind. Efforts were made to ‘polish up’ the candidate’s image: His family was included in his TV ads and they were presented on the stage at rallies, and he counteracted Noboa’s charge that he was a Communist by publicly going to Church and reminding people that he was a practicing catholic (Freidenberg 2015).

Correa’s Alianza PAÍS party was born as a loose articulation of social and political movements, traditional politicians and intellectuals. It was organised with the sole goal of propelling Correa to the presidency. Groups such as Movimiento PAÍS, Jubileo 2002, Iniciativa Ciudadana, Movimiento Bolivariano Alfarista and Acción Democrática Nacional participated in the original alliance, along with many provincial movements, human rights activists and intellectuals, as well as territorial bosses with electoral power.

Thanks to the rebranding, Correa won the second round and thus became Ecuador’s new president in 2006. He now had to govern in a country that had become famous for its presidential crises, had reformed its constitution over twenty times in its history, and had a chaotic and inefficient electoral system⁵. Once Correa was elected, the transition of Alianza PAÍS from a collection of parts into a populist machine party began. It had a significant clientelistic and electoral capacity and created a clear vertical hierarchy whose cohesion rested on Rafael Correa’s charismatic leadership. He had run as somebody untarnished by established party politics but, once in power, Correa began strengthening his Alianza PAÍS party—which he had created in an ad hoc fashion to run for office. He began threading together mobilisation networks, slowly building up the institutions of the party. Family committees were created, each of them ten members strong, following the model of the Bolivarian Circles of Venezuelan Chavismo. The goal was to organise 50,000 thousand committees before the next election. As he created his machine party, however, Correa did carry on with his moralistic, Manichean discourse, which emphasised the unique role of the people in the social change necessary to supersede the corrupt technocratic oligarchy (even if he usually referred to ‘citizens’ and not to ‘*el pueblo*’ [the people]), in a break with classical forms of populism.

5 Between 1997 and 2005 three presidents were forced to step down by mixtures of popular protests, pressure and bargains between members of the political elite and the military.

Once at the helm of government, Correa made decisive choices, like abandoning the neo-liberal consensus and bringing back the state as the central actor in the development model. Social expenditure was expanded to reduce social disparities. He sought to come across as an ordinary citizen with extraordinary qualities. He surrounded himself with a mixture of left-wing technocrats and people plucked from the parties and movements of the old ‘partitocracy’, even though Correa was fond of railing against it. Rafael Correa presented himself as the one and only decision maker and the one and only communicator, liberally using his ‘sabatinas’ (televised Saturday talks) to disseminate information.

Like Peronism, Rafael Correa’s Alianza PAÍS party is a good example of the ways in which populist leaders strive to walk down both sides of the political road. On the one hand, his party has become the hegemonic power in Ecuador and he controls the levers of the state. On the other hand, as a survival strategy Correa seeks to keep his antagonistic struggle with the ‘partitocracy’ (and the opposition) alive through use of the media. The members of his party, which functions as an aggregation of factions that are kept together by his charismatic leadership, actually promote antagonising the others as a part of their political strategy, even as the opposition remains weak and fragmented. Even though PAÍS lost some key municipalities in the 2013 elections (like the capital, Quito), president Correa and his electoral machine still control the media agenda, the public’s access to state institutions and the wider public debate.

The populist current in Ecuador, which had lost its leadership, reinvented itself with different expressions and nuances, moving from Abdalá Bucaram to Álvaro Noboa, then to Gutiérrez and finally, in a different manner, to Correa.

Reconceptualising Populist Parties

There are many examples of populist movements from Latin America and elsewhere capable of transforming themselves into populist parties that could have been discussed here. However, the two cases analysed in this chapter are probably sufficient to demonstrate that the relationship between populist strategy and a populist discourse is far from being dichotomous.

It thus becomes necessary to view the relationship between populism and party institutionalisation not in terms of an either/or structure but in terms of degrees and levels.⁶ In writing specifically about Rafael Correa’s style of leadership, Carlos De La Torre stated that: “I conceptualise populism as a Manichean discourse that presents the struggle between people and oligarchy as an ethical and moral struggle between right and wrong. But because these categories are profoundly ambiguous, it is necessary to study who is included in them as well as the level of polarisation produced by these discourses” (De La Torre 2010: 1; authors’ translation). By speaking of “levels” of polarisation, De La Torre seems to imply that while the discourse is indeed Manichean, the way it is translated into actual practice can be more or less inclusive, more or less institutionalised, and that these different choices can produce different levels of polarisation. It might be even more suitable to speak of degrees of “populistness”, as Pierre Ostiguy (2001) proposes.

6 “There is absolutely nothing, following Bollen, that would prevent us from building a similar type of continuous scale for the attributes defining (operationalising) any other type of regimes. I will suggest that such type of continuous, ordinal-unidimensional scale can indeed be constructed for another type of regime, such as populism, or more accurately here, level of “populistness.” (Ostiguy 2001: 7)

The acknowledgement of the existence of populist parties as parties that operate with their own form of “dirty institutionalism” (Ostiguy 2014) has important practical consequences for the study of politics in Latin America. For a long time, the literature on Latin American party systems has suffered from the conceptual stretching caused by trying to define political parties based on characteristics extrapolated from other contexts (mainly from Europe); another problem has been an epistemological obstacle that has impeded a particularised study of the parties of the region. Because ‘political party’ is a commonly used conceptual label, it is easy to think that ‘everybody knows’ what a party is and that that general idea can be translated into the study of empirical examples irrespective of their specific attributes.

If the difference between programmatic and populist parties is indeed ordinal and not dichotomous (which is the approach maintained in this chapter), then the research agenda should be revised accordingly in future research, even if that were to create a break with tradition. To begin with, the idea of ‘populist parties’ would be accepted as phenomenally valid and the theoretical categorisation of any group that competes in elections as a political party would be accepted.

Thus, the distinction between populist parties and programmatic ones boils down to a matter of strategic choices instead of a difference in nature. Both are organisations created by groups of people that seek to win elections. Populist parties deploy different strategies, resources and discourses than programmatic parties. Populist parties endeavour to shore up loyalty by distributing goods, besides using leadership and discourse. Yet they are parties nonetheless. Ideology and programmatic positions are their main source of loyalty in one case, while personal leadership and discourse bring followers in in the other. Yet populist parties are not necessarily less institutionalised or have less solid linkages to social sectors. Populist parties routinise and institutionalise those linkages on the basis of the leader’s charisma; they mobilise voters through territorial clientelistic networks, emphasise direct communication of the leader’s voice through the media and social networks, and rely on an antagonistic style over a deliberative one. Thus, parties replicate some traditional forms of discourse even though their format is different (Welp et al. 2016). Yet, these practices are indeed compatible with forms of political institutionalisation and are able to function as the foundation of political organisations that are at the same time operative, lasting, resilient and able to achieve their goals.

Populist parties have weak internal democracy in their decision-making processes. The resources, members’ careers and candidacies are decided in an informal, ad hoc manner that is based on personal networks and patronage. Public and private spaces become merged in the party’s life.⁷ Party funds usually come from private sources, and the internal collective decision-making institutions only assemble to rubber-stamp the leader’s decisions. Territorial work depends on brokers that mobilise potential voters based on their personal connections.

⁷ It is important to note that not all informally organised parties are populist and that not all informal organisations are dependent on charismatic leaders, but that populist parties usually share both characteristics (informality and charismatic leadership).

Table 17.1: *Populist Parties of Latin America: The Cases of Alianza País and Peronism*

	Alianza PAIS	Peronism
Leadership	Founded by a charismatic insider Populist <i>Caudillo</i>	Founder: charismatic outsider. Subsequent elected peronist presidents: two governors (insiders) from peripheral provinces (outsiders)
Mediation	No organizational mediation between leader and followers	Peronism has a high density of mediation organizations that rank from the formal to the informal (unions, ‘corrientes internas’ (internal suborganizations), governors and mayors, youth groups, social movements, brokers)
Relative autonomy of organization vis a vis the leader	No autonomy. Verticalism. All decisions are made by the leader and a small cadre of advisers	‘Serial verticalism’: full acceptance of each president’s authority only while he or she is in power.
Level of organizational systematicity	No systematicity. The party is still young and it is completely dependent of the charismatic leader informal organization.	Low systematicity. There are actors within the organization that can constrain the leader (union leaders, governors, senators), but the negotiation are mostly conducted through informal and direct means.
Established recognizable repertoire of symbols and ideas	No repertoire except the exaltation of the leader. The ‘other’ is constructed as antagonistic to the Citizen’s Revolution.	There is a core repertoire of symbols and narratives and a strong dispute about its meaning
Strategies for winning votes	Clientelism, patronage. citizen’s circles (‘círculos ciudadanos’)	Multiple linkages: some programmatic appeals (more to middle classes) depending on the leader’s preferences (neoliberal, nacional-popular), clientelism and patronage

Source: authors’ elaboration

Populist parties are non-programmatic, but they are still parties. They structure collective identities, mobilise votes and recruit party officials. They coexist with other parties, participate in elections and, in more general terms, behave in somewhat acceptable democratic terms. They can be resilient and successful, both as electoral machines and at keeping their leader in government to the end of his or her constitutional term in office. Populist parties can, of

course, also fail in both tasks. But then again, almost any kind of party seems to be able fail in today's Latin America.

There seems to be an intimate relationship between the transformation from a populist movement to a populist party and the capacity and responsibilities of actual government. Populist parties, like all parties that govern, are forced to evolve, as they must react to the experiences and challenges of holding on to power. In the complex and challenging environment of Latin American politics, almost all parties must be willing and able to generate electoral success and governmental resilience by creating, nurturing and mobilising multiple kinds of linkages: charismatic, clientelistic, territorial and programmatic.

The ability to mix and match charismatic, clientelistic, programmatic and territorial linkages fulfils two critical functions: diversifying the coalition of support for the government and expanding the regional and territorial reach of the party. These are no small tasks for populist parties in a region whose civil and political societies are fragmented, heterogeneous, mobilised and demanding. In Ecuador, Rafael Correa was able to articulate disparate elements, like a series of classically leftist ideas, statist policies and a strongly anti-political discourse, as a recognisable whole. This mishmash operated as an ideological umbrella for a personalistic party structure that has won elections repeatedly from 2005 to the present. With it, he was able to transform a polarised multiparty system into a hegemonic one.

Conclusion

As a well-known journalist from Ecuador once said, "in this country without parties, which has never had them and never will, history has been made by parties" (Freidenberg 2003). This idea also applies to Argentina, a country whose political history for the last century was written by two populist movement parties, the UCR first and later Peronism. It turns out that parties were where things happened but analysts refused to see them. Those who claimed that there could not be parties because the country was awash with populist practices could not see that there were actually populist parties, which admittedly were clearly different from programmatic parties, but they were parties nonetheless. The claim that populism could not be party-based impeded empirical research on the internal functioning of these parties.

The belief that populist leaders do not want to or cannot create parties was at the root of the relative absence of research on the institutional organisations of the parties of post-transition Latin America. Only at the end the 1990s and at the beginning of the 2000s was it possible to identify (Coppedge 1997; Alcántara et al. 2001; Levitsky 2003; Freidenberg 2003) a greater interest in undertaking actual research on the functions that party organisations actually perform (Heinisch and Mazzoleni in this volume). These researchers focus on the informal connections, the unwritten rules, the practices that condition the inner workings of a party and that, even though they might not be written down in its by-laws and regulations, are effective in the regulation of the central activities of the organisation and must be considered a crucial part of it (Casullo 2015).

The acknowledgement of the existence of populist parties, which are organised as "informal party organisations", allowed the broadening of the research scope to encompass the actual functioning of the parties (Freidenberg and Levitsky 2007). Many non-programmatic parties

are able survive, even thrive, in a competitive environment by combining a formal apparatus of programme, rules and regulations with an informal practice that responds to an underground logic, which is in turn connected to a specific political culture. This fundamental logic might be different from the party's explicit legal rules and programmatic positions, yet it is operative and has the ability to shape and coordinate collective action. The only plausible conclusion is that it is possible to have a consolidated party system that is, however, based on informally institutionalised parties (Freidenberg 2003; Freidenberg and Levitsky 2007; Casullo 2015).

As for the wider issue of the relationship between populism and democracy, there is no question that their relationship is contradictory and even tortuous. The broader conclusion will depend on which cases are chosen, and how they are evaluated. Some argue that populism itself is an attack against democracy, while others argue that populist leadership has proven to be instrumental in bringing about change, including in marginalised populations, by broadening access to rights. There are relevant popular actors, intellectuals and new elite groups that perceive that the populist form of politics has allowed for the incorporation of common people into institutions from which they were previously excluded (Panizza 2001; Aboy Carlés 2001; Casullo 2013). Some go as far as stating that populism is a constitutive dimension of democracy (Worsley 1970; Casullo 2014) and that populist leadership might actually expand democracy.

However, even though populist leadership might push for the expansion of polyarchic structures and practices, populist leaders might also choose to pursue a direction whose final outcome is a regime that limits the rights of the citizens and that excludes those who do not agree with the government. In this type of regime, populism arguably has a negative effect on democratic institutionality and inclusion, because the party and even the broader institutions will become subordinate to the whims of the leader (Zanatta 2008; Weyland 2013; Zanatta 2014).

There are no simple answers or predetermined trajectories. There is no one form of 'populism' but many. Likewise, it is always necessary to remember that populist leaders are never alone. They come to power propelled by the votes of their followers, who have chosen to invest their loyalty in a bond with the leader and who are consumed by distrust towards traditional parties and representative institutions. Voters simply do not believe that the traditional parties are capable of addressing their daily concerns and needs. As there are many underlying reasons, a more nuanced analysis of the ways in which leaders are able to bring about political change and how this affects the voters' lives would be one of the most important tasks of further research. Ascertaining the reasons why citizens willingly submit to a personalistic project is one key to understanding Latin American politics today.

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CHAPTER 18:

SOCIETAL MALAISE IN TURBULENT TIMES: INTRODUCING A NEW EXPLANATORY FACTOR FOR POPULISM FROM A CROSS-NATIONAL EUROPE-WIDE PERSPECTIVE

Wolfgang Aschauer

Introduction: The Driving Forces of Populism

This chapter introduces the concept of societal malaise¹ as a factor in explaining the rise of populism across Europe. All the critical events of recent years—EU enlargement to the East, the financial crisis beginning in 2008, the eurozone crisis that followed, which particularly affected the Mediterranean countries, the conflict in Ukraine and the refugee crisis—have all placed an enormous strain on the ability of the European Union to function as an efficient community of states. In his recent work, the late Zygmunt Bauman (2012) identified the contemporary period in the development of Western societies as an “interregnum.” The classical promises of modernity (Lyotard 1987; Habermas 1994) have been called into question in profound ways, while European integration has become more contested than ever. Authors such as Rosa (2013) claim that widespread transformations in the economic, political and cultural spheres have contributed to the feeling that progress in Europe appears to be stuck. Significant parts of the population are expressing fears of societal decline and political alienation, and are tending to rely more strongly on their national identity, which, in turn, is connected to a rise in exclusionary attitudes.

This chapter looks at the context and social conditions, particularly from the perspective of an individual, in which populist politics thrive. Thus, it empirically analyses the links between societal malaise and the rise of populism in Europe. The term malaise is derived from medical science and describes general feelings of discomfort or a lack of well-being (see National Institute of Health 2016). But in recent years this term has also been used to refer to societies that are “afflicted with a deep cultural malaise” (see Online Oxford Dictionary 2014). This second connotation of *societal malaise* encompasses latent feelings about society not being in good health (see Elchardus and de Keere 2012: 103f.). It is assumed that these feelings of societal dissatisfaction are to be found mainly within societal groups who feel left behind in society (Castel 2000; Standing 2011). However, worries about the functioning of society and concerns about the future are also becoming more and more common among the middle classes (Kraemer 2010; Lengfeld and Hirschle 2010; Bude 2014). The pertinent notion of the ‘silent majority’ (with regard to Italy, see, for example, Arrigoni and Ferragina 2015) was coined to reflect the underestimated reservoir of protest voters who have not registered in opinion polls and

¹ Citizens’ perceptions of societal crises can be summarised under the terms societal pessimism (Steenhoven 2016) or societal malaise (Aschauer 2014, 2016). All these terms are used synonymously, although societal malaise is the preferred term with which to assess contemporary feelings of society malfunctioning.

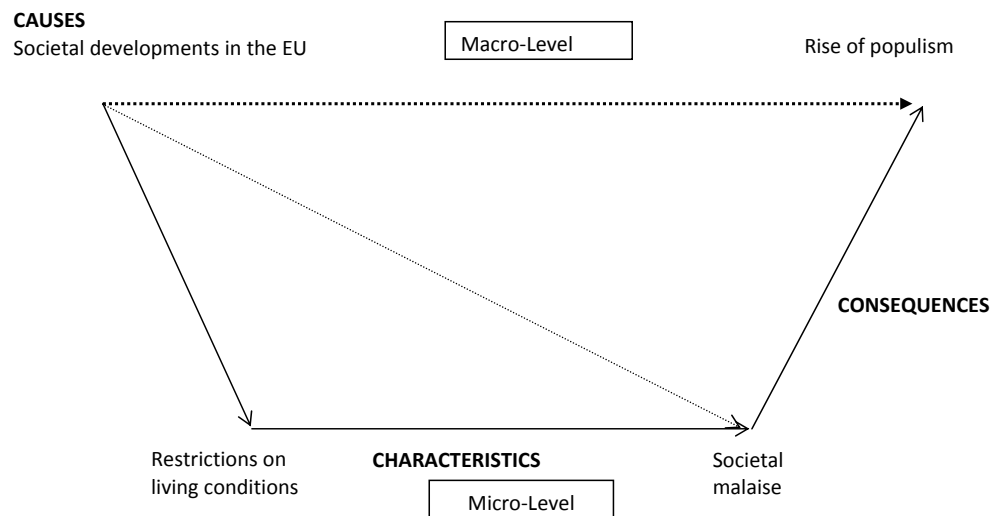
who have shaped recent elections. In this climate of insecurity, it is not surprising that populism, in the way it is conceptualised in Chapter 1 of this handbook, is on the rise.

Theoretical and Empirical Approach: An Overview

This chapter's theoretical approach connects the causes of societal pessimism (societal conditions in Europe at the macro level), the characteristics of societal malaise (at the micro level), and the consequences of societal perceptions of crisis (for example, the rise of populism). This represents my basic theoretical model; it systematises and links approaches at the macro and micro levels, thus presenting a macro-micro-macro explanatory framework (Coleman 1991; Esser 1993)². It is best represented by the 'bathtub model,' as depicted in Figure 18.1 (Coleman 1991).

In the theoretical approach I employ, contemporary societal developments are considered to be major factors that influence objective living conditions and societal well-being at the micro level. Societal pessimism can be characterised by the multifaceted perceptions of crisis (see next section). A higher degree of societal pessimism within certain countries or European regions may thus strongly correlate with the rise of populism and the tendency towards political radicalisation in Europe.

Figure 18.1: The Macro-micro-macro Explanation Scheme for Populism in Europe



Note: Based on Coleman's 1991 Bathtub Model

Although societal malaise is considered to be a prominent explanatory factor in the rise of populism, it is not the aim of this chapter to chart the extent of populism in European societies. This empirical analysis sticks predominantly to the micro level to explore the main causes of societal malaise in certain European regions. The multifaceted dimensions of societal

² The guiding logic of this traditional sociological explanatory scheme holds that social phenomena have to be explained with reference to the micro level because they are always influenced by individual actions.

well-being at the micro level are quantified using public opinion data from the European Social Survey (2006 and 2012). Three main research aims guide the empirical section of this chapter. First, it is necessary to evaluate the multidimensional concept of societal malaise and to test the cross-cultural equivalence of the concept. Implementing structural equation modelling and using MGCFA (Multi-Group Confirmatory Factor Analysis) are common methods of testing for the cross-national invariance of new concepts for empirical research (for a detailed description, see Bachleitner et al. 2014). Second, after we have evaluated the quality of the concept, comparisons of the mean should allow for the monitoring of societal well-being in the aftermath of the economic crisis in various regions of the EU. This approach is intended to provide an initial overview of which EU countries have experienced sharp increases in societal malaise in recent years and which nations have continuously suffered from restrictions to societal well-being.

The third objective of the empirical study is to use a comprehensive set of contextual indicators and individual characteristics to explain the degree of societal malaise in a multilevel model. It is assumed that while roughly the same individual characteristics may explain societal dissatisfaction, variation in negative societal climates across EU countries can be traced back to different contextual indicators. Viewing a rise in populism as a consequence of societal malaise is a relationship that will not be tested empirically in this chapter, but it remains a promising area for further study. The aggregation of individual perceptions of crisis into collective reactions (for example, voting preferences) is not easy to test empirically (for more details, see Esser 1993: 95ff.). Several mediator variables (for example, the extent of social inequality, the functioning of the welfare state, the amount of exposure to the refugee crisis or the extent of migration, as well as media coverage or political discourse) influence how populism is manifested in certain countries. The last section will address potential new areas of research into populism based on societal malaise.

Characteristics of Societal Malaise

Societal malaise can be described using three key perceptions of crisis, which are connected to economic, political and cultural conditions in Europe: EU citizens express *fear of societal decline*, show increasing levels of *political disenchantment* and react with *social distrust* to the challenges of cultural diversity.

Fear of societal decline

Although current stratification research often deals with precarisation (Standing 2011), it also focuses closely on the vulnerable middle classes (Burzan and Berger 2010) and is beginning to examine subjective fears of social decline (Kraemer 2010). It is notable that middle-class insecurities are often not connected with real experiences, but are based on individual or historical comparisons. People feel underprivileged in comparison to other groups or to a previous point in time. Citizens in Western Europe often consider the ‘golden age’ of the second half of the twentieth century (Castel 2000) to have been an era of peacebuilding, economic growth, political stability and European integration. Current middle-class fears can best be attributed to

changes in expectation for the future, since EU citizens now seem to have the impression that European stability is itself illusory. In close proximity to the prosperous regions of Western Europe, there are several trouble spots, such as the Middle East, and new conflicts, such as that in Ukraine, which have weakened the European position in global power relations. New borders between the West and radical Islam (combined with the terror threat posed by Islamic State) threaten social cohesion between Christians and Muslims. Fears of societal decline are reflected in high levels of pessimism for the future. It is important to distinguish expressions of fear among the middle classes from the perceptions of social groups who are clearly underprivileged. In Southern Europe, we can observe a deterioration in the lives of the poor as objective living conditions have measurably declined. The emergence of a young and seemingly 'lost' generation, who are experiencing limited opportunities in the labour market, has become a major social problem. These individuals try to get by by taking occasional jobs while facing the realities of mass unemployment and material deprivation. These marginal groups in Europe are becoming more and more visible in certain peripheral regions. It is thus important to take feelings of recognition (Honneth 1992) into account, as people who have the fewest privileges in contemporary society all suffer from neglect. Enraged citizens (see Kurbjuweit 2010) in this group have unleashed their anger in recent elections, a process seemingly fuelled by their powerlessness to influence societal change.

Political disenchantment

One sociological theory that is suited to explaining political disenchantment is the concept of anomie (originally developed by Durkheim [1897] 1983). In Durkheim's model, citizens witness significant disruptions to social order (for example, due to an unexpectedly high influx of refugees), which leaves them feeling like passive bystanders in a country with porous borders. Anomie in contemporary society thus reflects not only the violation of societal norms but, most significantly, a relative lack of certainty in expectations for the future within a highly differentiated society (see Bohle et al. 1997). While people with a higher social status remain active in civil society, disadvantaged groups tend to react with increasing apathy. It has been a widespread failure to neglect these far-reaching forms of institutional alienation, which is also coupled with a tendency to judge them as temporary phenomena. Moreover, we are also witnessing a critical shift into a 'post-truth' era of politics (for an initial outline, see Keyes 2004), reflecting citizens' need to search for easy solutions to complex societal problems. Growing parts of the citizens tend to distrust the mainstream media and statistical data, as they favour dubious internet sources and become more and more susceptible to conspiracy theories. The crisis of representation in democracy (see Linden and Thaa 2011) has already reached a high level, signalling a post-democratic turn in Western societies (see Crouch 2008; Blühdorn 2013).

Social distrust

One clear symptom of a potential crisis of cohesion is the rise in social distrust in many European societies. Both the decline in social capital and forms of social exclusion are well-known research areas in the field of social cohesion, which were prominently addressed by advocates

of communitarianism (see Taylor 1995; Walzer 1993; Putnam 2000). Individual strategies that undermine solidarity result from subordination under the normative goal of achievement, since in highly individualised societies (Münch 2010) all responsibility for decision-making is assigned to the individual. People experience a lack of personal freedom (as a paradoxical consequence of high levels of autonomy), as they are forced into unwanted decisions and incur debt but often have no real opportunities for advancement within society. In many European societies, the pressure to achieve social mobility is growing, and the impulse of competition may win out over that of solidarity. It is not only economic conditions but also political disruptions to the existing order that have provoked widespread feelings of distrust. In particular, the issue of immigration is responsible for a sharp polarisation of values in society. While some groups in society welcome cultural heterogeneity, those who reject late-modern transformations may reconfigure their values as a form of defence (Spier 2010). Specifically, these values may take the form of disapproval of cultural diversity, resulting in increased attachment to one's own nation and a renaissance of social values aimed at preserving order by simultaneously opting for strong leadership and rejecting egalitarianism and a commitment to tolerance. A rise in ethnocentrism is especially noticeable among the least privileged strata of society due to the fact that disadvantaged groups choose to defend their precarious levels of wealth by bullying the even more underprivileged. As a result, particular groups come to be identified as "significant others" (Triandafyllidou 1998: 593) and are perceived as a threat to the achievements associated with Western democracies, such as relative equality and overall wealth. Disputes over cultural diversity are expressions of significant identity conflicts in contemporary society and have the potential to initiate a new "age of irreconcilability" (Dubiel 1997: 429). To these groups, that which is foreign is perceived as a powerful invader in their ancestral territories, which can no longer be protected from the side effects of globalisation.

Empirical Approach and Operationalisation Strategy

The main empirical aims of this article are, first, to test a multidimensional conception of societal malaise (using structural equation modelling), to monitor societal change in Europe (with mean comparisons), and to operationalise contextual factors and individual circumstances that are able to explain the extent of societal malaise in certain countries and regions. Two waves of the European Social Survey, which is currently considered to be the leading cross-national survey in Europe,³ were used to measure the political and social attitudes of citizens. To analyse the effects of the financial crisis and its aftermath in Europe, the third wave in 2006 has been compared with the sixth wave in 2012. In total, 21 countries belonging to the EU were selected for the study.⁴

3 The European Social Survey has several advantages in comparison with other survey instruments. The data quality fulfils the highest standards in survey research, which is demonstrated by their extensive efforts at documentation, a high number of participating European countries (from 22 countries in the first wave up to 30 countries in the fourth wave), large probability samples for each country (the minimum sample size is 1,500), equal survey modes (in the form of face-to-face interviews), and a high target response rate (70 per cent) (see Lynn et al. 2007).

4 Austria, Greece, Croatia, Latvia, Luxemburg, Malta and Romania were not included in the analysis as these states did not participate in the sixth wave of the European Social Survey. Additionally, it was only possible to compare the means of 18 countries since Italy, Lithuania and the Czech Republic did not participate in the 2006 survey.

Macro indicators leading to a conception of diverse European regions

In a first step, it is necessary to define key societal conditions that can explain the extent of societal malaise at the level of a given country. Table 18.1 gives an overview of the statistical indicators (based on the year 2012) that were used as contextual predictors for the multilevel analysis.

Table 18.1: Operationalisation of Macro Indicators

Levels of analysis	Indicators	Data source
Economic sphere	GDP per capita in PPS	Eurostat: Code tec00114
	GDP growth rate (compared to previous year)	Eurostat: Code nama_gdp_k
	GINI index	Eurostat: Code ilc_di12
	Unemployment rate	Eurostat: Code une_rt_a
	Poverty and social exclusion	Eurostat: Code t2020_50
Political sphere	Public debt	Eurostat: Code tsdde410
	Expenditure on social protection	Eurostat: Code tps00100
	Quality of Democracy (KID)	University of Würzburg
Cultural sphere	Proportion of people with migration background	Eurostat: Code migr_pop3ctb

The GDP per capita in Purchasing Power Standards (PPS), the GDP annual growth rate, the GINI index, the annual unemployment rate, and the extent of poverty and social exclusion were selected to show the economic context in the EU. All measures were derived from Eurostat and reflect key indicators of economic development.

Current political conditions are represented through a general measurement of public debt (percentage of GDP) and expenditure on social protection (based on PPS per capita). The Index of Democracy (KID) by Lauth and Kauff (2012) combines data from Freedom House, the Polity Project and selected governance indicators of the World Bank (rule of law and political stability) to overcome the shortcomings of single measurements. The final macro indicator deals with cultural diversity between and within the countries of the EU and is measured according to the proportion of citizens with immigrant backgrounds (based on Eurostat).

To establish a finely tuned and comprehensive typology of European regions based on these indicators, it is necessary to account for different types of welfare state regimes, which afford different protections against the uncertainties of the market. Following Esping-Andersen (1990) and his concept of de commodification—which refers to an individual’s ability to access welfare programmes and social services independent of the market and the individual’s performance therein—we can establish three types: the liberal welfare states, such as the United Kingdom and Ireland, which emphasise the role of the free market, the conservative or Bismarck welfare model (such as that found in Germany or France), which is based on linking social security to social status and employment relations, and the social-democratic welfare regimes of Scandinavia, which provide the most extensive protection from labour-market risks. A fourth type of welfare regime has been suggested to reflect those that exist in Southern European states, which have been classified as rudimentary (Leibfried 1992), post-authoritarian (Lessenich 1995) or familialistic (Ferrera 1996). Eastern Europe may constitute yet a different type, as it cannot be easily accommodated as a group within Esping-Andersen’s typology (cf.

Kollmorgen 2009), and it may have to be segregated into two additional welfare types, with the Baltic States evidencing similarities to liberal welfare regimes and the Visegrád countries of Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, along with Slovenia, resembling more scaled-down versions of the Bismarck model. These differences allow us to both categorise the six European regions (see Figure 18.2) according to the welfare regime in place there and account for the variation in social policy provision in our model (for recent publications on this topic, see Aschauer 2016; 2017).

Figure 18.2: A Typology of Six European Regions Based on the Varieties of Capitalism Approach and Welfare State Research

Coordinated market economies				Liberal market economies	
Bismarck			Beveridge		
Conservative welfare states			Social-democratic welfare states	Liberal welfare states	
Mediterranean welfare states	Conservative welfare states		Social-democratic welfare states	Liberal welfare states	
Mediterranean welfare states	Conservative welfare states	Minimalist welfare states	Social-democratic welfare states	Liberal welfare states	
Mediterranean welfare states (IT, ES, PT, CY)	Conservative welfare states (BE, DE, NL, FR)	State-oriented corporate welfare states (SI, SK, CZ, PL, HU)	Social-democratic welfare states (SE, FI, DK)	Neoliberal rudimentary welfare states (LT, EE, BG)	Liberal welfare states (UK, IE)

Source: Modified and extended, according to Schröder 2013, 59.

Operationalisation of restrictions on living conditions

The selection of indicators to measure an individual's capacity to achieve social inclusion takes into account several control variables. Besides age and gender, as well as marital status, the number of children in a given household, domicile, and migration and religious backgrounds were also used to demonstrate potential sociodemographic impacts on societal malaise. To differentiate clearly between social groups and to highlight contemporary living conditions, this study follows Anhut and Heitmeyer's (2000) concept of integration (see Table 18.2 for a list of all the indicators).

- The structural sphere refers to *individual-functional system integration* and covers the resources needed for advancement in society (access to jobs, education and income). Several grades of employment relationships were used to assess the structural position of citizens. These indicators were supplemented by two subjective measurements that address feelings of belonging to the top or bottom social strata and impressions of whether it is easy or difficult to manage on one's household income.
- The *communicative-interactive social integration* measure corresponds to the political sphere and institutional participation. This level is only measured roughly using three indi-

Table 18.2: Overview of operationalisation of restrictions on living conditions

Levels of analysis	Objective predictors	Subjective predictors	Indicators
Control variables (7 indicators)	Socio-demographic factors		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age (ESS Code agea) • Gender (ESS Code gndr) • Marital status (ESS Code maritalb) • Children in household (ESS Code chldhhe) • Domicile (ESS Code domicil) • Migration background, part of ethnic minority (ESS Codes: brncnr & blgetmg) • Religious background (ESS Code: rlgdgr)
Structural sphere (6 indicators)	Employment status		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time job with unlimited contract • Self-employed (ESS Codes: emplrel & emplno) • Part-time (<=30h) (ESS Codes: mnactiv & wkhtct) • Temporary contract (ESS Codes: mnactiv & wrkctra) • Unemployment (ESS Code: mnactic) • Permanently sick or disabled (ESS Code: mnactic) • In education (ESS Code: mnactic) • Housework (ESS Code: mnactic) • Retired (ESS Code: mnactic)
	Education (ISCED)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low education level (ISCED 0–2) • Middle education level (ISCED 3–4) • High education level (ISCED 5–7) (ESS Code: eisced)
		Subjective status Managing on income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subjective top-bottom scale (ESS Code: plinsoc) • Managing on income (ESS Code: hincfel)
Political sphere (3 indicators)	Trade unions		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership (ESS Code: mbtru)
	Conventional political participation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contacted a politician (ESS Code: contplp) • Worked in political party (ESS Code: wrkptry) <p>Index of participation (0 = no, 1 = at least one activity)</p>
	Unconventional political participation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Took part in demonstration (ESS Code: pblldmn) • Signed a petition (ESS Code: sgnptit) • Boycotted products (ESS Code: bctprd) <p>Index of participation (0 = no, 1 = at least one activity)</p>
Cultural sphere (4 indicators)	Formal social capital		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involved in work for voluntary organization (ESS Code: wkvorg)
	Social inclusion		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with relatives and friends (ESS Code: sclmeet) • Number of people with whom individual can discuss intimate matters (ESS Code: inprdc)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking part in social activities (ESS Code: sclact) <p>Index of social inclusion (linear transformation, 1–7)</p>

cators. The first variable deals with trade union membership. Two indices reflect the extent of conventional and unconventional political participation in society (Uehlinger 1988).

- The *cultural-expressive social integration* measure is operationalised using indicators of formal and informal social engagement (cf. Putnam 2000). One variable refers to involvement in voluntary organisations, while the other measure indicates levels of social contact and social inclusion (friendships, intimate relationships and social activities).

Operationalisation of societal malaise and ethnocentrism

All those indicators that refer to potential restrictions on living conditions are enhanced by multifaceted measurement of perceptions of crisis. Societal malaise versus societal well-being is

conceptualised as a second-order factor constituted by various feelings of unease within society. All measurements corresponding to societal well-being are again framed by the concept of structural, regulative and cohesive crisis states based on Anhut and Heitmeyer's approach (2000). Table 18.3 provides a list of all the indicators that are used to measure social integration on a subjective level in European societies. In total, 14 indicators belonging to different subordinate factors are included in the measurement.

Table 18.3: Operationalisation of societal perceptions of crisis with ESS indicators

Crisis level	Dimensions	Indicators
Crisis of regulation (disenchantment)	Dissatisfaction vs. satisfaction with societal developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust in parliament (ESS Code: TRSTPRL) • Trust in politicians (ESS Code: TRSTPLT) • Trust in political parties (ESS Code: TRSTPRT) (11-point scale from 0 = no trust to 10 = complete trust)
	Political distrust vs. political trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfaction with the economy (ESS Code: STFECO) • Satisfaction with national government (ESS Code: STFGOV) • Satisfaction with the way democracy works (ESS Code: STFDEM) (11-point scale from 0 = dissatisfaction to 10 = satisfaction)
Crisis of structure (decline)	Fear of societal decline vs. feelings of societal progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to be hopeful for the future (ESS Code: NHPFTR) • Situation of people in country is getting worse (ESS Code: LFWRS) (5-point scale from 0 = disagree to 10 = agree)
	Lack of recognition vs. acknowledgment of own talents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free to decide how to live my life (ESS Code: DCLVLF) • Feel a sense of accomplishment in what I do (ESS Code: ACCDNG) • What I do is valuable and worthwhile (ESS Code: DNGVAL) (5-point scale from 0 = disagree to 10 = agree)
Crisis of cohesion (distrust)	Social distrust vs. social trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most people can be trusted (ESS Code: PPLTRST) • Most people try to be fair (ESS Code: PPLFAIR) • Most of the time people try to be helpful (ESS Code: PPLHLP) (11-point scale from 0 = no trust to 10 = complete trust)

- Political *disenchantment* is composed of two first-order factors that contribute to societal malaise. Political trust represents a traditional measurement—similar items are used in several cross-national surveys (such as the European Values Study and the World Values Survey). A central measurement for capturing regulative crisis conditions in society is dissatisfaction with societal developments.
- Structural perceptions of crisis are measured by fears of societal *decline*. The first two items refer to pessimism about the future, while the other three predominantly deal with individual feelings of recognition in society.
- The concept of a crisis of cohesion is operationalised using the indicator of social *distrust*, which is measured through three typical items. Mutual trust between individuals is seen as a key influencing factor in the avoidance of insecurity (Kollock 1994).

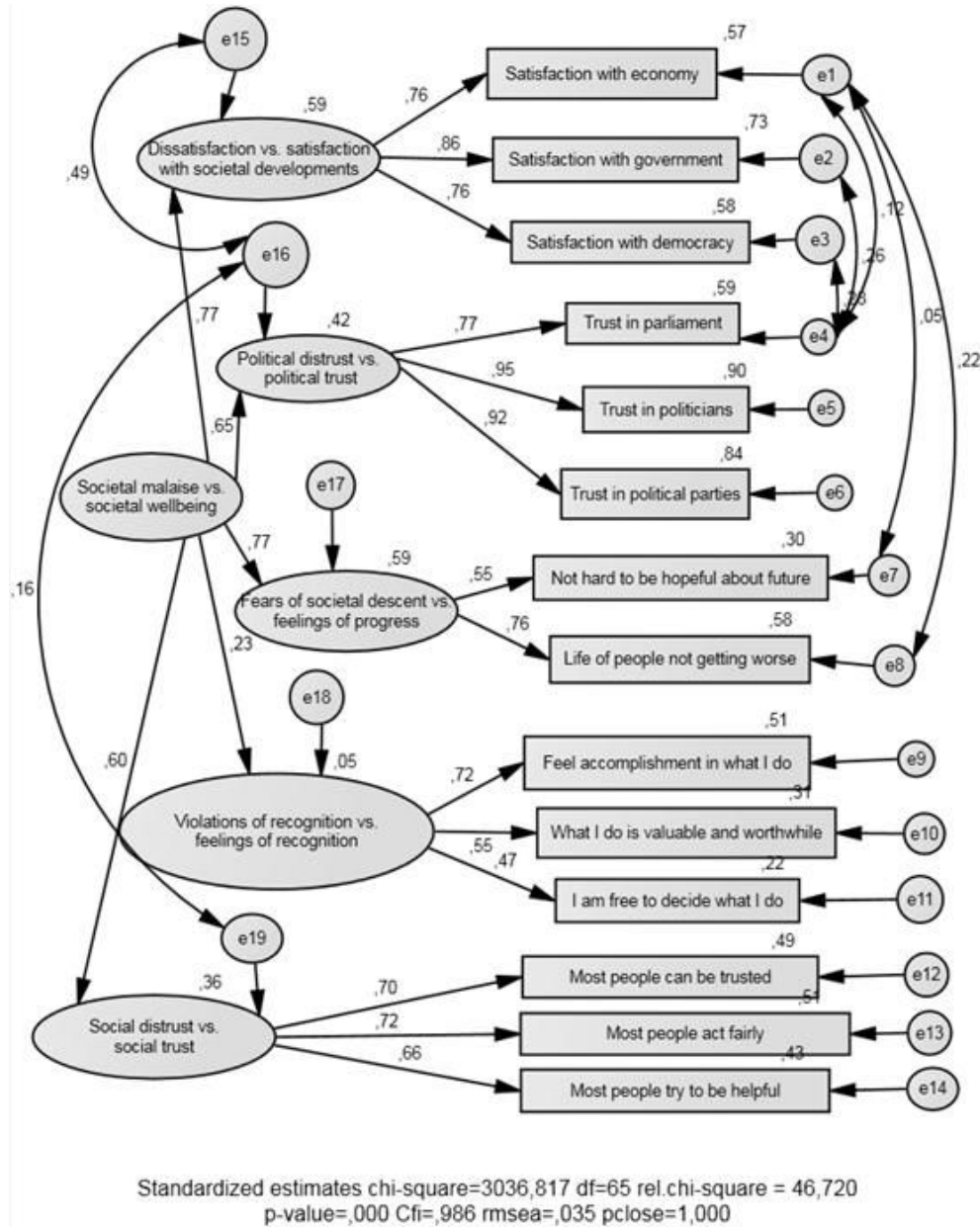
Empirical results

Evaluation of the concept of societal malaise

The first empirical analysis evaluates the empirical model for societal well-being. The multidimensional measurement can be viewed as a second-order model, since it is composed of five first-order factors (political trust, satisfaction with society, optimism about the future, feelings of recognition and social trust) that all contribute to societal well-being. A confirmatory factor

analysis that shows this structure of relations and relevant fit measures,⁵ based on the total individual sample, is illustrated in Figure 18.3.

Figure 18.3: Factor Analysis Confirming Concept of Societal Well-being (Based on Total EU Sample, 2012)



5 If one evaluates the general fit measures shown at the bottom of the figure, the coefficient Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA = 0.035) and the Comparative Fit Index (CFI = 0.986) are respectively well below or above the necessary criteria (RMSEA < 0.05 and CFI > 0.90 respectively) (cf. Hu and Bentler 1999). The χ^2 remains too high to achieve an adequate model fit, but this indicator is sensitive to large sample sizes and is therefore hardly used in cross-national survey research (cf. Cheung and Rensvold 2002).

The results of the first-order factors measuring structural, regulative and cohesive crisis conditions lead to high factor loadings and a clear empirical distinction between the different levels.⁶ All loadings for the indicators are above 0.5 (except one item loading on feelings of recognition), which demonstrates a high-quality measurement of the latent variables. Also, the correlations with the higher-order factor of societal malaise versus social well-being are generally substantial. There is only one weaker correlation between feelings of recognition and societal well-being. This is plausible, since recognition corresponds more directly to the individual level.

Besides evaluating the empirical quality of the model, we additionally need to test for cross-national equivalence. The same model of societal well-being should converge in every nation state. The cultural invariance test is often employed using the method of Multi-Group Confirmatory Factor Analysis (MGCFAs). According to Chen, Sousa and West (2005), measurement invariance should be tested at different levels. The first step of invariance testing is configural equivalence (see Table 18.4, Model 1).

Table 18.4: Evaluation of cross-national equivalence (fit indices based on MGCFAs)

Sample	Equivalence test	Chi ² -based models				Global fit indices		
		Chi ²	df	Chi ² / df	Sig.	RMSEA	pclose	CFI
21 EU countries, 2012 (Model 5: release of intercept invariance concerning items 1,3,4,6,8,9,11,12,14)	Configural invariance (Model 1)	5821.4	1344	4.33	< 0.001	0.009	1.000	0.980
	Metric invariance (Model 2: first-order factor loadings)	7288.3	1524	4.78	< 0.001	0.010	1.000	0.974
	Metric invariance (Model 3: first- and second-order factor loadings)	8055.6	1604	5.02	< 0.001	0.010	1.000	0.971
	Full scalar invariance (Model 4)	41791.1	1884	22.2	< 0.001	0.023	1.000	0.819
	Partial scalar invariance (Model 5)	24371.7	1704	14.30	< 0.001	0.018	1.000	0.897

This means that the same items should belong to the construct in every single country, but the factor loadings can differ. The second level of equivalence is achieved if the loadings of each item on the underlying first-order factors can be considered equal (see Table 18.4, Model 2). In second-order models, it is necessary to test for the factor loadings on the higher-order factors as well. Therefore, full metric invariance can only be reached if all first-order and second-order factors constrained as equal lead to a sufficient model fit of the data (see Table 18.4, Model 3).⁷ However, the latent means of the underlying concepts can only be compared if scalar equivalence is fulfilled. To test for scalar invariance, the intercepts of the items and factors are constrained as equal (see Table 18.4, Model 4). Recent methodological articles (see Davidov et al. 2014) clearly demonstrate that full scalar invariance is barely fulfilled in cross-national research. Thus several authors suggest testing for partial scalar invariance (see Table 18.4, Model 5).⁸ The clear decrease between Model 3 and Model 4 (as well as Model 5 respectively) demonstrates that it was neither possible to reach full scalar equivalence nor partial scalar in-

6 Otherwise, some high-error correlations between the factors appear. From a theoretical standpoint, it can be argued that trust (on the personal and political levels) correlates with general satisfaction with societal developments.

7 If this stage of metric equivalence is achieved, relations between the construct and other variables can be tested, and it is therefore possible to use the operationalisation of societal well-being for a regression analysis.

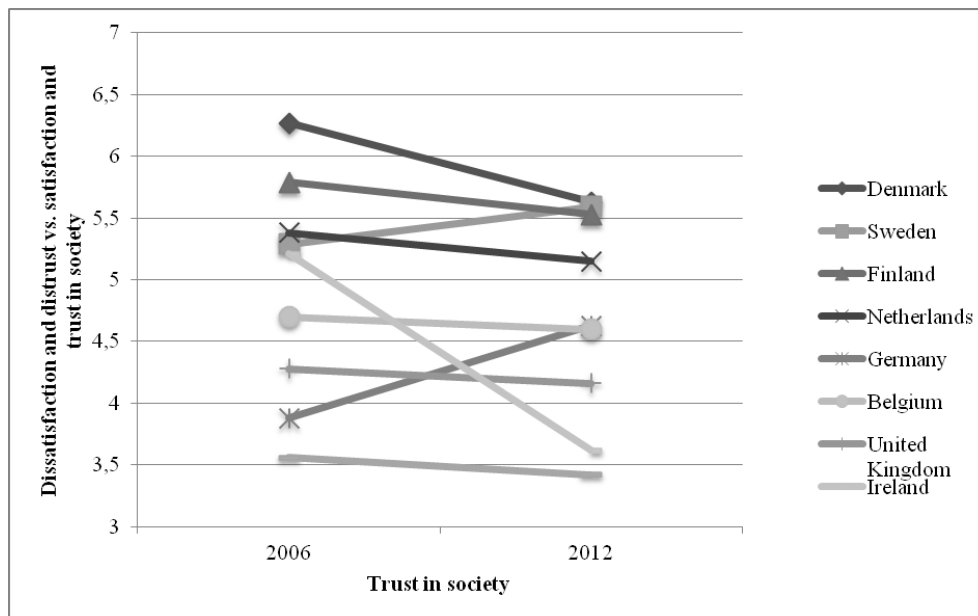
8 They claim that releasing the equality constraints on a small number of indicators does not necessarily degrade the quality of mean comparisons between countries (see Steenkamp and Baumgartner 1998; Davidov 2010).

variance, which is a necessary precondition for comparing the means between countries.⁹ But it was possible to establish partial scalar invariance within at least most of the European regions and also over time (between the two survey waves) in most of the countries (see Aschauer 2017 for further computations).

The evolution of societal malaise in Europe

The second part of the empirical analysis provides an insightful description of contemporary trends within societal well-being in European countries. All 14 indicators measuring societal functioning were aggregated within two indices.

Figure 18.4: Trust in Society, 2006 and 2012 (Northern and Western Europe)



⁹ To assess the fit of the five models, changes in the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) were analysed. According to Cheung and Rensfold (2002), a difference larger than 0.1 in the CFI value indicates a substantial change in model fit. If that rule is applied, metric invariance concerning at least the first-order and second-order factors could be achieved in a cross-national comparison of 21 countries.

Figure 18.5: Trust in Social Relations, 2006 and 2012 (Northern and Western Europe)

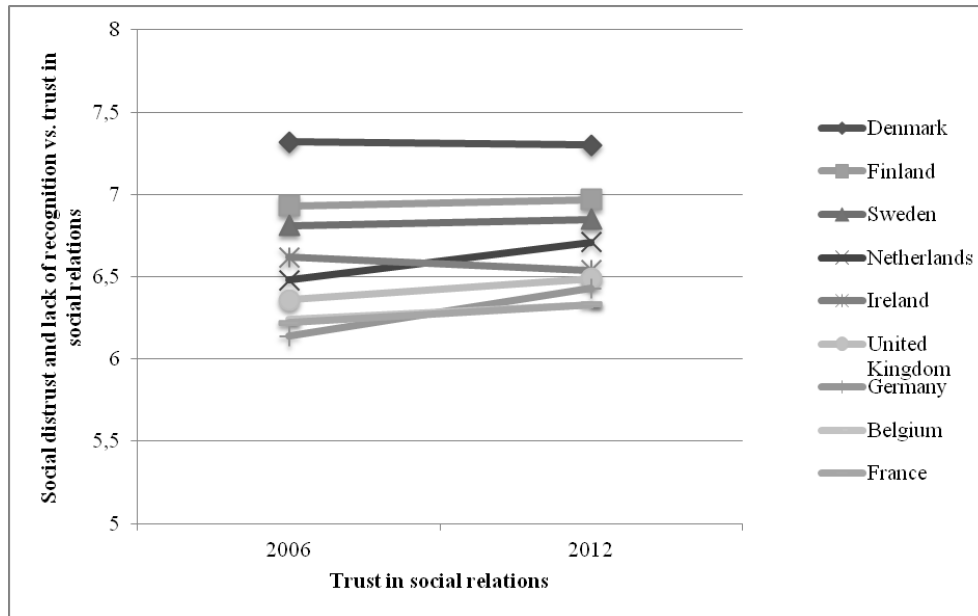


Figure 18.6: Trust in Society, 2006 and 2012 (Eastern and Southern Europe)

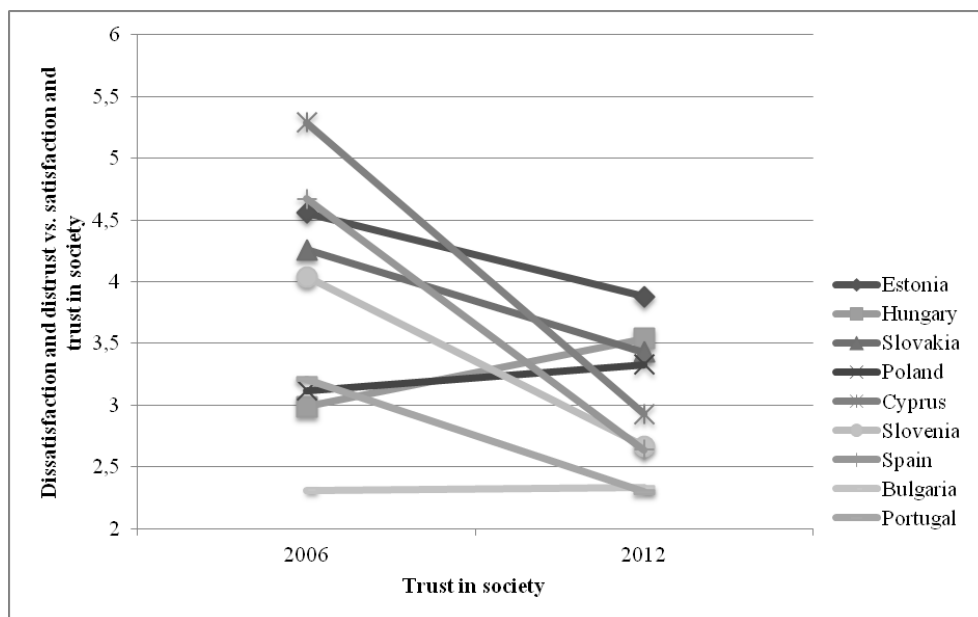
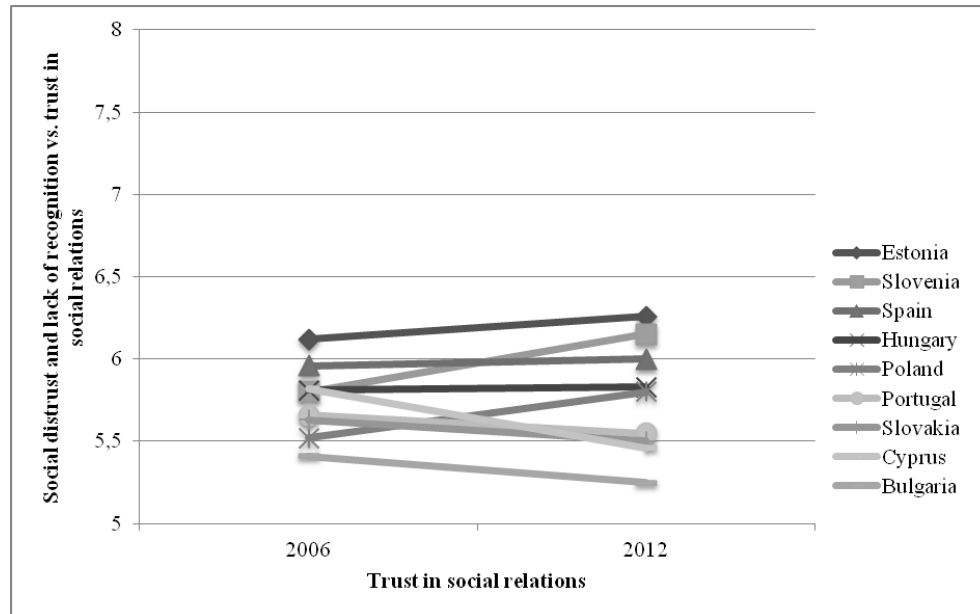


Figure 18.7: Trust in Social Relations, 2006 and 2012 (Eastern and Southern Europe)



The first mean value is computed based on political distrust, political dissatisfaction and fears of societal decline in order to analyse the rise in societal perceptions of crisis during recent years. The second index value refers to trust in social relations. It combines the items of social trust and individual feelings of recognition. This procedure for monitoring societal change based on the attitudes of citizens intends to draw attention to important societal developments in Europe.

Figures 18.4 to 18.7 permit initial hypotheses on the evolution of societal malaise from 2006 to 2012.¹⁰ Both countrywide indices are shown based on their scale means (that is, the combination of items that belong to the relevant first-order factor).¹¹

The figure on the upper left shows the continuous rise of societal malaise, even in Western and Northern Europe. There are only four countries in the year 2012 with a level of trust and satisfaction above the scale mean of 5. These countries are Denmark, Sweden, Finland and the Netherlands. While societal well-being appears to be increasing in Sweden, there is a slight downward trend in Finland. Additionally, in Denmark and the Netherlands, the most recent data from 2012 shows a decrease in societal functioning compared to the year 2006. The other Western European countries clearly fall behind in this respect and achieve a mean value between 3.5 and 4.5 (see Figure 18.4).

¹⁰ Although these timely comparisons are based on an evaluated concept, the results should only be seen as an estimation of countries' means. The invariance test demonstrated that full scalar invariance was not fulfilled. This means that comparisons of mean values by country should be treated with caution.

¹¹ Most of the indicators were evaluated by the citizens on an 11-point scale (from 0 to 10). All items that employ a different scale were adapted to those scales through linear transformation. The values in the figure can thus be seen as average values for societal well-being at a specific point in time. Country means below five (the middle of the scale) indicate societal perceptions of crisis (as people tend to voice feelings of dissatisfaction or distrust in social relations), while mean values above five reflect relatively positive judgements by citizens.

Belgium and Germany occupy roughly the same position, although both states were confronted with different developments. Belgium has faced an increase in societal malaise during recent years, while Germany has been able to enhance the societal well-being of its citizens. The level of perceptions of crisis seems to be growing slightly in the United Kingdom and in France as well. The sharp decrease in societal well-being in Ireland is a clear example of how economic difficulties can cause dramatic changes in citizens' attitudes and how social integration is threatened by economic downturns. On the other hand, Figure 18.5 clearly demonstrates that—at least in the year 2012—there is no evident crisis of cohesion in Northern and Western European states. People express a high amount of social trust and normally feel appreciated within society. Thus, social trust and recognition are still widely guaranteed in Western Europe as all countries achieve a scale mean far above the threshold of 5. It is notable, however, that feelings of recognition and social trust have changed slightly in Ireland, the only country in Western Europe that was dramatically affected by the economic crisis in the year 2009.

If Eastern and Southern Europe are taken into consideration, we can observe sharp declines in trust in society (see Figure 18.6). In particular, the economic difficulties Cyprus, Spain and Portugal have experienced are clearly reflected in the data on societal well-being. While Bulgaria have had consistently low levels of societal satisfaction over the last few years, Portugal, Spain and Cyprus have experienced a rapid rise in societal perceptions of crisis due to the European debt crisis. Additionally, in Eastern Europe, the global financial crisis has had significant negative impacts on societal well-being in most of its constituent countries. There are only two notable exceptions: Poland and Hungary have mainly experienced positive developments; Hungary in particular appeared to recover in 2012 from the high-level perceptions of crisis it evidenced in 2006. The financial crisis has had a strong negative effect on societal functioning in Slovenia and the Czech Republic. It is striking that many countries only achieve a scale mean between 2 and 3, reflecting high levels of general dissatisfaction with societal developments.

This crisis of institutional trust is again not connected with a crisis of trust in social relations (see Figure 18.7). Although most of the Southern and Eastern European states rank behind Northern and Western European countries, the amount of social trust and feelings of recognition is still within a mean range of 5 to 6.5, indicating a functional level of cohesion. Societal well-being seems to be threatened at the institutional level but not at the level of social relations. Otherwise, it is clearly apparent that those countries that have suffered the most from the economic crisis are also often affected by a decrease in social trust. More pronounced feelings of social distrust get observable in Bulgaria, Cyprus and Portugal over the course of the last years.

The causes of societal malaise: A multilevel analysis

The third empirical analysis adopts a multilevel analysis. This sophisticated method enables the simultaneous analysis of which macro predictors and individual factors might explain the extent of societal malaise. The execution of a multilevel analysis has to follow certain steps to arrive at conclusions that provide valuable insights. Commonly, a bottom-up strategy is used (Hox 2010). It allows for a gradual increase in the complexity of the model. The first step that is required to justify the use of a multilevel analysis is to compute the intra-class correlation

based on an intercept-only model. This coefficient clearly shows that more than 30 per cent of the variance of societal malaise can be traced back to the level of the country (see Model 1).

Table 18.5: Results of the multilevel analysis to explain societal malaise in the European Union

Levels of analysis	Predictors	Indicators	Model 1: Empty model	Model 2: Individual predictors	Model 3: Predictors of individual and country level	Model 4: Predictors of individual and country level and welfare-state classification (with standardized coefficients)
	Intercept		4.71	4.61	4.64	5.46
Socio-demographic level	Gender (0 = female, 1 = male)			-0.06***	-0.06***	-0.06 (-0.02)***
	Age					
	Domicile (ref. countryside)	Large cities				
		Small cities		-0.04**	-0.04**	-0.04 (-0.01)**
	Migration background			0.06**	0.06**	0.06 (0.01)**
	Religiosity			0.04***	0.04***	0.04 (0.08)***
Individual predictors	Unconv. political engagement			-0.07***	-0.07***	-0.07 (-0.02)***
	Voluntary engagement			0.13***	0.13***	0.13 (0.04)***
	Social Inclusion Index			0.10***	0.10***	0.10 (0.08)***
	Education (ref. ISCED 5-6)	Low (0-2)		-0.34***	-0.34***	-0.34 (-0.11)***
		Medium (3-4)		-0.26***	-0.26***	-0.26 (-0.09)***
	Employment relation (ref. retired)	Permanent (full-time)				
		Part-time				
		Temporary				
		Solo/self-employed				
		In education		0.35***	0.35***	0.35 (0.07)***
		Housewife/-husband				
		Unemployed		-0.16***	-0.16***	-0.16 (-0.03)***
	Disabled			-0.26***	-0.26***	-0.26 (-0.03)***
	Subjective estimation (social status)			0.19***	0.19***	0.19 (0.23)***
Contextual predictors	Dealing with household income			0.46***	0.46***	0.46 (0.15)***
	GDP / capita in KKS (2012)				0.02 (0.34)***	
	Public debt (% of GDP)				-0.01 (-0.22)***	
	Quality of democracy (KID)				0.30 (0.13) +	
	Proportion immigrant background				-0.03 (-0.09) +	
	Welfare-state typology (ref. social democratic)	Conservative				-0.70 (-0.21)*
		Liberal				-0.79 (-0.18)*
		Mediterranean				-1.47 (-0.36)**
		Corporate				-1.05 (-0.30)**
	Rudimentary					-0.73 (-0.19) +
Variance components	Individual level		1.43	1.12	1.12	1.12
	Contextual level		0.63**	0.41**	0.09	0.06
Explained variance	Individual level			22.1%	22.1%	22.1%
	Contextual level			35%	85.7%	91.2%
	ICC		0.31	0.27	0.08	0.05
Deviance			130436.03	109553.41	109521.79	109511.72
	Estimated parameters		3	24	28	32
	Sample size (unweighted)		40478 / 21	36858 / 21	36858 / 21	36858 / 21

The second model includes all individual predictors that were used to explain societal malaise at the micro level. It was decided to refer only to fixed-effects models, which set the precondition that certain predictors have to be equally relevant for all countries (see Model 2).¹² These models also assume that there are no cross-level interactions between macro and micro effects

12 This precondition was set due to the small N problem in this multilevel analysis because the sample size at the contextual level is only 21 countries (see, for example, Maas and Hox 2004). Stegmüller (2013: 758) states that “Simple linear or probit models containing only a random intercept are the best-case scenario. Here ML estimates and confidence interval coverage of estimated macro effects are only biased to a limited extent as long as more than 15 or 20 countries are available.”

(see Models 3–5).¹³ Model 2 illustrates only the highly significant predictors at the individual level ($p < 0.01$) due to the large sample size. The effects of sociodemographic parameters are rather weak, showing that women are more satisfied with society than men, and foreign-born and religious people express slightly more trust in society. In terms of predictors at the level of social cohesion, we can see that social inclusion is highly relevant in guaranteeing higher levels of satisfaction with society. At the structural level, higher education leads to societal well-being, while unemployed and disabled people demonstrate a higher degree of societal malaise. The two most important predictors refer to the subjective level. People who see themselves as being at the bottom of society and people who have difficulties managing on their income are susceptible to high-level perceptions of crisis. In general, these variables can explain a considerable amount of variance (22 per cent) at the individual level. The inclusion of these predictors also accounts for a significant reduction in variance at the level of each country.¹⁴

Finally, model 3 includes all individual predictors and certain macro predictors.¹⁵ Altogether, three main predictors appear to be highly relevant in explaining societal malaise. Economic prosperity helps to increase societal well-being, while high levels of public debt increase societal pessimism. A third relevant factor is quality of democracy, which strengthens the public impression of society being functional. The standardised effects (shown in brackets) demonstrate that GDP per capita exerts a considerable impact on societal well-being. The influence of public debt is also highly significant, while the quality of democracy only weakly contributes to explanations of societal malaise. Interestingly, the proportion of immigrants also leads to a slight decrease in societal well-being.¹⁶

In Model 4, the standardised effects of the individual predictors are also depicted.¹⁷ With regard to country effects, Model 4 finally shows that all macro predictors can be traced back to different welfare systems and regional characteristics within Europe. Societal well-being is highest in Scandinavia and decreases substantially when we consider other Western European regions (for example, the states with conservative and liberal welfare systems). The impression that there are high levels of societal dissatisfaction becomes clearly visible when we turn to Southern or Eastern Europe. When we control for all different predictors, societal malaise is currently highest in the Mediterranean regions, closely followed by Central Eastern Europe. Compared to Scandinavia, the liberal welfare states (the UK and Ireland), as well as certain conservative states (for example, Belgium, Germany and France), experience a greater extent of societal malaise too. All country-level predictors turn out to be insignificant when the wel-

13 This daring assumption of similar effect sizes in all regions was tested before with a separate regression analysis (not depicted here). It turned out that roughly the same predictors explain societal malaise in all regions, although a few minor differences (especially in the effect of education on societal malaise) do appear (see Aschauer 2017 for further computations).

14 Variance at the contextual level can also be reduced because differences between countries might be due to unequal distributions (with regard to sociodemographic and structural predictors). Model 2 controls for those differences and can thus contribute to the explanation of countrywide differences.

15 It may be problematic to include all 13 context predictors in one model because they are highly correlated. Thus, it was decided to implement a stepwise procedure and to integrate only those predictors simultaneously and separately where a higher impact on societal malaise was expected. Ultimately, it seemed most beneficial to use the four predictors that are illustrated in Model 3 (see also, for this strategy, Neller 2008).

16 This small effect demands further clarification. The effect of immigrant numbers turned out to be insignificant when Cyprus (as an outlier) was excluded from the model. In Cyprus, a high degree of societal malaise (due to the economic crisis) converges with an extraordinarily high number of immigrants in the country. On the other hand, the current refugee crisis and the proportion of refugees per capita in a country might explain a certain rise in societal pessimism, but this thesis still has to be tested (based on more recent survey data).

17 The effect sizes of the individual predictors always remain the same because effects on countries show no variance at the individual level and thus cannot change the impact of the individual predictors.

fare state typology is taken into account. Additionally, it is possible to explain more than 90 per cent of the variance at the level of each country with these regional characteristics.¹⁸

Discussion and Conclusion

During recent years, there has been a shift away from using GDP as a measure for assessing social progress purely in terms of living standards, moving instead towards including not only traditional subjective measures, such as happiness and life satisfaction, but also indicators of societal well-being (see Glatzer 2008; Harrison et al. 2011). In the sociology of European integration, there are now calls to look more closely at the micro level and highlight future challenges to social integration (see Bach 2008; Vobruba 2007). Consequently, it is one of the principal future challenges of comparative research to take European citizens' subjective perceptions of crisis into account more adequately, to monitor societal well-being over time, and to search for comparable and equivalent indicators of this concept. The multidimensional model of societal well-being is an important first step in this direction. The results of the cross-national invariance test in this study seem promising as at least metric invariance (meaning the acceptance of a model with equal factor loadings across several European countries) was achieved. The heterogeneous results of the mean comparisons suggest that there is no unidirectional path towards perceptions of crisis in Europe and that the nation state still plays a crucial role in mitigating the effects of crises on citizens. It was possible to empirically support the assertion that there is an emerging societal malaise in European countries, which has developed in tandem with the economic crisis. In particular, trust in society is disappearing in many countries, and we are already witnessing a growing crisis of institutional trust, especially in Southern Europe and in some Eastern European countries. Although societal protests may not be clearly visible yet, there is danger in underestimating societal changes in countries trying to overcome certain crisis conditions (see Streeck 2013: 14). Additionally, it has to be assumed that the impact of the refugee crisis in particular has further intensified the extent of the societal malaise. This new unsolved challenge for Europe may particularly affect levels of trust and cohesion in society. Thus, one should be fearful of a growth in societal dissatisfaction across borders, which foments intercultural distrust and radicalisation.

The results of this multilevel model, which has been designed to explore the major impacts of societal malaise, clearly demonstrate that only five individual predictors exert a notable effect on societal malaise. The effect of the subjective status measurement is particularly strong, highlighting the importance of deprivation theory (see, for example, Pettigrew et al. 2008) in explaining societal malaise and populism. Those people who see themselves as being closer to the top of the social hierarchy express a more optimistic view of the future. Also, Europeans who are more highly qualified and who have no difficulties maintaining their income level perceive society to be functioning at higher levels. Additionally, religious people and individuals who are well-integrated into society also experience higher levels of well-being in society. The macro predictors clearly indicate that we are now confronted with considerable cleavages be-

18 The last model also shows the best performance that can be tested with the deviance test. Due to the full maximum likelihood procedure, which was adopted in all models, the deviance values can be subtracted and compared with a χ^2 test. The value of 10.07 (comparing Model 4 with Model 3) proves to be significant (taking four additional parameters into account) (see Hox 2010).

tween European regions (see, for example, Beck 2012), which are supported by theoretical models that suggest the presence of considerable diversity among groups of European countries (see, for example, Schröder 2013; Boatca 2010). The multilevel analysis confirms that perceptions of a functioning society in Nordic countries are due to high levels of economic prosperity, a higher quality of democracy and lower levels of public debt. By comparison, notable increases in public debt and precarisation (see, for example, Standing 2011) might influence societal pessimism in several regions of Western Europe (especially in the liberal welfare states). Financial restrictions (together with high unemployment rates) take societal dissatisfaction to extreme levels in the Mediterranean region. In Eastern Europe, it might be useful to attribute societal malaise to lower levels of economic prosperity and a lower quality of democracy. Especially in the Eastern periphery, we can observe citizens' ongoing disenchantment with democratic parties. This is largely due to perceptions of corruption (see, for example, Linde 2012).

These empirical findings regarding the causes of societal malaise return us to the issue of the rise of populism, which is seen as one major consequence of the pessimistic public mood in several European societies. It seems that Southern Europe is more susceptible to left-wing populist ideologies, which advance an inclusionary vision of society and try to unite the precariat against the establishment to promote a systemic change in global capitalism. In the West, we are witnessing a different right-wing form of populism. In Eastern Europe, the time span since the democratic transition has been too short to establish stable mainstream parties and guarantee strong ties between the citizens and political elites. Low levels of party institutionalisation have provided opportunities for populist actors to come into power by drawing on widespread levels of distrust in politics (see Kriesi and Pappas 2015). The common denominator of far right and right-wing populist ideologies in the West and in the East is the combatting of the transnational direction European society is taking towards global interconnectedness. It is therefore important to remember that populism in Europe is context dependent and culture-bound, and it is vital in this area to understand how culture shapes populist politics and how regional characteristics influence political change in certain countries and challenge collaboration within the EU. It is therefore essential to analyse the generally pessimistic mood in European society. Monitoring social change and focusing on perceptions of crisis among citizens should thus neither be neglected in future empirical research on populism, nor should it be underestimated in future political conceptions of a united Europe.

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CHAPTER 19:

POPULISM AND DEMOCRACY—THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL CONSIDERATIONS¹

Robert A. Huber and Christian H. Schimpf

Introduction

Populist actors² are seemingly an omnipresent phenomenon in today's global political landscape (see de la Torre 2015). For examples of this phenomenon, we can look to the Americas (Gratius 2007; Oliver and Rahn 2016; Rovira Kaltwasser 2015), Europe (Mudde 2007; van Kessel 2015), Africa (Resnick 2015) and the Asia-Pacific region (Snow and Moffitt 2012; Moffitt 2015). In addition to the various topics discussed throughout this volume, scholars have also debated the impact that the presence of populist actors has had on other mainstream parties (Bale 2010; Bale et al. 2014; Bale 2003; van Spanje 2010) in terms of both democracy in general and democratic quality in particular. In this chapter, we introduce and examine the different points of view in this debate. These range from portraying populist actors as either good or bad for democracy (Tannsjö 1992; Urbinati 1998) to ascribing a dual role to them in the sense of their functioning as both a threat and a corrective (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012). We also consider how actor-inherent features (political role and host ideology) and contextual factors (democratic consolidation of a country) influence the particular relationship between a populist actor and the quality of democracy. Finally, we discuss how the two concepts of populism and democracy can be measured to establish valid empirical evidence.

'Populism' and 'Democracy' – An Ambivalent Relationship?

In this volume, Heinisch and Mazzoleni have already elaborated on the different ways in which populism has been defined. For this chapter, we rely on a general concept that is suitable for application to most of the standard definitions used in contemporary populism research. We understand populism as a set of ideas that encompasses anti-elitism, the belief in a general will of the people (*volonté générale*) and a Manichean outlook (Hawkins 2009; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2013; Rovira Kaltwasser 2014; Rooduijn 2014). While this view of populism remains broad, it does capture the essential ingredients of populism that various scholars agree upon in their definitions and concepts (Rooduijn 2014). As van Kessel (2015: 8) points out, the different interpretations are not problematic from an empirical perspective “as long as there is a consensus about the concept's attributes.” Thus, whether populism is con-

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2 Throughout this chapter, we use 'populist actors' to refer to both populist parties (for example, in Europe) and populist politicians (for example, in Latin America).

ceived as a thin-centred ideology (Mudde 2004) or a frame (see Heinisch and Muzzolini in this volume), it is essential to understand that the underlying ideas form the reference points for any action taken by populist actors.

When surveying the literature on populism, we observe that scholars focus on the relationship between two specific understandings of democracy and populism the most: representative democracy (for example, Taggart 2002; 2004) and liberal democracy (for example, Pappas 2016; Plattner 2010). We discuss both strands in tandem with each other in our review and, suffice it to say, populism is at odds with both these forms of democracy for similar reasons: Populist actors reject the representative character of democracy because, in their view, non-majoritarian representation prevents clean implementation of the general will of the people. For the same reason, these actors are also at odds with liberal democracy because within it power can never be absolute. Moreover, liberal democracy requires pluralism, which rejects the very idea of a homogeneous people with unified interests and thus the notion of a general will (*volonté générale*). Due to the fact that for populist actors there is only one particular will, any institutions/rules (for example, a system of checks and balances) designed to limit power and balance against the majority is anathema to populist actors and their central ideas.³ For these reasons, we review and discuss these two concepts of democracy together.

Before reviewing the literature on populism in greater detail, it is necessary, however, to emphasise that while populist parties can be radical (Mudde 2007), they are, when viewed from a theoretical perspective, not considered to be extreme. Extreme parties differ from (radical) populist parties in that the former are anti-constitutional (anti-democratic), whereas populist parties are not (Betz 1994; Pappas 2016). Instead, populist actors are strong critics of the democratic system but, as such, attempt to obey the rules of democratic contestation (Griffin 1999; Rensmann 2006). Rensman (2003; 2006) also highlights differences between the political goals of these two types of parties. Extreme parties strive to establish an autocratic regime in which the people are part of the whole. Populist parties glorify the will of the people, which they consider to be the “ultimate source of legitimacy” (van Kessel 2015: 15). A grey area between radicalism and extremism certainly exists, which makes it hard to place each and every populist actor in one of the two categories. Yet, this distinction helps one to understand why in the following analysis populist actors are not considered anti-democratic but rather can present both a challenge to and opportunity for certain aspects of democracy, such as minority rights and mutual constraints, but also accountability.

Democracy in its most basic meaning refers to the rule or power of the people. In today's societies, this is often understood as the rule of the majority expressed through fair and free elections (Plattner 2010). In a representative democracy, voters elect individuals and parties to represent the interests of the people (Urbinati 2011). However, it is almost equally recognised that majoritarianism by itself does not constitute what we visualise as a democracy. Rather, a political regime, in order to be considered democratic, must also “guarantee the freedom or liberty of its citizens” (Plattner 2010: 84). If democracy is enshrined in a (written) constitution, in combination with limitations imposed on the government by the rule of law, we then talk of a constitutional or liberal democracy. In this way, a liberal democracy always implies

³ In fact, Pappas (2016) suggests that we should define populist parties based on the criterion of anti-liberalism. That is, all parties that are democratic (for example, not extreme) and anti-liberal in their tactics are populist parties. All other parties are not.

an internal struggle for balancing popular rule, on the one hand, with anti-majoritarian constraints, on the other. The United States' idea of checks and balances is perhaps the best-known example of this internal tension within liberal democracy. It is also evident that representative and liberal democracy are not distinctive but, rather, complementary ideas.

The question that arises is how populist actors relate to this view of democracy, since according to several scholars (for example, Plattner 2010) liberal democracy is the one form with which populism is most at odds. Populist actors criticise the representative character of democracy (Taggart 2002). In their minds, there should be no intermediary who converts the people's will. Rather, democracy ought to be a process through which the general will is directly implemented through plebiscitary measures (Abts and Rummens 2007; Barr 2009; von Beyme 2014; Canovan 2002; van Kessel 2015; Meny and Sured 2002).⁴ In a similar manner, populist actors advocate positions that are at odds with liberal democracy. Sharing the conviction that the *volonté générale* should be the point of reference for all decisions taken in a polity, populist actors consider any anti-majoritarian elements to be unnecessary. This is not to say that populists are anti-democratic per se as they are perfectly accepting of democratic outcomes under majoritarianism (Tännsjö 1992).⁵

Populist actors, rather, perceive the general will to be the majority, which serves to finalise political decisions and mandates their implementation without any further questions. For these reasons, populist actors "have little patience with liberalism's emphasis on procedural niceties and protections for individual rights" (Plattner 2010: 88).⁶

Urbinati (1998) also stresses the critical role of pluralism in democracy, and liberal democracy in particular. Based on her theoretical framework, she portrays populism as the opposite rather than the prototype of democracy. She considers it a more moderate form of fascism, and concludes that populism is in conflict with any form of plurality. According to Urbinati, these roots in fascism lead to the transformation of society into an entity "where class and ideological differences are denied and mastered in the attempt to fulfil the myth of a comprehensive totality of state and society" (Urbinati 1998: 110). Thus, she criticises the populists' division of society into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups. Already, Tännsjö, Plattner and Urbinati reflect how a central idea of populism, the *volonté générale*, shapes its relationship with democracy, most specifically liberal democracy. However, as liberal democracy eventually rests on two pillars, subsequent works have thus begun to consider the idea that populist actors may play a dual role in democracy by redeeming or strengthening the majoritarian side while working against anti-majoritarian elements.

4 For a different view, see Müller (2016) who argues that populist actors do not reject representative democracy per-se. Rather, these actors claim to be the only legitimate representatives because only they can represent the true will of the people. In turn, they do not argue against representative democracy but rather, those parties and politicians that are frequently elected into office. Plebiscitary measures then do not become an instrument to derive (and implement) the general will. Instead, they function as means to confirm what the respective populist actors consider as the only correct policy going forward.

5 Populism, although conceptualised slightly differently, was criticised precisely on these grounds by Riker (1982). The scholar argues and shows, based on social-choice theory, that the general will can never be implemented through elections and, thus, the view would have to be rejected.

6 Some scholars argue that because the balance between 'liberal logic' (protecting minorities, preventing absolute power) and 'democratic logic' (majoritarian focus) has suffered at the expense of the latter, populist parties have been able to rise as a result (Mouffe 2000). As representatives of the democratic logic, they represent a counterweight, which can achieve balance between the two antagonistic logics (see also Meny and Sured 2002).

Beyond a One-dimensional Relationship

Canovan (1999) builds on the idea that democracy is characterised by two traits: the pragmatic style of politics (where institutions mediate conflict) and the redemptive vision (“government of the people, by the people, for the people”; Canovan 1999: 10). One of Canovan’s (1999) central points is that populist actors oppose institutions and, thus, representation as these hinder the implementation of the *volonté générale*. Therefore, populist actors work against the pragmatic style of democracy. Yet, populists agree with the redemptive face of democracy because it focuses on the *vox populi vox dei* (the voice of the people is the voice of God). Ultimately, populists act in the nexus between these two faces of democracy and try to replace its two pillars with a version of democracy in which the redemptive vision is positioned at the core.

By considering the possibility that populist actors may have different and even contradictory consequences for democracy. Canovan (1999) has paved the way for many works that followed her initial publication.⁷ In their book, Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2012), for instance, contend that the role (whether in government or opposition) that populist actors take on determines what potential effects populist actors can have on (liberal) democracy (be they positive or negative).

In contrast, populist parties have strong incentives to increase mobilisation and participation, thereby potentially strengthening the quality of democracy (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012). These mobilisation efforts, for example, can result in the inclusion of disenfranchised parts of society, such as ethnic minorities (for example, indigenous groups in Latin America) and other groups (such as individuals who hold extreme political views), in the political realm (Gratius 2007). Similarly, their criticism of the political establishment can lead to higher levels of accountability and responsiveness among elites to diverse views within the electorate (Müller 2002; Heinisch 2003). Populist actors also challenge prevailing views on how democracy works (for example, by demanding the implementation of instruments of direct democracy) and, as a result, foster a discourse that forces constant review of the political mechanisms in place (Barr 2009).⁸

In government, however, populist actors can undermine mutual constraints and exclude minorities (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012). Due to their strong focus on the *volonté générale*, populists shift focus exclusively to the redemptive side of democracy (Canovan 1999). As a result, populist actors can undercut political institutions which, in their view, hinder the proper implementation of the general will. This is also reflected in the ‘anything goes’ attitude that populist actors embrace and which manifests itself in a strong Manichean discourse (Hawkins 2003: 1156). To achieve their goal of more direct implementation of the general will, populist actors have also extensively used plebiscitary measures to legitimise their efforts (Roberts 2012: 154; Walker 2008). Furthermore, while populist actors tend to include certain segments of society who have previously received less representation to increase their vote share in opposition, populists exclude other actors to secure the former’s newly gained

⁷ For an extensive response to Canovan (1999), see Ardit (2004).

⁸ Due to their strong belief in a general will of the people, populist parties propose, for instance, to expand the use of direct democratic mechanisms. Walker (2008) and Roberts (2012), for example, mention that Chávez in Venezuela actively tried to bypass political institutions in Latin America by using plebiscitary measures. Eventually, he exploited these options to change the constitution.

powers. These excluded groups comprise the former elite, while they claim that the groups who are included comprise the people (see Ruth and Hawkins in this volume).

To summarise, theoretical arguments suggest that populist actors play a dual role in democracy. However, in most instances, the effects listed above are moderated by a variety of different factors, such as the level of democratic consolidation.

Moderating Factors

Although scholars argue that the relationship between populist actors and democracy plays out irrespective of time and place, the presence of these actors does not lead to equal levels of erosion or improvement in all countries. Instead, a series of moderating factors constrain the possible effects. These include, for example, the level of democratic consolidation in a given state or the type of government of which populist actors are a part.

In their model, Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2012) propose that the level of democratic consolidation moderates the extent to which the potential effects of populist actors on the quality of democracy play out.⁹ The more consolidated democracies are, that is, the more developed political institutions are, the smaller the expected impact of populist actors on the quality of democracy (regardless of their role). For instance, in countries where a system of checks and balances is well established, populist actors in government will find it harder to reduce the strength of such a system. Empirically, comparative studies find support for this argument in Latin America (for example, Huber and Schimpf 2016b) but not in Europe (Huber and Schimpf 2016a).

Researchers who focus on populist actors in government also suggest that the extent to which populist actors influence the level of democracy in a given country depends on the type of government of which they are a part (Albertazzi 2008; Huber and Schimpf 2016a).¹⁰ They argue that the relative strength that populist actors have within the cabinet limits their overall power. In a government in which more than the minimum number of parties necessary for a majority are in the cabinet, populist parties are assumed to exert less influence because their veto power is small (as opposed to, for instance, minority governments where each cabinet member holds considerably more power). New empirical analyses in the European context support this argument (Huber and Schimpf 2016a).¹¹

Similarly, the overall power (for example, share of seats in government, number of cabinet posts) of a populist actor may be significant for the degree to which such an actor influences

9 Because populist actors do not oppose democracy per se, we shall from here on talk about their effect on the quality of democracy, which refers to the implementation of standards in accordance with the concept of (liberal) democracy (Beetham 2004). A high-quality democracy guarantees its citizens “a high degree of freedom, political equality, and popular control over public policies and policymakers through the legitimate and lawful functioning of stable institutions” (Diamond and Morlino 2005, xi).

10 This argument is not applicable to presidential systems (for example, in most Latin American states) in which power resides with a president rather than with a government carried by a majority in parliament.

11 For populist actors in government, Allred et al. (2015) also argue that, while not necessarily constrained or moderated in their effect, they need time in order to have their full effect on democracy. Consecutive terms in government, therefore, increase the extent of the negative effects on four different aspects of democracy: executive constraints, electoral quality, civil liberties and press freedom. The empirical results by Allred et al. (2015) indeed indicate that potentially erosive effects only play out after populists have been reconfirmed in office in a second election. Ruth and Hawkins (in this volume) support these findings and find similar effects for contestation and participation.

the quality of (liberal) democracy.¹² Although this point has yet to be studied in greater depth, studies of presidential power (for example, Metcalf 2000) and the power of parties in parliaments (Tsebelis 1995) highlight that, in a simple form, power leads to opportunities and influence. Initial work supports this idea and finds that more public support tends to increase opportunities for populist presidents in Latin America to erode systems of checks and balances (Ruth 2015). Given that most countries in Latin America have presidential systems in which office holders are granted extensive powers by virtue of the law, high public support and low levels of consolidation have created fertile ground for populists like Hugo Chávez to erode the system of checks and balances. In contrast, in (Western) Europe, where parliamentary systems are coupled with higher levels of democratic consolidation, populist actors have had far fewer opportunities to implement similar wide-ranging changes.

Finally, we briefly want to highlight the role of what is referred to as host ideology (Huber and Schimpf 2016c) in the context of populism. A host ideology is a set of ideas and orientations rooted in different belief systems that accompanies the populist ideational dimension, and is an inherent feature of populism. Whether populist actors are left wing or right wing, their world view, and ultimately their policy proposals, may be restricted by ideas stemming from the host ideology (see, for example, Converse 1964). In turn, this can lead to large differences in how populists relate to dimensions of the quality of democracy. This, perhaps, becomes clearest when we consider minority rights, in which case right-wing populist parties propose solutions that involve exclusion, whereas left-wing populist parties promote inclusion (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2013). These opposing views result in different ways of handling this issue.

We may conclude that the discussion of how populist actors relate to democracy has shown that while there remain contradictory views about their positive and/or negative effects, there has been a shift in the understanding of this connection. Scholars have gradually established that the relationship may be more complex than merely assuming that populist actors are either good or bad. Rather, they may have dual effects depending on their role. Additional factors, such as democratic consolidation, moderate these effects. However, this review has also shown that scholars use numerous concepts not only for the independent variable of 'populism' but also for democracy. Table 19.1 provides an overview of the different effects populist actors are seen to have on democracy. From an empirical standpoint, this raises the question of how to best measure these concepts to test arguments empirically. Therefore, in the subsequent section we discuss some of the different forms of measurement that are available. In an effort to provide a meaningful assessment, we compare these measurements based on empirical applications to a set of cases in which populist actors have been part of the government or held the presidency.

12 In particular, the share of seats held by a populist party in parliament, for instance, may be significant given that, all things being equal, a larger seat share increases the power of a party to decisively influence coalition formation and power allocation (see, for example, Austin-Smith and Banks 1988; Christensen 2016; Folke 2014).

Table 19.1: Summary of Effects

Effect	Time	Potential moderators	Dimension	Mechanism	Source
Positive	Mostly when in opposition		Increase in responsiveness, accountability	a) Putting forward important issues b) Holding government to account	van Cott 1994; DeLange and Akkerman 2012; Hawkins 2003, 1142; Heinisch 2008; Huber and Schimpf 2016c; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012, 21; Müller 2002
Positive	Mostly when in opposition	Part of society may depend on host ideology	Inclusion of excluded segments of society	Representing their interest in order to maximize vote share	van Cott 1994; Gratius 2007; Hanley 2012; Huber and Schimpf 2016c; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012, 21; Webber 2011
Positive	In government	Consecutive terms	Representation through policies	Implementing policies that were promised to achieve office	Allred et al. 2015; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012, 21; Ruth and Hawkins in this volume
Positive			Building bridges beyond class barriers	Combining interests and representing several classes	Betz 2015; Bruhn 2012, 90; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012, 21
Positive			Fostering discourse on how democracy should work	Calling for stronger direct democratic measures to implement their majoritarian worldview	Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012, 21; Papadopoulos 2002; Taggart 2002
Positive		Host ideology	Individual liberties	Depending on the host ideology, populist parties might be at odds with economic rights, religious freedoms, and individual liberties, such as the rights of LGBT people or women	Huber and Schimpf 2016c
Negative	In government	Consolidation, cabinet type, and consecutive terms	Mutual constraints	Eroding mutual constraints because they hinder the implementation of the <i>volonté générale</i> . Plebiscitary instruments are often used to implement or accelerate this development	Albertazzi and McDonnell 2008; Allred et al. 2015; Hawkins 2003; Huber and Schimpf 2016a; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012, 21; Roberts 2012; Walker 2008
Negative	In government	Consolidation, host ideology, cabinet type, and consecutive terms	Minority rights	Minority rights are undermined by applying majoritarian instruments	Allred et al. 2015; Akkerman 2012; Emerson 2011; Huber and Schimpf 2016b, 2016c; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012, 21; Rydgren 2008
Negative			Create new cleavages (populists against non-populists)	Due to their strong anti-establishment character, they thereby make the formation of stable coalitions harder	Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012, 21; Weyland 2009
Negative			Moralization of politics	Because they use a Manichean discourse to distinguish between good people and the bad elite, they make compromises and consensus extremely difficult	
Negative		Consolidation	Delegitimization of politics	Fostering plebiscitary politics undermines the legitimacy of political institutions	Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012, 21–22

Note: Empty time fields suggest that these effects can occur regardless of role or other constellations.

Empirical Strategies: Measurement and Research Designs

In this section, we want to illustrate the different kinds of empirical measures and strategies that have been used for examining how populist actors relate to democracy and the quality of democracy in particular.

Measuring populism

The measuring of populism is gaining importance, as illustrated by the increasing number of studies that seek to determine how populist particular politicians are (Jagers and Walgrave 2007; Hawkins 2009; Hawkins and Castanho Silva 2016; Pauwels 2014; Pauwels in this volume; Rooduijn and Akkerman 2015). This, of course, also has implications for the study of populism and democracy. Arguably, most would agree that any actor to which the central ideas of populism are crucial would fit well into the discussion thus far.¹³ Yet, to some populist actors, these ideas may be more central than to others. Some actors may apply populist frames more than others, which could then be measured as such (Heinisch und Mazzoleni in this volume). While both would probably fit the definition of a populist party, even along a continuous scale, actors embracing populist ideas are most likely to have a different effect on democracy than actors to whom populism is less central. The extent to which democracy is affected would arguably change, whereas the directions the effect takes would not. The challenge then lies with scholars to expand and improve on existing gradual measurements of populism to facilitate these types of analyses (for example, Hawkins and Castanho Silva 2016; Pauwels in this volume, Ruth and Hawkins in this volume).

Measuring Quality of Democracy

In this final section, we touch on existing measures for democracy and quality of democracy respectively. We focus our discussion on four measures in particular: the Liberal Democracy Index (from here on: LDI) from the Varieties of Democracy Project (Coppedge et al. 2016); the Polity IV Index (Marschall et al. 2016); the Unified Democracy Index (UDS) (Pemstein et al. 2010); and the Democracy Barometer (from here on DB; Merkel et al. 2016). We wish to highlight that this research field is characterised by the variety of methods and approaches that scholars have taken.¹⁴ To this extent, our discussions are more immediately relevant to quantitative studies. Nonetheless, the principles of measurement apply to any other approach in similar ways (Mahoney and Goertz 2006), and incorporating some of the measures below into qualitative analyses (for example, for purposes of illustration) may also strengthen authors' arguments.

13 This applies to those who conceive of populism as a thin-centred ideology where views guide actions, as well as to those who define populism as a frame that functions as a guideline for actions.

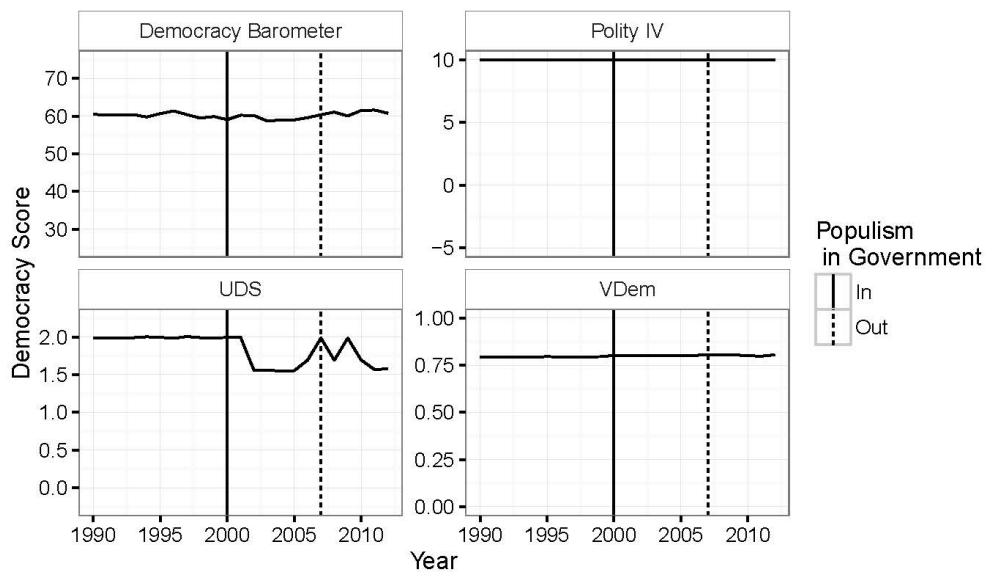
14 These include qualitative case studies (see, for example, DeLange and Akkerman 2012; Fallend 2012; Fallend and Heinisch 2016; Hawkins 2003, 2009; Heinisch 2003; Roberts 2012), comparative studies (see, for example, Akkerman and DeLange 2012; Albertazzi and Mueller 2013; Moffitt 2015; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2013) and quantitative works (Allred et al. 2016; Houle and Kenny 2016; Hawkins and Ruth in this volume; Ruth 2015).

As highlighted earlier, populism is theorised as being more at odds with liberal democracy than is the case for any other type of democracy. Thus, the question that arises is how we can assess liberal democracy and, more particularly, its quality. The LDI stands out as perhaps the clearest measurement because its underlying conception is tailored to capture solely the essential elements of liberal democracy. In contrast, the Polity IV measurement seeks to measure institutional changes. To this extent, it is, for instance, well suited to capturing changes in systems of checks and balances. This is helpful in evaluating if and how populist actors might erode the institutions they oppose. Because Polity IV focuses on mostly institutional aspects, it is unlikely to measure nuanced changes in more established democracies, such as in Western Europe.

Compared to the other two indices, the UDS and the DB are broader with regard to what they measure. The UDS essentially combines a series of existing indices into one measure. Thus, the UDS, while not aiming to capture the specifics of liberal democracy, can function as an additional source for examining the relationship between populism and democracy in slightly broader terms.

The DB measurement is not as broad as the UDS, but it is considerably more detailed than other measures, such as Polity IV (Bühlmann et al. 2012). It is based on liberal and participatory aspects of democracy (Merkel et al. 2016) and thus offers an interesting alternative to the LDI.

Figure 19.1: Democracy Scores Compared—Austria (1990–2012)



To show the difference between these four measurements descriptively, we chose four countries that were all governed by populists for some period during the last two decades: Austria (the Freedom Party of Austria), Hungary (Fidesz), Slovakia (Smer Party) and Venezuela (Hugo Chávez—Movimiento Quinta República). In Figures 19.1 through to 19.4, we illustrate the differences by comparing the timeline of the measurements within the same country. By looking at Figure 19.1, in which we compare democracy scores for Austria, where in 2000 the

right-wing populist Freedom Party entered the government in a coalition with the Christian Democrats, we can already observe some notable differences between the scores. Polity IV displays a straight line and, thus, reinforces our point that this particular measurement may be less suited to capturing nuances in consolidated democracies. For the other three measurements, we can see that while UDS measures a decrease in the quality of democracy, the LDI remains flat while the DB records a short increase, and then a decrease. For the other countries, we note similar patterns (except for Venezuela in Figure 19.4).

As is the case for Austria, Polity IV also does not show any change in the quality of democratic institutions over time for Hungary (Figure 19.2). For the first period of populist government (1998–2002), we see that the UDS and DB show similar trends (a short period of improvement followed by a period of decline), whereas the LDI shows a declining trend. However, all three measurements share the fact that, after Fidesz returned to government in 2010, all three indices measure a similar, declining trend in the quality of democracy. For Slovakia (Figure 19.3), the differences during the Smer cabinet range from decline (DB) and improvement (LDI) to an up-and-down pattern (UDS). While once again showing significant improvement early on in the timeline, Polity IV remains flat (at its maximum) during the populist government period.

Finally, we take a look at Venezuela (Figure 19.4). All four indices measure a strong decline in their respective measurements of quality of democracy after Hugo Chávez began his presidency in 1999. The Polity IV trend strengthens our point that this particular measure may be well suited to capturing institutional changes.

Figure 19.2: Democracy Scores Compared—Hungary (1990–2012)

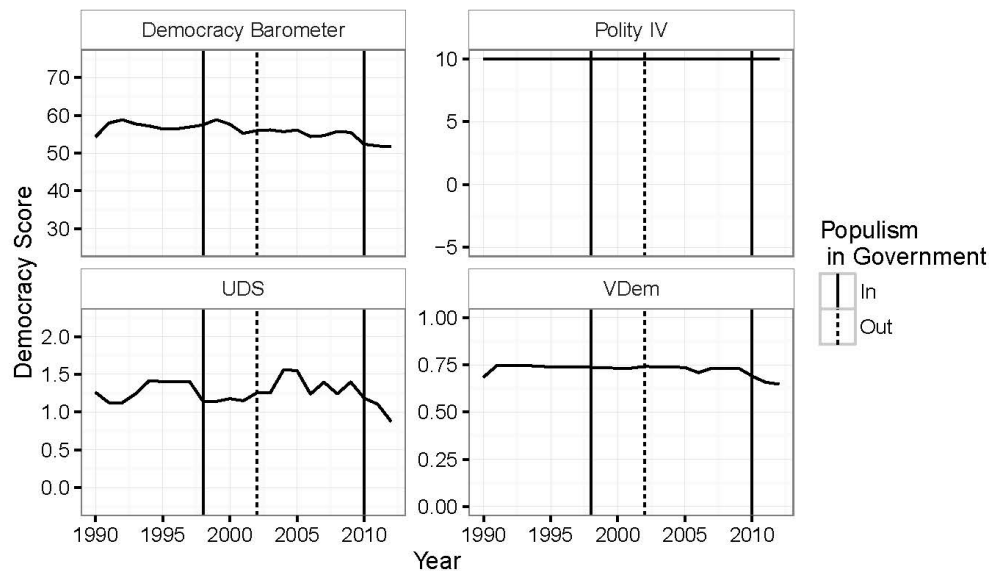


Figure 19.3: Democracy Scores Compared—Slovakia (1990–2012)

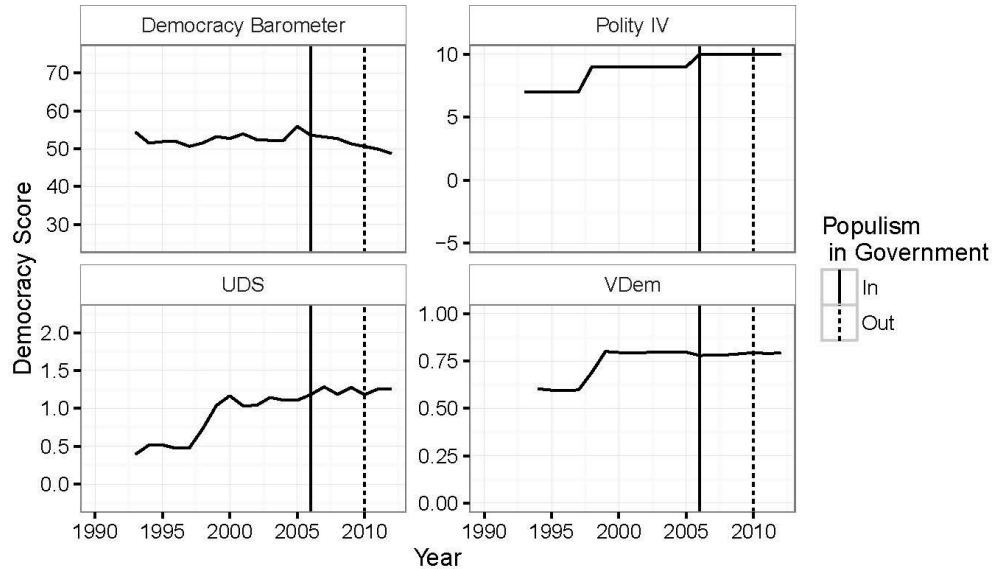
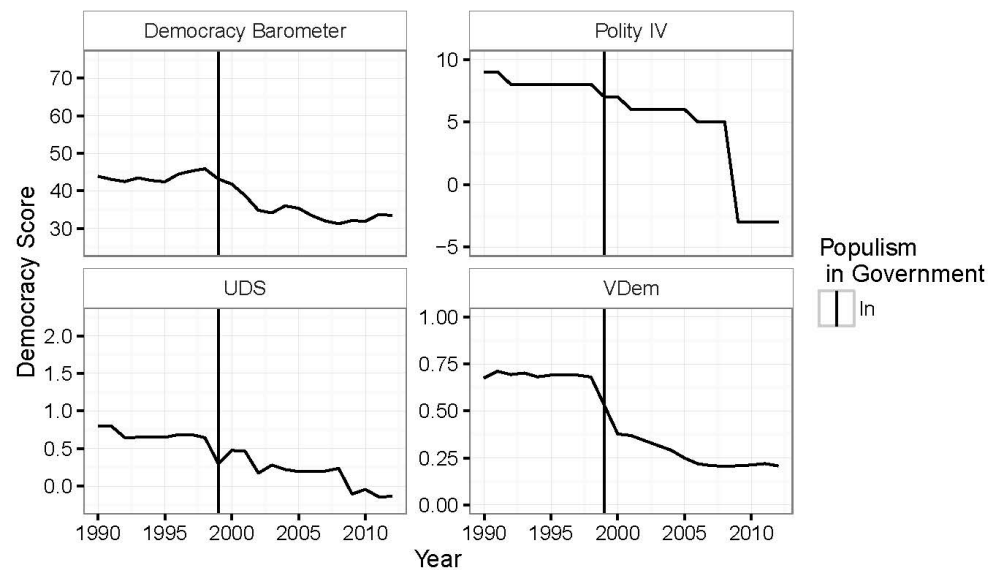


Figure 19.4: Democracy Scores Compared—Venezuela (1990–2012)



Overall, this comparison illustrates that when one is measuring the quality of democracy empirically to examine how populism relates to it, it is essential to understand the underlying concepts that different indices capture. The DB and LID exemplify that even if two measurements build on the same concept, they may still deviate in the results they show. Thus, any analysis should treat measurements with care and precision so that the applied concept of democracy aligns with the empirical measurements. Furthermore, scholars should include different indices where possible to establish an empirical line of evidence that is robust against

various theoretical, conceptual and empirical (for example, measurement error¹⁵) differences and issues.

Another possibility when examining how populist actors relate to democracy and the quality of democracy respectively is to consider democracy's various dimensions and sub-dimensions. In several studies, scholars show, for instance, how populist actors influence levels of participation (for example, Immerzeel and Pickup 2015; Houle and Kenny 2016) and institutions of horizontal accountability (for example, Allred et al. 2015). These works have used sub-dimensions of the indices to create a measure tailored to specific needs.¹⁶ Considering these aspects, rather than a large concept such as the quality of liberal democracy, opens up two possibilities that are worth pointing out. First, analyses of sub-dimensions can help us understand further nuanced differences between, for instance, different types of populist parties. By looking at the aspect of minority rights in isolation, one may wish to study how left-wing and right-wing populist parties differ in the way they can affect the quality of democracy given that both propose different visions for society (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2013; Huber and Schimpf 2016c). Second, these types of analyses can foster the tracing of causal paths in greater detail and increase the application of research designs specifically tailored towards the issue of identifying causality. Houle and Kenny (2016) examine, for instance, how populist presidents in Latin America affect the rule of law, participation in elections and redistribution. The focus on these three sub-dimensions of democracy enables the authors to apply instrumental variable estimations which, despite their well-known shortcomings (Angrist and Pischke 2009, Ch. 4), present an interesting step in the direction of causal theory testing.

Concluding Remarks and Outlook

In this chapter, we have presented and discussed academic research that deals with the question of how populist actors relate to democracy in general and liberal democracy (quality of democracy) in particular. Furthermore, we raised issues pertaining to the measurement of both key variables. Overall, our review and discussions led us to the following conclusions: First, the relationship between populist actors and democracy is considerably more nuanced, other than in cases in which populists do not oppose democracy per se. Hence, their presence may not lead to a complete breakdown or the erosion of democracy as we know it. Rather, there are numerous factors (for example, the exact role within a political system) that can influence whether populist actors erode or even enhance the quality of democracy. Second, measuring both populism but also the quality of democracy remains challenging. While researchers continue to work towards creating a reliable continuous measurement of populism, we can already choose from various options in order to measure the quality of democracy. The key is to not only choose between them, based on theoretical and conceptual grounds, but also to compare the outcomes against different measurements of the quality of democracy to validate the findings from central analyses.

15 On this point, it is well worth pointing out that measurements, such as the UDS or the LDI, provide their users with confidence intervals that allow measurement errors to be directly taken into account.

16 Huber and Schimpf (2016a) have also explored the possibility of extracting sub-dimensions from the DB to create a more specific measurement of the quality of liberal democracy.

With the results of both these theoretical and empirical studies in mind, the question is: Where do we go from here? We propose that future research should consider two points in particular: First, as has been the case for various questions related to populism, empirical studies are still limited in their scope of application with their enduring focus on Latin America and Europe in particular. These two regions are among the most interesting given their long history of populism and, by now (in some countries), fairly established populist forces. Yet, other countries, such as Australia (Mouffitt 2015), Japan (Mizuno and Phongpaichit 2009) or Zambia (Resnick 2015) have seen populist actors come and go as well. This raises the question of to what extent existing theories and arguments are applicable to these cases and, if they are not, what we can learn from them. Second, our discussion of measurements implies that not only can different indices lead to slightly different results, but also that there is much to explore in terms of the sub-dimensions of these contexts. For good reasons, initial studies have focused on democracy in general; however, we still know very little about how (different) populist parties relate to specific sub-dimensions of democracy. Exploring these mechanisms can further strengthen our theoretical understanding and empirical knowledge about the ambivalent relationship between populism and democracy.

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CHAPTER 20:

THE GENDER DIMENSION OF POPULISM

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Introduction

Notwithstanding abundant literature on populists' electoral success, their organisations and their impact on political discourse, public policy, party systems, as well as democracy more broadly, research on the relationship between populism and gender remains underdeveloped in both theoretical and empirical terms. This is due to two key shortcomings: First, our empirical knowledge is both scant and scattered. Discussions of existing works either focus exclusively on right-wing populist parties (RPPs) (for example, Mudde 2007), or, when they do include left-wing populist parties (LPPs), they limit themselves to a specific region (for example, Kampwirth 2010a). Second, recent attempts towards the integration of evidence from both poles of the ideological spectrum and across global regions are confined to ideology (for example, Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2015). To date, no study has attempted a more holistic discussion of populism and gender that includes populist parties' leaders, candidates, members and voters. With this chapter, we take a first step in this direction.

Based on Heinisch and Mazzoleni's conceptual framework, this chapter explores the relationship between gender and populism and understands it as intrinsically ambivalent claims diffused by individual and collective actors in order to challenge the status quo in favour of people's empowerment and elite change (ibid. in this volume). We begin by formulating some broad, empirically testable expectations regarding populism's gender dimension, which frame our discussion of the literature. As we will show below, gender can act as a dependent or an independent variable in empirical analyses of populism.

Firstly, the populist gender model is likely to contain contradictory ideas. Although the inconsistency of the discursive frame may be electorally effective, it may also lead to unintended policy consequences in populist politics for women's empowerment – which concern the relationship between populist discourse and practice (Heinisch and Mazzoleni, in this volume).

Secondly, the question of whether populists' challenging of the status quo will translate into the promotion of gender equality depends upon how gender corresponds to populists' Manichean division between 'the people' and/or 'the elite'. Based on a homogeneous interpretation of the notion of people, populist parties might not differentiate between genders and thus not devote particular attention to any of them. Alternatively, populists are unlikely to pursue radical change in gender relations if feminism is regarded as part and parcel of an educated, privileged elite. However, if women are perceived as part of the *populus* (and especially of the marginalised, formerly excluded social groups) populists are likely to try to mobilise them, for example by incorporating gender aspects into their ideology and policy proposals. The kind of issues populists will choose to emphasise may, in turn, impact on populists' appeal to women or repel them as voters.

Which specific gender models and issues are likely to be integrated into populists' ideology and policies, and how? These choices are likely to be context-dependent, given macro level developments in gender equality and in broader policy domains that affect women, for instance, the economy. Hence, populists' relationships with gender and specific issues are likely to vary according to differences in opportunity structures – what Heinisch and Mazzoleni label as 'exogenous conditions' (societal and cultural change, institutional conditions, and so on). Hence, variation can manifest itself both within a country (or a region with similar characteristics, for example, Scandinavia) over time¹, and across countries (or regions).

Furthermore, the kind of gender issues integrated into populist frames may also vary across ideological camps. In their competition against other parties, populists on the right and left are likely to tie gender to the issue frames in which they have a good reputation². For instance, parties on the right are likely to link it to immigration, security, tradition and culture, while parties on the left are likely to connect it to social change, social justice and inclusion.

However, if leadership is highly individualistic (as is the case with many populist parties), gender models and the kind of discursive frame promoted by populist parties may be strongly dependent upon the views of a single person, such as the leader, and how she or he relates to gender—which is linked to populism's 'individual dimension' (Heinisch and Mazzoleni, in this volume).

At the same time, gender may also feature among the key characteristics of the populist actor in the sense that specific gender models may facilitate or hinder the conversion of non-political capital into political capital (*ibid.*). Indeed, if populism concerns the politics of personality, then it has always been about gender and specific models of masculinity³ and femininity (Kampwirth 2010a: 1).

In addition, the relationship between populism and gender may be influenced by the extent to which populist organisations open up space to women as activists, members, candidates and leaders. This connects to what Heinisch and Mazzoleni label the 'collective dimension' of populism, which concerns intra-party democracy and resources. The role gender plays within the populist organisation, for example, involving women on the ground and/or increasing the presence of women in the party's central and public offices, may impact on the way populists are perceived by the electorate and/or the press, and may also affect their appeal to female voters.

Finally, whether populists are in government or in opposition matters for how gender and populism can be analysed. While in the latter case, analysis is inevitably limited to party ideology and discourse, in the former case, research can also examine how gender plays out in policy programmes and/or assess the consequences of populist politics and governance for women's emancipation and their professional advancement.

1 In Latin America, populism can be divided into three waves: classic populism (left-wing, redistributive), neo-populism (neo-liberalist) and radical populism (left-wing, against neo-liberalism but with fewer resources than classic populism). These engaged with gender differently, not only due to their underlying ideology but also because each was facing a different wave of feminism (Kampwirth 2010a).

2 See Lefkofridi and Michel (2017) about how radical right parties tie the issue of welfare expansion to an anti-immigrant frame.

3 Examples of such models used by populist leaders in their campaigns include, among others, the athlete, the military man and the father figure (Kampwirth 2010a: 10).

With these expectations in mind, we attempt the first comprehensive overview of nascent research on gender and populism and seek answers to the following questions:

- How do populists relate to gender?
- What kind of roles does gender play in their ideology, policies and organisations?
- Does left/right populism question the traditional roles of women as mothers and wives?
- Do populists promote female leadership and candidacies?
- To what extent does electoral support of and activism for populist parties exhibit gendered patterns?

In pursuit of these questions, we review existing knowledge and synthesise the insights gained from analyses on the populist left and right across the world.

In what follows, we begin by discussing how gender plays out in the ideology and policy programmes of populist parties, along with a critical assessment of the impact of populist politics on women's emancipation. We proceed to the relationship between populism and women's political engagement, whereby we discuss female members, activists, candidates and leaders of populist organisations. Next, we examine gender differences in electoral support for populist parties. In conclusion, we identify the key gaps in knowledge in the field and suggest directions for future research.

Gender in Populists' Ideology and Policy Programmes

Most studies of the gender dimension of populist ideology, policy agendas and discourse focus on the populist right, while few study left-wing populist parties, and even fewer examine both (Rousseau 2010; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2015). With regard to geographic scope, the bulk of scholarship concerns successful RPPs in Northern and/or Central Europe⁴ (Townsend et al. 2014; De Lange and Mügge 2015; Akkerman and Hagelund 2007); only a small body of research examines Latin American neo-populism (for example, Sosa-Buchholz 2010; Rousseau 2010). In what follows, we review these works in an effort to understand how populists relate to gender; we are particularly interested in their underlying gender models and images of women, and whether they challenge traditional gender relations.

Populist Right-wing Parties in Western Europe

Contrary to scholarship that relies on the assumption that RPPs regard women as inferior to men without empirically scrutinising it (for example Mudde 2007), recent studies of the extent to which RPPs' ideology and discourse is gendered adopt a systematic empirical approach. Analyses of gender-related issues (such as equality, abortion and homosexuality) document an ambiguous relationship between RPPs and gender. Examinations of parties' official documents and manifestos produce three key findings:

⁴ At the time of writing and to the best of our knowledge, no well-grounded empirical studies exist which analyse the US presidential election 2016 from a gender perspective. Therefore, since this chapter seeks to review existing research and point to avenues for future research, we will not address this election directly. The success of the populist leader Donald Trump, however, underscores again the importance and topicality of the gender dimension of populism.

First, RPPs tend to be more traditional than conservative parties. Most authors echo Akkerman's (2015) findings about RPPs' support of (large) families and opposition to same-sex marriage and abortion. Second, however, there is important variation within the RPP family. For instance, the Austrian FPÖ articulates more conservative positions on family issues than its Norwegian and Danish counterparts (Meret and Siim 2012). Moreover, a comparative analysis of RPPs and neo-liberal populists in the Netherlands and Flanders shows that some parties (for example, *Partij voor de Vrijheid* (PVV)) exhibit more modern views on gender equality than others (for example, *Parti Centrum Partij*'86/CP'86) (De Lange and Mügge 2015). Few parties even seem to defend same-sex partnerships (for example, *Dansk Folkeparti* (DPP) , see Meret and Siim 2012).

Third, though gender issues' salience in most RPPs' manifestos (for example, *Front National* (FN) , *Vlaams Belang* (VB)) was in decline in the 2000s (Akkerman 2015); more recently the latter paid renewed attention to gender issues within the framework of their anti-immigration agenda. Gender issues are—often exclusively—linked to the overarching subject of immigration (mostly from Muslim countries), and the notion of multiculturalism and/or integration (Townes, Karlsson, and Eyre 2014). In this context, RPPs even pose as champions of women's rights and gender equality condemning religious practices (for example, veils, headscarves) as discrimination against women (Akkerman and Hagelund 2007; see also Meret and Siim 2012). They use the presupposed unequal status of women in Muslim countries to emphasise the clash of civilisations between Islam and the West (Meret and Siim 2012, Irvine and Lilly 2007). For instance, the FPÖ's discourse portrays Muslims as pre-modern and Muslim men in particular as oppressors, who endanger Austrian society (Mayer, Ajanovic, and Sauer 2014).

What should we make of these inherent tensions in the commitment of RPPs to gender equality? Does the packaging of conservative views in liberal rhetoric (which appears to be a common feature across RPPs) signify a repositioning towards more liberal positions? RPPs' revived interest in gender issues should not be interpreted as signalling change from conservatism towards liberalism. In fact, RPPs remain deeply traditionalist and conservative parties, and their rhetorical support for liberal principles only seldom translates into concrete policy proposals that foster gender equality. These parties' "Janus face" (Akkerman 2015: 56) reflects somewhat conflicting appearances in different policy areas and points towards a rather instrumentalised commitment to liberalism, which is confined to their anti-immigration agenda. Importantly, gender framing by RPPs is consistent with our understanding of populism as "intrinsically ambivalent".

Studies of RPPs are also instructive regarding possible interactions between endogenous and exogenous conditions and the credibility of the claims' maker as a change agent in the given context (Heinisch and Mazzoleni, in this volume). Contextual (cultural and ideological) factors matter: the social setting in which they attempt to be electorally successful affects the language these parties use. Thus, to understand the fuzziness of RPPs' gender discourse, we must consider that most case studies concern RPPs in advanced liberal democracies (for example, Northern Europe). At its core, RPPs' conservative stance relies on freedom of choice arguments (for example, Mayer et al. 2014), whereby a 'genuinely free' choice for women requires more support for the traditional family. RPPs are, accordingly, critical of a state whose policies support women with jobs and careers but does not undertake action against economic constraints that 'force' women into the labour force in the first place. For example, the Sweden Democrats critically discuss the idea of gender equality (understood as pay gap, underrepre-

sensation of women etc.) in most contexts, except for immigration or multiculturalism (Towns et al. 2014).

Populist Left-wing Parties in Latin America

Research in the less liberal Latin American context reveals that even a backwards movement regarding women's actual standing in society is possible, when RPPs in power shift their ideology towards more traditionalist positions (González-Rivera 2010). Contrary to previous Nicaraguan right-wing governments (for example, National Liberal Party, 1930s-1970s) that had fostered female employment, the Alemán administration (Constitutionalist Liberal Party, 1997-2002) was heavily influenced by socially conservative (and Catholic fundamentalist) forces in the US and thus placed more importance on family values. However, as we will discuss below, leftist populism in Latin America also seems to be deeply inculcated by the same family model and gender norms (for example, women are homemakers and men are breadwinners).

To begin with, Latin America's classic leftist populism challenged neither machismo nor the status quo of gender inequality and had little to do with feminists, who, according to Eva Perón, belong to "another race of women" (Grammático 2010: 128). Although LPPs do assign women the role of crucial agents of social change and popular mobilisation, they do so by hailing them as mothers.

Early populist regimes (for example, Juan Perón in Argentina, Lázaro Cárdenas in Mexico and Getúlio Vargas in Brazil) developed a maternalist ideology that was—similarly to the European populist right—characterised by many contradictions. It aimed at reproductive control over women, while using them in economic terms and as agents of development (Fernandes 2010). Under the Mexican President Lázaro Cárdenas (1930s), for example, it was development imperatives (rather than the desire to promote women's emancipation) that problematised gender relations. Not surprisingly, the resulting policy programmes preserved gender differences, such as fixed family responsibilities or standards of sexual behaviour (Olcott 2010: 31–32).

Besides this, populists in the 1930s linked their advocacy of both women's rights (including women's suffrage) and policies that benefitted women specifically to motherhood. What qualified women to take part in political life was precisely their maternal role (Grammático (2010, 129). To be part of the 'people', women in Juan Perón's Argentina (1946–1955) had to demonstrate "self-abnegation, sacrifice, love, and selflessness, all of which were tied up with the image of the mother" (Grammático 2010: 128). Furthermore, the labour policy promoted by the Brazilian President Getúlio Vargas (in office 1930–1945), which included the obligation for factories' to provide separate spaces for women to nurse their babies, was based on his ideological conviction that womanhood and, especially, motherhood were "goods that need state protection" (Wolfe 2010: 79).

During the 1970s, women's role as cultural tradition keepers and unpaid producers of industrial labour force was preserved (for example, compare the Cardenas and Echeverria administrations; Olcott 2010). In Nicaragua, the leader of the Sandinistas not only endorsed the 'protection model' of gender relations, which essentially confined women's emancipation to a more

‘effective’ performance of their traditional roles, but even sided with the Catholic Church on the issue of abortion (Kampwirth 2010b).

The case of the Sandinistas under Ortega is very instructive for the broader study of gender and populism also because it manifests a transition from revolutionary to populist politics, whereby the models of masculinity and femininity shift as Sandinista politics becomes increasingly populist (*ibid.*). Kampwirth (2010b: 163–4) argues that the connection of a revolutionary agenda, an agenda of social justice and social change to one individual (populist leadership) may undermine feminist gains for two reasons: first, the agenda narrows as the leadership of the movement moves from being more collective to more individual; second, the shift from collective revolutionary leadership to individual leadership of one person and his immediate family results in the fate of women becoming dependent upon the views of that one person.

Ultimately, conventional models of gender relations carried on into the new millennium and contemporary left populists’ gender discourse remains inconsistent, though it is now tied to different frames. Bolivian President Evo Morales (Movimiento al Socialismo/MAS, 2006) uses a strong anti-colonial tone, whereby gender inequality becomes a means with which to blame Bolivia’s social problems on colonial influences (Rousseau 2010). Machismo (and consequently gender inequality) are considered foreign to Andean culture and ‘imported’ from the imperialists—similarly to European RPPs that warn against Muslims importing gender inequality. At the same time, however, Morales refers to women as symbols of motherhood, affection and honesty as well as family unity—in the Catholic sense of being self-sacrificing for the sake of the family (Rousseau 2010).

Due to the changing relationships between labour and capital, contemporary populism’s maternalist ideology is “no longer rooted in developmentalist concerns of labour discipline” (Fernandes 2010, 206). Latent ideological constructs in the Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez’s (1999–2002) rhetoric portray women as nurturers and caregivers (Fernandes 2010), whereas his emphasis on “women’s rights as a marginalised group” is restrained to both socialism and his own image as “the liberator of women”, who values “their sacrifices and struggles to care for their families and communities” (Espina and Rakowski 2010: 192). In Chávez’s view, Venezuela needs ‘revolutionary mothers’ to advance social change (*ibid.*). While a subset of Chavista discourse and symbols is developed especially for women, its ideas are diverse and conflicting: women should act as self-sacrificing housewives and as leaders and volunteers in community projects (Espina and Rakowski 2010: 197).

To summarise, existing research reveals that when gender issues are emphasised, they aim at preserving the image of women as mothers, caregivers and homemakers rather than advancing feminist demands. Right and left populism focuses on feminine, rather than feminist issues. As long as the utilisation of gender serves populists’ ideology and policy purposes in other domains (for example, immigration and development) they integrate it into their discourse and policy programmes—though often in contradictory ways. Although not necessarily fundamental to their ideological profile, gender is undoubtedly instrumentalised by both right and left populist parties.

Populist Politics and Women's Political Engagement

Women exhibit different patterns of political engagement in populist politics. While some are involved with RPPs or LPPs as members and activists, others assume more visible roles as candidates, representatives or party leaders. These diverse forms of support are reflected by the few existing studies in this field, which we review in the following.

Female Members and Activists of Populist Parties

Literature on female activists and members of populist parties reveals that even if populists do not challenge conventional gender models, they do try to mobilise women. The inherent tensions in their ideology, discourse and policies, however, may prove consequential for women's emancipation. In this regard, research on Latin American populists in power provides critical insights into populists' impact on women as political actors. Though neither RPPs nor LPPs in Latin America intended to advance a truly 'progressive' gender agenda, they opened up opportunities for women to respond to their political exclusion. Women's emancipation often came as a side effect of populist politics and policies (Kampwirth 2010a).

As Grammatico (2010) shows, in Argentina, the Montoneros⁵ created the front *Agrupación Evita* (Evita Group) to use women's nurturing and caretaking capacities. Despite Peronism's dismissal of feminism, women's experience as political activists in *Agrupación Evita*—an organisation that did not intend to emancipate them—led women to question their roles and re-think the relations between men and women in daily life and politics (Grammatico 2010: 138).

Similarly, in the Mexican case, the Cardenas (1930s) and Echeverria (1970s) administrations encouraged women leagues but could not stop the tide: women organised themselves to articulate specific demands that went beyond what populists had imagined. Instead of confining themselves to wage, labour and population control, as envisioned, women demanded sexual rights and alleviation of their unpaid labour obligations (Olcott 2010). In sum, the social order that the populists' ambivalent (maternalist) ideology represented enabled women to critically reflect on their social status and to react to their political marginalisation. Despite populists' unwillingness to alter conventional gender norms in many Latin American countries, they could not control how women exploited the new opportunities presented to them.

Turning to the literature on membership, women's engagement in populist party organisations in Europe suffers from a lack of reliable information. While gender-focused research on RPPs and LPPs' membership is generally scant, an overview of women's role in five European RPPs during the 1980s and 1990s is provided by Amesberger and Halbmayer (2002). More recent studies focus on the individual level: based on interviews with party insiders, they explore women's positions in RPPs. Félix (2015) studies female activists in the Hungarian Jobbik and the Greek Golden Dawn. In both cases, female members played a prominent role in the mobilisation of new supporters and female voters. Crucially, these parties' 'far right' image was moderated by their female members, who helped the party place itself closer to the mainstream.

⁵ A revolutionary organisation tied to Peron while he was in exile in Madrid.

The ambivalence observed in populist discourse at the party and leadership levels is reflected in the ideological tensions faced by RPPs' female activists. Petterson's (2015) analysis of female politicians' discourse in Swedish and Finnish RPPs reveals a smouldering conflict between their somewhat feminist positions and their parties' ideological stances. The RPPs' female activists' ambivalent discourse exposes a double standard (Bacchetta and Power (2013). Scrinzi's (2014) study of female politicians in the Italian Lega Nord and the French FN further indicates that their self-conception can indeed be anti-feminist and pro-women's rights at the same time. They advocate certain rights for women, but not universally—rather, they demand them exclusively for the women of 'their community'—thus promoting "exclusive solidarity" (Lefkofridi and Michel 2017).

Latin American populists made efforts to recruit women through programmes they launched and organisations they specifically founded for this purpose. Venezuela provides a contemporary example of women's successful recruitment. Although no data on the exact percentage of women participating in the programmes introduced by the Chávez administration (for example, *casas alimentarias*, soup kitchens) are available, the large majority of participants in health committees were women⁶ (Fernandes 2010: 210), and they were the main beneficiaries of the educational *misiones*⁷ (social policy outreach programmes) (Espina and Rakowski 2010: 190). Also, two main national organisations targeted women for participation under Chavista populism: the *Inamujer* (the state women's institute) and *Banmujer* (the women's bank)⁸ (Espina and Rakowski 2010: 190–1).

Female Candidates and Leadership of Populist Parties

Another aspect of women's participation and engagement in populist parties relates to their more active roles as candidates, representatives and party leaders. Although female party leadership is a rare phenomenon, some European RPPs are or were led by women, including the German Alternative für Deutschland (AFD) (Frauke Petry), the Danish DF (Pia Kjaersgaard), the French FN (Marine Le Pen), the Norwegian Fremskrittspartiet FrP (Siv Jensen) and the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) (Susanne Riess-Passer and Ursula Haubner). This implies that populist leadership can by no means be considered an exclusively male affair.

Furthermore, Konstadinova and Mikulska's (2015) study of Bulgaria and Poland challenges a common hypothesis in the field of gender and politics, namely that left-wing parties promote female candidates more than other parties. They find that big populist parties in Bulgaria and Poland managed to elect more women to the national legislature than the main leftist parties, and did much better in ranking women high on the list. The fate of female candidates is, however, entirely in leaders' hands due to these parties' centralised organisations (see Heinisch and Mazzoleni on the 'collective dimension' of populism). Women are promoted if the leader is sympathetic to nominating them; this implies that leadership change (or a change of strategy of the same leader) could alter female candidates' chances of nomination and success (Kon-

⁶ Based on her own fieldwork.

⁷ For example, 75 per cent of participants in Caracas were women, while the 'madres de Barrio' programme (targeting women exclusively) included hundreds of thousands of women (Espina and Rakowski 2010: 190).

⁸ In mid-2008 the *Inamujer* website placed the number of the *puntos de encuentro* (encounter points, for instance groups of three to five women) at 17,761, and the number of women organised in *puntos* at 177,610 (Espina and Rakowski 2010: 190–1).

stadinova and Mikulska 2015). Populism is not necessarily a masculine characteristic, as Coniff's (2010: 120) research into the Brazilian case suggests. However, female populists are to be found primarily in the lower echelons of government than at the top—and this is perhaps because of the difficulties women face in competitive politics in general.

The importance of the personal opinions of the leader in the relationship between gender and populist politics common to LPPs and RPPs is evident in the case of Bolivian MAS' President Morales. He increased the presence of women in politics by appointing a number of female ministers and successfully introducing gender parity as a principle on party lists for the constituent assembly election (Rousseau 2010: 156). Also, despite stark opposition from key political parties, including his own, the Peruvian neo-populist President Alberto Fujimori reformed the electoral code, mandating that one quarter of party candidates for congress and municipal elections be women (Rousseau 2010: 145). Although he cultivated a masculine image by surrounding himself with the lightly dressed female dancers on stage during his political rallies, he appointed more women as ministers, vice ministers or to other high executive positions in state agencies than any Peruvian ruler. Fujimori gave both female ministers and congresswomen a higher profile, and these women, in turn, became his most fervent defenders and helped him appeal to women's motherly concerns (such as security). Their gender allowed them to claim that they truly understood mothers' needs (Rousseau 2010). Hence, populist parties' ambivalence may not only concern ideological inconsistency but also incongruity between the leadership's gender-related images and their practices.

While male populist party leaders strongly affect the success of female candidates, they also use their mothers, wives and daughters electorally, for example, as female symbols intended to influence their election campaigns (Conniff 2010: 120). A famous example is the wife of Juan Perón, Eva. Her role as a politically active and important woman was connected to the image of the beauty queen, the mother and wife, and she always emphasised that Juan Perón was everything and she was nothing (Grammático 2010: 128).⁹

Perception of Female Leaders of Populist Parties

A related question concerns the ways female populist leaders are perceived by their party base, the general public and the press; and whether they are judged differently compared to their male counterparts. In patriarchal societies, as is the case in Latin America, the presumption that men are better leaders is not surprising. Coniff's (2010) research on Brazil indicates that when discussing populist leadership, ordinary individuals made family analogies in which the president (for example, Vargas) was represented as the *father figure* of the country and the citizens as his children. Besides the father figure, other models used by populist leaders in their campaigns include, among others, the athlete, the military man, the Catholic priest or even Jesus Christ himself, who comes to 'save' the people (Kampwirth 2010a: 10).

Crucially, however, women have a much harder time getting leadership roles (not only in politics but also in business), and when they do, they are often harshly judged for their performance. This is because, based on gender stereotypes, they are assumed to be compassionate and soft, while leadership requires 'toughness'. This has two consequences: first, women are

⁹ Eva Peron never held elected office but headed the campaign for women's rights that led to women's enfranchisement in 1947. She founded the Partido Peronista Femenino (1949), which was opposed to feminism (Grammático 2010: 127).

assumed to be less fit for leadership; second, if women are tough leaders, they are judged harshly because they do not conform to the gender stereotype, which expects them to be gentle and kind. To be successful, female leaders have to constantly find a balance between images of masculinity and femininity.

One of the scarce in-depth studies in this field (Meret 2015) concerns Pia Kjærsgaard, who headed the Danish right-wing People's Party from 1995 to 2012. Though her populist style and rhetoric did not seem to differ significantly from those of her past or contemporary male colleagues, some female gendered elements were clearly overemphasised and often reproduced both in the party literature, in official and non-official biographies and in the mainstream press. On the one hand, she displays a "professional, hard core and despotic leadership" in the public political sphere; on the other hand, she shows a "motherly, ordinary, over-emotional and straightforward" image of the 'private Pia'—both a woman and a mother (Meret 2015: 101). This last gendered construct aimed at compensating for her authoritarian, bureaucratic and, in some cases, tyrannical leadership style.

Gender and Electoral Support for Populist Parties

Women's electoral support for populist parties varies strongly according to the political orientation of the parties and the region under scrutiny. While left-wing populist parties in Latin America enjoy strong support among female voters, men still constitute the majority of voters of right-wing populist parties in Western Europe. The subsequent part of this chapter discusses these different trends.

Electoral Support for Left-wing Populist Parties in Latin America

Peruvian women's enthusiastic support for the neo-populist Alberto Fujimori is assumed to be related to his promotion of women in politics (Rousseau 2010: 147). His women-friendly strategy proved to be fruitful electorally: after 1995 the percentage of his female supporters increased consistently compared to the percentage of his male supporters. In contrast, Sosa-Buchholz (2010) suggests that women's (and men's) support for Velasco Ibarra in Ecuador was based on purely utilitarian motivations. Ibarra's populism used political clientelism with the result that men and women got rewards for their support (for instance, electricity, potable water); also, while men got jobs, women got education, which also led to employment (Sosa-Buchholz 2010: 48).

The Radical Right Gender Gap in Western Europe

However, research on support for European RPPs reveals that these parties still mostly appeal to men (such as, for example, the FPÖ in the second run-off of the Austrian Presidential election in 2016), a phenomenon labelled "the Radical Right Gender Gap" (Givens 2004). This debate is distinguished by a case-selection bias: while France, the Netherlands and Belgium

have been extensively studied, other—especially South Eastern European and Balkan—countries have often been neglected.

Accounts of this gap rely on differences between male and female voters with regard to socio-structural characteristics such as age, education, occupation and religiosity. To begin with, men are overrepresented in the industrial sector, where blue collar workers are more directly affected by the negative consequences of globalisation (Givens 2004). As the structure of occupation is changing, however, women in precarious part-time jobs may be as vulnerable as men in the industrial sector (Mayer 2015). Furthermore, religiosity matters because Christian churches mostly denounce RPPs' anti-immigrant stances, thus discouraging their—mostly female—followers from supporting RPPs (Sineau 2004; Mayer 2015). Although the aforementioned socio-structural variables exert some influence, their effect varies across countries; crucially, none of them fully explains the gender gap.

More recent works assume that men and women differ with regard to their policy attitudes and positioning on those issues, which are important for RPP support, such as immigration or dissatisfaction with politics (cf. Spierings and Zaslove 2015). Research that combines socio-structural explanations and attitudes produces mixed findings (de Bruijn and Veenbrink 2012; Fontana et al. 2006), while often pointing towards other influential factors (Rippeyoung 2007), for example RPPs' programmatic appeal (Johns et al. 2011); their extremist or outsider image, which could repel female voters (Immerzeel et al. 2015); RPPs' ideological distance from other rightist parties (Harteveld et al. 2015) and the existence of a viable conservative alternative (Montgomery 2015). To date, however, this debate remains inconclusive.

Latest research demonstrates the gender gap narrowed in the 2012 French presidential election (Mayer 2015), which is likely due to the FN's leadership change (from father to daughter) and the party's normalisation strategy (see also Mayer 2013). The evolution of the gap in French politics raises the question of which factors can account for change over time and whether or not similar processes are underway in other countries.

To the best of our knowledge, no inquiry specifically devotes itself to the gender aspects of support for the populist left. Yet, some studies draw interesting conclusions regarding what influences women's support for leftist populists. For example, Coniff's (2010) fieldwork in Brazil shows that Ivete Vargas and Heloisa Helena functioned as role models that attracted women voters and opened up spaces for them in the administration. Interviewees also concurred that physical appearance does sway voters, perhaps women more than men; gender characteristics (masculinity, femininity) influence how the public perceives populists (Coniff 2010: 120).

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have tried to chart the nascent field of gender and populism by looking at right- and left-wing populist parties and their governments. This field is not only underdeveloped, but it is also uneven, with LPPs being less examined than RPPs. We discussed the role of gender in populists' ideology, discourse and policy programmes, their organisations (from the lowest to the highest ranks) and their electoral support (gender gap). Our review reveals that

the gender dimension of populism is highly complex and rather unexplored (Meret and Siim 2012). In what follows, we point to the specific gaps we have identified.

Firstly, the debate about gender issues in populist parties' ideological profiles remains inconclusive. For some scholars, they constitute fundamental characteristics of RPPs' ideology and contribute to their electoral appeal (Kitschelt and McGann 1995; Akkerman 2015), while for others they are unimportant to the concept of populism (Mudde 2007; Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2015). Most, however, agree that RPPs recently tend to devote less attention to family policies and more to gender inequality tied to immigration. Crucially, the populists under study (European RPPs and Latin American LPPs) have an uneasy relationship with feminism; though the advancement of women's empowerment is not part of their ideology, the ambivalence of their ideology, discourse and policies may result in feminist gains.

Yet, we lack studies of contemporary left-wing populism beyond Latin America (for example, SYRIZA in Greece, Podemos in Spain) and on right-wing populism beyond Europe (for example, Donald Trump in the US context; for an overview of contemporary populism in the US see Vergari, this volume).

For this purpose, future research should employ a comparative approach to research: first, both poles of the political spectrum and, second, populist vs. non-populist parties. Perhaps populist parties' engagement with gender may differ less from the mainstream than typically assumed. Moreover, we need a robust theoretical framework (including novel hypotheses) about why and how ideologies are gendered. In this context, we should question our assumption about a fixed set of women's interests and preferences. Current research is limited to traditional women's issues, such as family policies or abortion, but does not include women's preferences in other policy areas.

Secondly, we lack research on RPPs' and LPPs' members and activists due to the absence of reliable numbers and data sources for their shares of female membership. Large comparative studies are, to date, absent. Single case studies are instructive but allow us neither to generalise nor to assess whether and how RPP and LPP membership differs from other parties. Why would 'populist women' be different?

Furthermore, it would be appealing to conduct comparisons between populist and non-populist parties, as well as between the populist right and left, regarding the percentages of women nominated on their electoral lists, included in their cabinets and so on. As the tiny amount of research literature on gender and LPPs concentrates mostly on Latin America, we lack knowledge of European left-wing populist parties, such as the Greek SYRIZA or the Spanish Podemos. These cases are crucial to our understanding of LPPs because they operate in a much more liberal context compared to Latin America. Both SYRIZA¹⁰ and Podemos¹¹ do not seem to promote women more strongly within their cabinet or electoral lists compared to other parties—despite their self-proclaimed mission to bring about radical social change.

Thirdly, research should pay more attention to the models of gender relations and images of femininity and masculinity constructed and practiced by party leaders. The field would greatly benefit from comparisons between female populists (for example, Marine Le Pen and Siv

10 SYRIZA is in government together with the populist right ANEL (Independent Greeks) since 2015, and women constitute only 17.5 per cent of their cabinet.

11 Compared to other Spanish parties, Podemos nominated more women than men in total; however, only 19 per cent of those female candidates were at the top of their electoral lists in 2016.

Jensen) and their male counterparts given that their leadership styles and gendered representations seem to have significantly contributed to the profiling of populist parties (Meret 2015, 102). Again, current examples, such as the 2016 presidential elections in the US or the race for the French presidential chair, provide fertile ground on which to analyse not only the ideological dimension of populism and gender but also to what extent the campaigns of candidates belonging to different poles of the political spectrum are gendered and try to appeal to women.

Last but not least, more work is needed on what explains electoral support for populists; very few studies investigate the development of the gender gap over time, while many (for instance, Eastern European) countries still remain uncharted territory. Similarly, Donald Trump's unforeseen electoral success in the 2016 presidential election fuels the debate on how a candidate managed to attract a large section of female voters despite or precisely because of his misogynist attitude. Thus, the success of populist parties amongst women voters proves to be a promising avenue for new studies.

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CHAPTER 21:

THE BODY IN POPULISM

Paula Diehl

Introduction

The body is one of the most effective instruments in political representation. It is the physical support for political performances since it enables the politician to speak, to gesticulate and to produce facial expressions. In so doing, the body is an ideal medium for activating emotions and producing identification. The Greeks paid particular attention to the role of the body in politics and dedicated an important place in rhetoric to it: the art of persuasion. Without the body, politicians cannot speak; they can neither show their emotions nor prove authenticity; and they face difficulty in providing their audience with identification. In a mass media society, where body images play a crucial role in political communication, politicians' bodies are more important than ever. It is impossible to dissociate political messages from the bodies of the actors who express them.

In populism, the body has a particular function. It activates emotions and identification, as in conventional political rhetoric, but it also takes on an additional meaning: the body is the medium by which the leader demonstrates her or his popular belonging to the people she or he claims to represent. This is particularly important, since the opposition between the people and the elite is a central feature of populism. In the populist view, the leader is supposed to belong to the people and to build an unmediated relationship with them. This similarity to the people and direct contact to them are in themselves political messages because populists claim to disrupt the power of the elite and return it to the people. Populist communication emphasises this message by insisting on the popular roots of the leader and her/his capacity to represent the people by similarity. The body works as the most important evidence of the politician's popular belonging. It is the major medium with which to affirm the special attachment between the leader and the people he or she claims to represent. Such a use of the body has serious implications for democratic representation. It establishes a special kind of mirror representation, since the leader claims to mirror the people as a whole.

In order to understand these mechanisms, two research fields have to be connected: populism on the one hand and body performances on the other. This chapter begins by clarifying the concept of populism. Populism is more than a political style (Moffitt 2016), a "thin ideology" (Mudde 2004) or a logic of discourse (Laclau 2005). As will be explained in detail further below, populism can affect four political dimensions of political action: communication, ideology, organisation and programme (Diehl 2011). For the purposes of this research, I have found it useful to conceive of populism as more than a category, and to approach it as a logic of political action that can vary in degree, depending on political actor and situation. Body performances are more closely connected to the first two political dimensions, communication and ideology, since the body is a generator of symbolic meaning. Analysing body performances can

provide important information about the relationship between a populist leader and the people, the role politicians claim to play, the representation mechanisms mobilised by them, and the nature of political legitimacy. We can distinguish between three different elements of body performance that play a crucial role in populist body performances: appearance, activities and interaction with the people. Applied to empirical cases, the analysis of body performances can provide a better idea of how populists present politics and how they frame political action. This article argues that body performances are more than aesthetic practices or communication styles because they generate ideological and symbolic outcomes, providing the leader with identification and legitimacy. Finally, this article will evaluate the chances offered and the risks to democracy posed by populist body performances.

Populism as a Multidimensional and Gradual Phenomenon

It has become a commonplace for scholars working on populism to invoke the diversity of theoretical and empirical approaches to the subject and the lack of a common definition. Indeed, there is very little consensus on what populism is. Scholars in the field operate with varied criteria, privileging different elements of the phenomenon as communication style, political discourse, political mobilisation, or ideology. Authors focusing on communication style depict populism as a type of political communication that presents the leader as a political outsider who comes from the people and that includes symbolism, aesthetics and body performances (Moffitt 2016). Populist communication and style break with taboos, provoke scandals, and do not use established codes of politics. In some cases, the language used can be even vulgar in order to disrupt the norms of political professionalism. Oversimplification of political issues and Manichean discourse structures are also typical (Reisigl; Deleersnijder 2009).

For those who embrace the discursive perspective, populism is a logic of discourse capable of drawing a sharp line between friend and foe, separating the people from the elite. Ernesto Laclau (2005) is the most prominent author who defends this perspective. He stresses that populism articulates political discourse by unifying a heterogeneous group and providing a chain of equivalences able to connect different popular demands under one single signifier, which is normally the leader. In so doing, populism stands for popular sovereignty and empowers the people. In this sense, discourse is closely connected to ideology.

Examining populism from a mobilisation and organisation perspective, authors embracing this point of view pay more attention to the linkages generated by populism. They stress that populism operates beyond party structure and appeals directly to the voters (Mair 2002). In so doing, populist leaders “combine popular mobilisation with populist rhetoric” (Jansen 2011: 82). Intermediation, especially institutional intermediation, appears to be circumvented by a more direct relationship between the leader and her followers. This can be seen in many cases such as Hugo Chávez, Beppe Grillo, Juan Domingo Perón and Geert Wilders, who all claim to speak about what the people want. In populism, the leader has to be the ‘voice of the people’.

Although the perspectives presented here do not intend to fully cover the broad variety of approaches on populism, they show that, when it comes to understanding populism, different definitions are possible. Given this situation, it is not surprising that scholars in the field have contrasting views on certain cases. One of the most controversial cases is that of Silvio Berlus-

coni. If one embraces the perspectives of political communication or mobilisation, a scholar will be more inclined to classify Berlusconi as a populist. Berlusconi has direct and vulgar language, presents himself as an outsider to the political system, and often disrupts political codes by breaking taboos and provoking scandals. From the perspective of mobilisation, the case of Berlusconi matches the populist criteria as well. Berlusconi has created a party that has worked as a franchise and was still operating as a personalised agency for a long time. Italian scholars have called it a “plastic party” (Diamanti 2004). On the other hand, if one takes the perspective of ideology, Berlusconi’s case becomes difficult to analyse. In fact, the former Italian prime minister never defends popular sovereignty or asks for more popular power; he never attacks the economic elite, to whom he claims to belong. Moreover, the ostentation of the luxury he enjoys and statements about his own wealth are crucial features in his political communication. Instead of insisting on the people’s power, the core of Berlusconi’s message is neo-liberal. He defends freedom from the state and individualistic opportunities in the capitalist economy. Depending on the perspective adopted, Berlusconi is either a perfect populist or not a populist at all (Diehl 2011).

In such a controversial research field, the idea of a “thin-centred ideology”, as invoked by Margaret Canovan (2002) and revisited by Cas Mudde (2004), has emerged as a glue able to unify the different perspectives with minimal common ground. In line with this approach, the common feature of populism is “a political appeal to the people and a claim to legitimacy that rests on the democratic ideology of popular sovereignty and majority rule” (Canovan 2002: 25). For Mudde, populism is a “thin ideology” based on the idea of popular sovereignty, on the opposition between the people and the elite and on a Manichean world view. Despite these features, populism is incapable of providing a full ideological orientation, like that which Michael Freeden attested to ideologies (Freeden 1996). For this reason, Mudde states that populism is a thin ideology, which is not as consistent as other ideologies, such as liberalism or socialism (Mudde 2004: 544).

This definition has the advantage of explaining the different shapes that populism can take, encompassing liberal populism, left-wing populism, right-wing populism, media populism or mainstream populism. The idea of “thin ideology” is especially convincing if one looks for the ideological determinants of populism. Although populism insists that the ‘people’ is a moral source of legitimacy, it does not define who the people are. Only in combination with a more consistent ideology can populism specify who ‘the people’ are. For left-wing populists, the people are the proletariat, the excluded and the exploited. For right-wing populists, the people are determined by their belonging to an ethnicity, culture, religion, or race. For liberal populists, the people are the small entrepreneurs, the self-employed, or salesmen. However, even though the minimal definition of populism as a “thin ideology” can help underline the inconsistencies and flexibility of populism, it does not explain the variation of the empirical results caused by the different approaches to populism or how populism operates on different levels of political action. Instead of a minimal definition of populism, a more complex approach to the phenomenon is needed to explain variations in operational modes of populism (Diehl 2011), as is also discussed in the theoretical conceptualisation at the beginning of this handbook.

In addition, populism is a matter of degree. It is possible for politicians to be more or less populist, depending on the situation and political context. Populism should be conceived of as a multidimensional and gradual phenomenon; it is a political logic that can affect different di-

mensions of political action in different degrees. This differentiation allows us to understand discrepancies among empirical results. Berlusconi, the paradigmatic case, is populist on the communication and organisation levels but cannot be considered ideologically populist. Political actors can thus use the populist logic in many different ways and degrees. The next step is now to conceptualise the body as a medium for political representation.

The Body as a Political Medium in Democracy

The body has always been a central medium for political representation and communication, a fact of which the Greeks were aware. In *Rhetoric*, Aristotle shows the importance of the body for political persuasion and decision-making. According to him, the body of the speaker is the most important medium for expressing political ideas, convictions and, especially, the truth. In order to affect citizens' rationality and emotions, the speaker should symbolically perform his messages. A successful speaker has to apply the appropriate performance in order to communicate the truth. This includes far more than the choice of the right words; it requires management of the body and the voice (*Rhetoric*, Vol. III, Ch. 1). Since Aristotle believes that the body transmits emotions of the soul (*On the Soul*), gestures and body posture are involved in the process of persuading the audience as well. From this perspective, the performance of the speaker's body is able to affect the bodies of the citizens. For this reason, true politics should be achieved not only by exchanging arguments, but be physically felt by both the speaker and the audience. In the ideal case, both bodies work together: the body of the speaker is the expressive medium for the truth, and the body of the citizen is the place where communicated messages have emotional and rational resonance. From this perspective, politics involves more than rational deliberation. Rather, it depends equally on the symbolic performances of the politician's body.

By privileging rationality and cognitive communication, modern political thought has neglected the symbolic meaning of the body for a long time. Only feminist theory and diversity studies have taken it into account. In recent years, however, political theorists have analysed body performances in order to understand their implications for political representation in democracy (Celis 2008; Lombardo and Meier 2014; Diehl 2015; Rai 2015). Karin Celis, Emanuela Lombardo and Petra Meier have paid attention to the effects of physical appearance and body performances on the representation of gender, and Shirin M. Rai has focused on the implications of class signs on the body for political communication in India. Nevertheless, it is possible to locate the body in a broader scope of political representation by building a model that stresses the importance of politicians' bodies in the symbolisation of democracy concerning very different representational objects, like political principles, political institutions and the people as a whole (Diehl 2015). In doing so, political theory is confronted with a complex situation in modern democracy, where popular sovereignty builds the core of political legitimacy. Three different aspects of the body's performativity have to be taken into account here.

The first aspect is intrinsic to democracy and has been considered by political theory, especially by the Lefortian approach. After the revolutions of the 18th century, popular sovereignty transferred the symbolisation of power from the body of the king to a symbolic empty place. Claude Lefort has explained this symbolic shift in political representation in the following way: since the power belongs to the people, it belongs to everybody. The consequence is that

power cannot be embodied by a single person, as was the case of the king under absolutism (Lefort 1988). The implication of this shift is huge for political representatives and makes their body performances particularly difficult. In democracy, representatives have to use their bodies to stress the fact that power belongs to the people; they cannot pretend to embody the power or the people, as absolutists and, later, totalitarians have done. Rather, their body performances have to refer to the people as the sovereign and invoke democratic principles, abandoning the embodiment model of political representation, where the body of the representative is supposed to be the place of political sovereignty (Diehl 2015: 245ff.). If a democratic politician presents herself in a royal manner or uses the body to stress superiority or personal power, democratic symbolism will suffer. The same is the case for politicians who present their physical strength, health and masculinity in order to endorse their leadership—well-known examples are Vladimir Putin’s self-presentation as a bare-chested fighter, Beppe Grillo’s famous “Messina swim” and Jörg Haider’s self-presentation as an extreme sports athlete. However, if there are clear limits to what representatives in democracy can do, the codes for their performances can significantly differ depending on the political culture and historical context.

Second, political body performances are products of the interaction between nature and nurture, between individual and social norms, between the private and the political spheres. They reflect internalised social behaviour, social norms and marks of gender, class or ethnicity (Butler 1993; Bourdieu 1980). Body performances also mobilise cultural patterns of perception, depending on the role of the actor and on the situation in which they happen (Goffman 1959). In the face of these multiple social-cultural factors, the analysis of political performances can become extremely complex, requiring an interdisciplinary approach. Many scholars working on political representation and communication have embraced an interdisciplinary perspective; by using concepts such as *mise en scène* (Coulomb-Gully 2001; Diehl 2015) or performance (Rai 2015; Moffitt 2016), they intend to describe the function of the body in staging political representation. Yet, politicians’ bodies can only take on political meaning in a specific cultural and political context, which is permeated by hierarchies and a social power structure. Despite the democratic principle of equality, different bodies are not treated equally. Male and female, healthy or ill, white or non-white bodies and even educated or uneducated gestures are read by the audience in very different political manners. The different bodies of political actors are above all inscribed with unequal power by social norms. The analysis of body performances in French electoral campaigns has shown that it is impossible for political actors to escape from social norms and their perception patterns that reflect social hierarchy (Coulomb-Gully 2001). This was equally confirmed by research focusing on class and race (Daloz 2009; Rai 2015). In populism, class is the pivotal marker of the leader’s body; in the case of right-wing and ethno-populism, race and ethnicity are more prominent in characterising the leader’s body as belonging to the people.

The third aspect of the body complicates the study of performances in democracy: mass mediation. Political communication is today mostly mass mediated and connected to the visualisation of issues and actors. With the predominant role of visual media in our society, news and political coverage have become more and more dependent on images, particularly on body images. The result is a strong focus of attention on the bodies of political actors, even if this attention is not necessarily conscious. Spin doctors and public relations teams are now taking special care of the appearance and staging of politicians’ bodies. It seems like Aristotle’s particular consideration of the body as a medium of persuasion now makes new sense. The mass

media suggests intimacy, and the bodies of politicians become a crucial element in establishing a linkage between the political message and the 'real' person that conveys it. Mass mediated body images offer compensation for the structural distance between representatives and citizens created by a "quasi-familiarity that is generated by the continuous and intimate exposure of political personalities" (Pels 2003). For the audience, this is an opportunity to identify with politicians on different levels. The identification can be directed at the claim the politician is making but it can equally occur in a more personal way by connecting the citizens with the imagined person performed by the politician's body. In the light of this background, it is not surprising that the body has become a subject of professionalisation in politics. In a context where the consumption of mass media images has permeated political communication, identification with the politician's body has become more and more important.

Mirroring the People

The mix of the emphasis on the body in the mass media and the appeal to the people in populist logic makes body performances particularly important for the understanding of populism. In this setting, the body becomes a pivotal element in proving the leader's belonging to the people. The physical appearance and behaviour of populist leaders are essential for the success of populist communication, symbolism and legitimisation of power. In the populist context, political representation is mirror representation, since the leader claims to mirror the people.

In political theory, the concept of mirror representation clearly refers to descriptive representation of specific groups and minorities. For minorities, mirror, or descriptive, representation becomes a tool with which they can acquire a voice. Mirror representation presupposes a particular relationship between the representative and the represented; it bonds both by similarity of appearance (Pitkin 1969: 74), including the similarity of lived experiences (Mansbridge 1999). Metaphors like 'map', 'mirror', or 'portrait' are used to give expression to this type of relationship.

In populism, though, the leader does not mirror a particular minority, but the people as a whole. In order to construct a unified people, populist leaders build up an idealised unity of the people that they claim to mirror. This has been considered one of the most problematic effects of populism on democracy, since the construction of the people occurs on the basis of the majority, ignoring the representation of minorities (Rosanvallon 2011; Müller 2014). Equally importantly, in the populist logic, the people are idealised as a moral source of politics (Taggart 2000) and, for this reason, it can never fail: *vox populi, vox dei*. In this context, the legitimisation of leadership is particularly dependent on the leader's capacity to mirror the idealised people, not the diverse people. Political actors follow the populist logic and claim to be one of the people and to be like the people. They do so by reinforcing their differences to the elite and by adopting mimetic behaviour towards the idealised people.

In the context of western societies, the codes for body staging in politics suggest professionalisation and a certain distance between the office holder and the voter. Political representatives demonstrate institutional attitudes and professionalism by dressing up, moderating their words and using restrained body language. Political actors who follow populist logic do exactly the

contrary: they embrace an anti-institutional and anti-elite attitude and stress the gap between the people and the elite by presenting their bodies with attributes of blue-collar or folkish qualities. In so doing, they claim to be like the people and not like the elite.

However, in populist representation, similarity does not necessarily mean similarity of lived experiences. Populist leaders do not always come from the people they are supposed to represent. Actually, many of them like Fernando Collor de Mello (Brazil), Silvio Berlusconi, or Donald Trump, belong to the economic elite. From the perspective of body performances, this is not necessarily a contradiction since mirror representation is a product of symbolic work in which the leader presents himself/herself by imitating the people (Diehl 2011). Usually, populist leaders perform similarity to the people they claim to represent by reproducing codes of disadvantaged social classes, the poor and excluded people. In Latin American leftist populism, this closeness is illustrated by emphasising the leader's proletarian origin, body language and clothes associated with the working class. Additionally, populists like Ollanta Humala (Peru) or Evo Morales (Bolivia) are known to mix class codes with ethnic elements of the indigenous people of their respective countries. This mixture of the connotation of the idealised people as underdogs and ethnically homogeneous at the same time can be seen in the context of European right-wing populism, especially in Austria, as well, where mimetic behaviour is interpreted as folkish. In Austria, the leaders of the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ), Jörg Haider and Heinz-Christian Strache, have shown a tendency to wear traditional costumes to exhibit their closeness to the people.

Regardless of the definition of the people, the key outcome of mirroring representation in populism is identification. When identifying with the leader, followers can project different meanings onto him or her. Identification can occur on two different levels: political and personal. In political identification, followers recognise the populist leader as the people's voice, the one who confers a political identity on them by engaging his or her followers in the process of "naming", that is, the establishment of an "empty signifier" able to unify the heterogeneity among the people (Laclau 2005). The leader serves as the interpreter of the people's will (Arditi 2005) and is the medium for establishing the people's identity as one political subject.

Personal identification operates on another level and is closely connected to psychological mechanisms described by Sigmund Freud. For Freud, identifying with something primarily means desiring to become like the respective object of identification. It occurs when the ego has enriched itself with the properties of the object (Freud 1922). In this sense, the populist leader serves as an idealised object for the followers. Personal identification with the leader supplies his or her relationship to the people with sympathy and enables the followers to recognise themselves in the leader. Such an identification mechanism is necessary in order for populists to legitimise their leadership and is based on the similarity between the leader and the people. Both mechanisms are involved in mirror representation; they render the idea acceptable that the leader's power is legitimate by virtue of his or her popular roots. Depending on the evolution of mirroring the people, populist body performances can produce problematic effects for democratic representation. This is the case when identification becomes uncontested and trust unquestioned. In this situation, the followers of the populist leader have no means to request accountability because the leader has become the embodiment of the people.

By following populist logic, political actors adopt particular body techniques able to provide their audience with identification and generate mirror representation. In some cases, especially

those of Berlusconi and Trump, mimetic identification with the leader is paired with the desire to become rich and famous, like they are. These cases are particularly interesting because they do not follow the populist identification only but add another important mechanism to the people's relationship to the leader: identification with celebrities, in which the desire to be successful and famous in a mass mediated capitalistic society is projected onto the leader. This kind of projection is very common in entertainment and is becoming an increasing element of populist performances (Diehl 2011).

Populist Body Performances

Scholars working on populism rarely address the question of body practices that generate mirror representation. One way to depict populist performances is to describe them as “performances of ordinariness” or “bad manners”, which symbolically mark populist leaders as “outsiders” (Moffitt 2016: 58). “Bad manners” can manifest themselves “in self-presentation, use of slang, political incorrectness, fashion or other displays of contempt for ‘usual’ practices of ‘respectable’ politics” (ibid.). However, although they depict an important mechanism involved here, “bad manners” cannot fully encompass populist performances.

Building on Erving Goffman's sociological approach, one can find other important mechanisms activated in populist body performances. The first concept here is the concept of ‘role’. For Goffman, social actors always play roles and follow specific codes according to the context of their interactions and on their relationships to those with whom they interact (Goffman 1967). A man acts differently as a father in a family, as an employee at work, or as a consumer in a shop. Each role requires a specific code: a specific form of interaction, language and body performance. This is equally true for political representatives. Holders of political office have to follow an institutional role and apply formal codes in order to represent their office. For unelected politicians, these codes are not so rigid, but they are still the model for behaviour and body performances. Populist performances are in constant dialogue with this institutional role. They tend to disrupt institutional representation by breaking with the standard code. Yet, it is not that populists do not claim to represent the people. They rather claim to not belong to the corrupt establishment and instead to be the legitimate representatives of the people precisely because of their outsider status. ‘Bad manners’ seem to be an important technique for presenting the actor as an outsider to the political elites and as someone who comes from the people, but they do not exhaust the variety of performances in populism. If one takes mirror representation into account, the production of similarity can provide a broader category for the analysis of populist performances. Detecting four main features of body performance—appearance, body language, body activity and interaction with the people—can provide a more systematic framework.

The first feature is physical appearance. In a mass media society, this is the first element of political performances that is noticed. Contrary to the intuitive assumption, body appearance is not solely natural, but rather a product of the interaction between the biologically given and socially constructed techniques of identity building. The physical shape of the body, clothing and even physical reactions interplay in body performance. Physical shape can be manipulated by techniques such as hairstyling, make-up, bodybuilding, or plastic surgery (Diehl 2015). Hairstyling, for example, is more significant in politics than it seems. Hair can be dressed, cut,

shaved, and coloured in order to be connected to gender, class and race. Undressed hair makes politicians look less professional and more similar to common citizens. However, populist leaders defining the people ethnically, like Geert Wilders in the Netherlands, can manipulate their hair to become more similar to the people they idealise. Wilder's right-wing populism defines the Dutch people by connecting them to blond hair and blue eyes. However, his problem is that he happens to have Indonesian ancestors. Thus, colouring his hair blond is a technique to achieve a physical appearance similar to the people he claims to represent.

Clothing is a crucial element in performances of similarity, and in consequence in populist performances, since it can provide politicians with popular attributes. In general, political actors intending to demonstrate their popular roots tend to dress down in order to confirm their belonging to the 'ordinary' people. Instead of wearing a suit and tie, which characterise the formal code of institutional representation, performances of similarity to the people, which are crucial for populism, tend to involve politicians presenting themselves in shirts. Hugo Chávez went even further by wearing comfortable sweatpants and sports clothes as a sign of popular taste. In election campaigns, established politicians are more inclined to assume populist logic and integrate symbolic similarity like the dressing-down technique in their body performance. Additionally, for populists who define the people by ethnic belonging, traditional costumes connect them to the people.

The second feature of populist performances is body language. This includes posture, the way the body moves and facial expressions. Sociologists such as Pierre Bourdieu have extensively examined body language in order to depict the internalised signs of class. According to Bourdieu, the body has the capacity to incorporate and reflect social norms, codes and, above all, the social power structure. Individuals are disposed to internalising body language, often unconsciously reproducing it. Members of higher social classes tend to maintain more vertical posture, to keep their gestures central and to moderate their body language (Bourdieu 1980; 1994). However, the body is equally effective in producing and communicating gender, race, cultural background, social milieu and ethnicity. Leaders following populist logic adopt mimetic behaviour of the people; they tend to assume less controlled body language and to stress spontaneity. In so doing, they present themselves differently to established politicians and to elites. Moffitt is right when he states that we assume that politicians "should be polished, professional, composed, and 'play the game' correctly" (Moffitt 2016: 61), but the populist message is double: the leader is not controlled by elite norms or political professionalism, but instead he or she is more similar to the common people and communicates directly.

This message is strongly stressed by the third populist feature: body activities, which include dancing, singing, or eating. By eating simple food, dancing or singing popular music, politicians demonstrate popular taste and similarity to the people at the same time as suggesting proximity to them. Chávez was famous for dancing and singing in public, and Berlusconi used to sing popular songs. However, the most powerful technique with which to demonstrate proximity and similarity is eating. Political actors show their belonging to the people by consuming the same food. Donald Trump, for example, stresses many times that he likes fast food, which is considered to be popular food in the USA. "The Big Macs are great. The Quarter Pounder. It's great stuff," he said to Anderson Cooper at CNN. The same is true for Heinz-Christian Strache (FPÖ) in Austria; by drinking beer, especially while he is dressed in traditional Austrian costume, he stresses his popular roots and demonstrates his belonging to the ethnic group used to define the people in right-wing populism. By consuming the same food, especial-

ly in common places like cheap restaurants or private homes, politicians following populist logic do more than produce similarity of taste and generate mimetic behaviour; rather, by introducing the same food that the people eat into their bodies, populist leaders prove that they are willing to share the same conditions as the people without fear of possible unhealthy consequences.

Yet, if eating, dancing and singing suggest proximity between the leader and the people, populist performance needs to be accomplished by more intensive physical interaction. In this sense, physical contact is crucial for populist performances. Hugging people on the street, kissing or simply touching them symbolically establishes a relationship without mediation. Such physical interaction is able to convey that the populist leader and the people are one bloc that is able to defeat the elite. In this sense, the ‘bath in the crowd’ works as an almost religious ritual that has to be repeated in order to reaffirm the unmediated relationship between the leader and the followers and to legitimate the leader’s power.

Political legitimation by populist body performances is particularly problematic. Populist performances produce a representational relationship based on mirroring the idealised people, posing two important risks to democracy. First, in order to represent each and every member of the people, populist leaders have to create a prototypical image of the people that can be mirrored, suppressing the diversity of the people on the symbolic level. Second, populist representation motivates strong political and personal identification with the leader. This kind of identification poses a serious risk to democracy: If personal identification is pushed to the extreme, representation is inverted: the represented will and identity of the people is substituted by the will of the leader. At this point, accountability becomes irrelevant because the leader is supposed to exactly feel what the people feel and know what the people want. Symbolically, this process could be observed when Chávez died. His followers went onto the streets of Caracas wearing masks with Chávez’s photo and carrying posters bearing the phrase: “Seamos Chávez” (Let’s be Chávez). In this case, it is not the leader that represents the people, but the people that represent the leader.

Conclusion

As this chapter has shown, body performances are crucial in understanding populism. This article takes populism as a logic that can affect different dimensions of political practices and varies in degree depending on the political actor. Starting from this point, it was possible to depict the populist logic in body performances.

Body performances are not a simple detail of political style, rather they are symbolic means of political representation able to motivate emotions and produce identification with political actors. In democracy, the bodies of political representatives have a difficult task to fulfil. They have to refer to the people’s power and represent political office without embodying that power. Yet, in a mass media democracy, where political communication is extremely dependent on images, the bodies of politicians have become a crucial element in establishing the connection between the political message and the ‘real’ person that conveys it. In the light of this background, body performances have emerged as a new object of research in political science.

This is particularly true for the study of populism. In populism, body performances are crucial for building up the relationship between a leader and her/his followers. It is used to demonstrate the outsider status of the leader, to provide identification with the leader and to symbolically construct the power bloc of leader and people against the elite. Populist body performances are always associated with mirroring representation, immediacy and directness. However, the mirroring effect invoked here is a mimetic attitude towards the idealised people populist leaders claim to represent. This mimetic and direct attitude can be detected in four main features of body performances: physical appearance, body language, body activity and interaction with the people. This article proposes a new methodological perspective by taking body performances of populism into consideration. Analysing populist body performances can provide scholars with a better understanding of the symbolic and psychological mechanisms involved in populism.

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CHAPTER 22:

POPULISM AND ISLAMOPHOBIA

Hans-Georg Betz

To a significant extent, radical right-wing populist parties in contemporary Western liberal democracies owe their success at the polls to their ability to ride the wave of anti-Islamic public sentiment. Appealing to diffuse latent fears and mobilising widespread resentment in response to the growing presence and visibility of Muslims in Western societies, radical right-wing populist parties have successfully promoted themselves as adamant defenders of the core values of Western civilisation against what they characterise as an insidious process of the ‘Islamisation’ of Western society. Their advances in the polls have pushed two contentious migration-related issues to the forefront of public debate—the questions of integration and national identity.

Surveys suggest that among Western publics there are widespread concerns that “the common norms and values that bind societies together will be weakened irretrievably if the newcomers do not adapt to the host-country language, culture, and identity—and, worse, if they harbour illiberal cultural practices” (Papademetriou 2012: 4). These concerns have fuelled, and been fuelled by, an anti-Islamic discourse propagated by self-styled moral experts and disseminated via the media, both old (books, newspapers, magazines) and new (internet websites and social media). Prominent examples are Oriana Fallaci (2001), Bat Ye’or (2005), Christopher Caldwell (2009) and Renaud Camus (2011)¹. It is in this setting that radical right-wing populist parties have found fertile ground for a political project which brings together traditional populist rhetoric and xenophobic invectives against a minority singled out for stigmatisation.

The adoption of comprehensive anti-Islamic rhetoric by the populist radical right provides perhaps the strongest evidence of the central importance ideas hold in contemporary populist mobilisation (supporting the ‘ideational approach’ to the study of populism; see Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2013). It also lends support to the thesis that cultural rather than socio-economic concerns drive people’s attitudes towards immigrants and that these concerns are instrumental in explaining the right-wing populist upsurge over the past two decades (Sides and Citrin 2007; Hainmueller and Hopkins 2014; Bornschie, 2010; Yılmaz 2012; Lentin 2014; Bouvet 2015). One promising and fruitful way to analyse the right-wing populist anti-

Islamic discourse is from the perspective of nativism, an approach adopted in this chapter (Betz 2013; Casanova 2012; Hervik 2015).

¹ For the former; gatesofvienna.net, pi-news.org, jihadwatch.com and barenakedislam.com for the latter.

Nativism: Antebellum Anti-Catholicism in the United States as an Ideal Type

Nativism is a concept advanced by American historians of the nineteenth century to make sense of the frenzied response to mass immigration in the antebellum and, to a lesser extent, the post-Civil War period in the United States. Nativism represents a “complex web of nationalism, xenophobia, ethnocentrism and racism” that comes in two versions (Anbinder 1992: xiv). Central to its lite version is the notion that the native-born should be accorded preference over aliens. Against that, the hard version starts from the assumption that some immigrant groups, because of their deeply ingrained cultural background, cannot be integrated into the host society. From this it follows that they should not be accorded full citizen rights (particularly suffrage) or, in the most extreme case, be prevented from entering the country altogether.

Historically, nativist mobilisation has by and large been of the lite variety, predominantly centring on demands for protecting domestic labour against competition from migrant workers. Episodes of full-blown nativist mobilisation have been rare. They occur when a society is subject to profound and extensive moral panic, and populist entrepreneurs seize the opportunities provided by the moral panic to mobilise ordinary citizens against the ‘elite’ and the ‘system’ as a whole. This is what happened in the decades before the Civil War in the United States, in response to the massive influx of European immigrants. A large number of them were poor German and particularly Irish Catholics, who upon arrival predominantly settled in the crowded tenements of the big north-eastern cities.

Mass immigration provoked a sharp and drastic backlash from ‘native-born’ Protestant Americans, which had all the characteristics of a moral panic, as defined by Stanley Cohen (1972: 9): “A condition, episode, person or groups of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylised and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people; socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnoses and solutions; ways of coping are evolved (or more often) resorted to; the condition then disappears, submerges or deteriorates and becomes more visible”.

There is an extensive literature chronicling the anti-Catholic frenzy that swept antebellum America, occasionally exploding in violence and destruction (Billington 1963; Anbinder 1992; Knobel 1996). The nativist outburst of religious phobia and ethnic hostility and denigration (cartoonists depicted Irish immigrants with ape-like features) led to the formation of secret political organisations founded for the purpose of protecting the republican institutions of the United States against the newcomers, whose religious-cultural background was deemed irreconcilable with the American creed. This anti-Catholic mobilisation culminated with the founding of the American Party, better known as the Know Nothings (founded 1849), a populist movement whose aim (besides promoting anti-Catholic policies) was the fundamental renewal of American politics. Although short-lived—the party broke apart over the question of slavery —, the Know Nothings were instrumental in bringing about the demise of the Whigs and the Jacksonian party system (1828-1854). Many of their ranks joined Lincoln’s Republican Party.

To a large extent, the Know Nothings owed their success to their ability to overcome the constraints imposed by America’s self-understanding of it being the land of liberty and opportunity, a haven for the ‘huddled masses yearning to breathe free’. They did this by couching their

nativist rhetoric in terms of ‘two clusters of values’ fundamental to ‘the American mythos’: republican patriotism and Protestantism (Carlson 1989: 372). Republican patriotism stood, most prominently, for democracy, liberty and equality; Protestantism for individualism, hard work and the ability to think for oneself and embrace change (Carlson 1989). Against that, they depicted Catholic immigrants as passive, easily manipulated by their priests, and docile pawns in the Pope’s machinations to subvert the liberties and free institutions of the United States and subject its citizens to popish despotism.

From the nativists’ perspective, Catholic immigrants were a vital part of a Manichean struggle: As a prominent nativist pamphletist claimed, since the two systems were “diametrically opposed: one must and will exterminate the other” (Beecher 1855: 29). The Know Nothings and its kindred nativist organisations thus promoted themselves as movements of “counter-subversion” (Davis 1960) bent on ‘unmasking’ and exposing Catholicism for what it was: a “fraudulent conspiracy against the interests of God and humanity” (Beecher 1855: 29) mounting a frontal assault on the country’s republican ideals under the guise of religion.

Central to the nativists’ campaign to save the United States from the designs of Rome was conjuring up “the symbol of the pure American woman debauched and ruined by the Catholic priest”, which informed popular anti-Catholic writings on convents and the confessional, such as the bestselling *Awful Disclosures of Mary Monk* (1836) and *The Archbishop; or Romanism in the United States* (1854) (Pagliarini 1999: 99). Their readers were shocked with lurid tales of young innocent women imprisoned in the dungeons of convents, subjected to the licentiousness of priests and nuns, the resulting offspring murdered and thrown into pits; and of virtuous wives and mothers compelled in the confessional by lecherous priests to respond to the most indecent questions, if not seduced outright and solicited for sexual favours (Mattingly 2006; Mercado 2013).

On the surface, these tales were designed to provoke moral outrage. Just as importantly, however, they also reflected concern over the growing role of convent academies in educating girls and young women from well-to-do Protestant families and thus exposing them to Catholic indoctrination and moral corruption by women who had chosen celibacy and thus forsaken their ‘natural’ duties as wives and mothers in marriage (Mattingly 2006: 168-70). As Marie Anne Pagliarini has convincingly argued, anti-Catholic nativism’s mobilising power derived to a significant degree from its appeal to the “antebellum ‘cult of domesticity’,” which “saw the pure American woman in her role of wife and mother raised to the status of a cultural and religious icon”, a model allegedly being undermined by Catholicism (Pagliarini 1999: 98).

Despite its vitriolic language and despite the violence it occasionally engendered (leading to loss of life and significant material damage), anti-Catholic nativism promoted relatively moderate policies. There were no demands for halting all immigration from Catholic lands, not even for a moratorium on immigration. Instead, the Know Nothings called for extending the nationwide naturalisation period from five to twenty-one years, a measure designed to deny immigrants the right to vote until they were fully assimilated. The measure was never adopted. Undercurrents of anti-Catholicism, however, persisted well into the second half of the twentieth century, leading one prominent historian of religion to claim that anti-Catholicism represented the ‘last acceptable prejudice’ in contemporary America (Jenkins 2003).

New Nativism: Anti-Islamic Mobilisation and the Populist Right

All this no longer holds true today. What we are witnessing today is a second major wave of hard-core nativism, this time targeting Muslim migrants and Islam in general. Similar to anti-Catholicism in antebellum America, the upsurge of anti-Islamic sentiments across contemporary liberal democracies exhibits all the traits of a moral panic. Today's nativists, in a similar fashion to antebellum Protestants, characterise Islam as a dangerous ideology that is fundamentally incompatible with the values that inform Western civilisation. Moreover, like the Know Nothings, they promote themselves as the vanguard of a counter-subversive movement intent on reversing the 'incursion' of Islam in Western societies. In contemporary anti-Islamic nativism, Islam is characterised as a monolithic and immutable religious doctrine, which is backward and prone to irrationalism, oppression and violence. Muslim migrants are depicted as potentially dangerous fanatics and blind followers of archaic rules that are fundamentally incommensurable with modern enlightened Western values. Anti-Islamic discourse is diffused via traditional and new media by experts on Islam and the Muslim world and publicists who promote themselves as such; and latent fears and prejudices are reinforced by the results of opinion polls, which create the sense that one is not alone in harbouring negative sentiments towards Islam and Muslims.

It is the confluence of these factors, extensively analysed in the literature on Islamophobia, which has allowed radical right-wing populist parties to make the question of the place of Islam in Western societies a central issue for populist mobilisation (Hajjat and Mohammed 2013). These developments can be observed throughout liberal Western democracies. Nowhere, however, have they been more striking than in northern Europe, long known for its tolerance and liberalism. This holds particularly true for the Netherlands. Hardly surprisingly, the 'strange death of Dutch tolerance' has been extensively studied as an exemplary case of the discursive construction of Islam as the threatening other and of its exploitation by political entrepreneurs for populist mobilisation (Lucassen and Lucassen 2015).

Unlike both traditional and more recent parties, such as the Greens, successful radical right-wing populist parties depend to a significant degree on strong, ideally charismatic leadership personalities. These are populist entrepreneurs capable of framing complex and contentious issues in an easily understandable form and articulating their essence in a short, catchy slogan or phrase (for example, *Les français d'abord*, *Roma ladrona*). This has been particularly true with the emergence of Islam as a central issue for the radical populist right. A typical case is Geert Wilders, the leader of the *Dutch Partij voor de Vrijheid* (PVV). In the summer of 2016, polls had the PVV as the leading party in the Netherlands, far ahead of its competitors. This was largely the result of Wilders' ability to combine a resolute populist strategy with an equally unrelenting anti-Islamic discourse (van Kessel 2011; van Kessel and Castelein 2016). At the same time, Wilders established himself as a pivotal access point for, and the centre of, a wide-ranging network of anti-Islamic groups, movements and parties throughout Europe and beyond. In this way, Wilders significantly contributed to a process of 'cross-national diffusion', which was instrumental in promoting the anti-Islamic nativist frame (Rydgren 2005).

Anti-Islamic Frames and Anti-Islamic Mobilisation

Frames and framing are at the heart of the ideational approach to the understanding of populism and its success. “Frames operate by altering the relative salience of different aspects of the problem” (Kinder and Kam 2009: 40). It is therefore hardly surprising that they play a decisive role in radical right-wing populist mobilisation. The contemporary radical right has always considered the ‘metapolitical’ struggle over ‘cultural hegemony’—a struggle over the perception and interpretation of processes and events and the contestation of the dominant meaning of words, concepts and values—central to its longer-term political strategy. As a prominent New Right activist has put it, metapolitics “is the prerequisite of politics—the dynamic of power, as it is manifested on the street and computer screen and up to the government and parliament; in the media and the press; in academia, cultural institutions, and civil society; as well as in art and culture. In short, in all the channels which communicate values perceived on an individual and collective level. This is the reason why metapolitical analysis must precede political action” (Friberg 2015). Metapolitics entails both undermining and deconstructing dominant values and redefining them. It represents “a war of social transformation, fought on the level of worldview, thought, and culture” in preparation for the ultimate assault on “the established political power—which now finds itself disconnected from public consent” (Friberg 2015).

The case of Geert Wilders provides a textbook illustration of this strategy and its success (Vossen 2011). Wilders’ star started to rise in the first decade of the new century, after promoting himself as the heir to Pim Fortuyn, the charismatic political maverick, whose life was cut short by an assassin in 2002. During the last years of his life, Fortuyn established himself as a sharp critic of Islam, famously dismissing Islam as a ‘backward culture’ that posed a fundamental threat to Dutch society. Weakened by the forces of individualism and ‘cultural relativism’, the Dutch were on the verge of losing their identity and Dutch society risked being submerged by an alien culture (Fortuyn 1997). In populist fashion, Fortuyn attacked the country’s cultural and political elite for their indifference towards the concerns of ordinary citizens and their refusal to acknowledge that Islam threatened the very foundations of the country’s liberal political culture, particularly regarding the separation of church and state, gender equality and gay rights (Akkerman 2005). Fortuyn’s blunt attacks on Islam, although shocking, proved highly influential. In particular, they reinforced ‘new realist’ tendencies in Dutch discourse on immigration, which dared to break taboos, gave preference to the experiences of ordinary people over expert opinion and took on the ‘progressive elite’, which dominated public discourse with its ‘politically correct sensibilities’ with respect to intolerance and racism (Prins 2002: 369).

In the process, Islam assumed an increasingly negative connotation, fuelled by the accounts of first-hand experiences of prominent witnesses, such as Somali-born Ayaan Ali Hirsi, whose claim that Islam was fundamentally incompatible with women’s rights made her “one of the key contributors to the ‘culturalist’ discourse on migrants” (Ghorashi 2010: 14). It was Geert Wilders who made anti-Islamic nativism the basis of his populist project. Perusing key speeches from the first decade of the new century shows that Wilders persistently pursued a populist strategy, pitting ‘ordinary people’ against the elite. The target of Wilders’ populist attacks was particularly the political Left, who he accused of refusing to facing up to reality, cuddling up instead to the Muslim minority and its representatives (Mols and Jetten 2016).

At the same time, Wilders integrated the disparate tropes of various Islamophobic discourses promoted in Europe and elsewhere into a comprehensive anti-Islamic narrative, which made him the perhaps most notorious and influential voice of nativism in the world today (see, for instance, Elizabeth Poole's [2012] analysis of his coverage in the British media after he was refused entry to the UK in 2009). Central to this narrative is the notion that Islam is not a religion but 'primarily a political ideology', a system that seeks to control every aspect of human life, thus a 'totalitarian ideology' that 'aimed at establishing tyrannical power over non-Muslims' (Wilders 2012: 67-8; 2016). Characterising the Koran as 'an inspiration for intolerance, murder and terror' comparable to Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, he called for Islam's sacred text to be banned².

Central to Islam's political ideology was the 'pursuit of dominance', its ultimate aim 'to exact its imperialist agenda by force on a worldwide scale'. This was the driving force behind the current 'third Islamic invasion' of Europe through mass immigration. Muslim immigrants, in turn, represented a force of 'incursion' bent on conquest, a 'Trojan horse' that, once safely installed, must inexorably open the door to subjugation via 'Islamification' (Wilders 2012: 163)³. Muslim immigrants were the pawns in a strategy of conquest, illustrated by the example of Paris, 'now surrounded by a ring of Muslim neighbourhoods' (conjuring up images of the siege of Vienna in 1683)⁴. It was for these reasons, Wilders insisted, that Islam represented an 'essential threat' to the Netherlands 'as a free nation'⁵. Islam was fundamentally incompatible with liberal values and democratic institutions that guaranteed the rights of women and sexual minorities. Under Islam, Wilders claimed, "women are not to complain when they're beaten up by their husbands, unfaithful wives should be stoned, homosexuals should be thrown from buildings, apostates and infidels deserve death, and democracy must be subordinate to Islamic Sharia law"⁶.

Nativism, like populism, derives its logic from the construction of a discursive narrative of dichotomisation and polarisation. In the anti-Islamic narrative, nativist entrepreneurs postulate a fundamental conflict that pits identity against multiculturalism and which represents a new cleavage that defines contemporary western democracies (Betz 2005: 34). In radical right-wing populist discourse, identity refers predominantly to the strengthening of national identity in the service of the defence of national sovereignty against the economic and political forces of globalisation. Against that, in nativist discourse, identity refers to the cultural foundations of Western civilisation—the substrate of values which, as Wilders has claimed, made Western civilisation "the most advanced and superior civilisation the world has ever known"⁷. For the nativist right, Western civilisation is rooted in Judeo-Christian culture, which defines Western identity. The nativist right's 'identitarian turn' can almost exclusively be explained as an attempt to assert "the superiority of Judeo-Christian culture over the backwardness of Islamic culture"⁸. The defence of Judeo-Christian culture, however, far from constitutes a defence of Christian faith. The controversy over the display of the crucifix in public schools which erupt-

2 <http://www.geertwilders.nl/index.php/in-english-mainmenu-98/in-the-press-mainmenu-101/77-in-the-press/1117-enough-is-enough-ban-the-koran>

3 <http://www.aina.org/news/2011051914958.htm>

4 <http://eaglerising.com/25378/spotlight-on-geert-wilders-his-warning-to-america-the-last-man-standing-for-judeo-christian-values-and-western-civilization/>

5 <http://www.breitbart.com/london/2016/09/28/geert-wilders-breitbart-lets-lock-door-islam/>

6 <http://www.breitbart.com/london/2016/06/07/geert-wilders-muslims-leave-islam-opt-for-freedom/>

7 http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2011/03/geert_wilders_in_rome_defendin.html

8 <http://www.aina.org/news/2011051914958.htm>

ed in 2009 in several Western European countries is a case in point. Both the FPÖ (Austria) and the Lega Nord (northern Italy) voiced strong support for keeping the crucifix in classrooms—yet not for primarily religious reasons. Both maintained that the crucifix was not merely a religious symbol, but a symbol of the values which informed Western history, civilisation and identity; at the same time, it served as a reminder that Austria and Italy were Christian countries which were prepared to defend their heritage⁹. The way the two parties framed the question of the crucifix supports a central point advanced in a recently collected volume on populism and religion: If the nativist right in Western Europe evokes Europe's Christian identity, it is not because it is interested in promoting Christianity, but because it seeks to impose an identitarian master narrative capable of repelling the Islamic challenge (Zúquete 2008; Marzouki et al. 2016).

Laying claim to the Judeo-Christian heritage of Western civilisation has opened up new opportunities for the populist right to refurbish their image by reinventing themselves as defenders of a panoply of liberal, republican and secular Western values. What at the beginning of the populist anti-Islamic mobilisation had been a position defended only by Fortuyn, had become the new 'ideological master frame' for the populist right in Western liberal democracies one decade later (Akkerman 2005; Vossen 2011). With a number of radical right-wing populist parties making great efforts to gain a measure of respectability (the most notable example being Marine Le Pen's strategy of *dédiabolisation*), its adoption was hardly surprising.

[B] Context and Opportunity Structures: Public Opinion

There is a second reason for its adoption. Populist entrepreneurs, movements and parties derive their claim to legitimacy from the notion that they represent the common sense of ordinary people, whose voice has been ignored for too long, and their concerns too long denigrated by the elite. One way to support this claim is to point to public opinion. Public opinion, however, has not been particularly kind towards the populist right. In France, for instance, a large majority of voters have consistently rejected the ideas advanced by the Front National (even after Marine Le Pen assumed the leadership of the party, only a third of respondents in polls said they agreed with her ideas).

This is not the case when it comes to the question of Islam. Over the past decade or so, public attitudes towards Islam and Muslims have been extensively surveyed in a large number of liberal democracies. In most cases, they have proved to be negative; in many instances, they show broad agreement with the nativist case against Islam and Muslim migrants. In Italy, for instance, in late summer 2016, more than two thirds of Italians concurred with the statement that Muslim immigrants failed to integrate because of "a fundamental incompatibility with Western values"¹⁰. One year earlier, in Britain, a survey found that more than half of its respondents agreed with the statement that Islam posed a 'major' or 'some threat' to democracy¹¹. In a broad-based study on German attitudes towards Islam from 2012, large majorities associated Islam with discrimination against women, fanaticism, intolerance against those who

⁹ <http://wiev1.orf.at/stories/358973>; http://www.leganord.org/index.php/notizie/7238-Crocifisso,_Calderoli_e_Bricolo_-_%C3%A8_il_simbolo_dei_nostri_valori.

¹⁰ Libero, 2nd September, 2016

¹¹ http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2015/07/03/77-bombings-muslims-islam-britain-poll_n_7694452.html

think differently, a propensity for violence and being backward-looking (Petersen 2012). Hardly surprisingly, four years later, a 60 per cent majority of Germans rejected the notion, propagated most prominently by Chancellor Angela Merkel, that Islam ‘belongs to Germany’.¹² Finally, in France, the country with the largest Muslim immigrant community in Western Europe, in 2013 (thus well before the jihadist terror attacks of Paris and Nice), more than 70 per cent of the population believed that Islam was an ‘intolerant’ religion, which was incompatible with the values of French society; eight out of ten thought that Islam was out to impose its ways on others (Le Bars 2013). These and similar results in a number of other Western democracies reflect a profound sense of wariness and suspicion pervading public opinion with respect to Islam.

Public opinion polls have played a vital role in fanning the flames of anti-Islamic nativism, their most alarmist results prominently displayed on the front pages of major newspapers. Both surveys and their media coverage have contributed to the intensification of a moral panic, which has proved fertile ground for nativist mobilisation by radical right-wing populist parties. Geert Wilders once again illustrates the point. In 2013, Wilders commissioned a poll on Dutch attitudes towards Islam. The results were striking. Among other things, the survey found substantial majorities who supported halting immigration from Muslim countries, the construction of new mosques and a ban on Sharia law; more than two-thirds of the respondents agreed with the statement that there was ‘enough Islam’ in the country¹³. Although flawed methodologically, the poll results were published in the country’s largest morning newspaper, *De Telegraaf*, and several blogs¹⁴. The poll was clearly meant to suggest that there was broad support for the drastic measures Wilders had proposed in his speeches to counter the threat of Islamisation, which he himself had conjured up on numerous occasions.

In general, surveys addressing the question of Islam which have been conducted during the past decade in Western liberal democracies reflect two developments: the progressive sensitisation of the public to Islam as an important cultural issue, and the progressive deterioration of the public image of Islam, which is increasingly being perceived as a multifaceted ‘problem’. Surveys, and the way they are covered in the mainstream media, have been one important factor in the generation of an emotionally charged sociocultural climate that has proved conducive to nativist mobilisation by populist entrepreneurs.

At least three other factors have contributed to the generation of this climate and particularly its intensification over time: the growing alarmism in media coverage of a range of issues associated with the presence of Muslim minority communities in Western societies in the wake of the terrorist attacks in the United States and Western Europe, and the influx of Muslim migrants in the context of the most recent refugee crisis; the popular success of publications by authors—with or without particular expertise in the subject matter—who are highly critical of, or downright hostile to, Islam; and, finally, and directly related to the former two, the growing visibility and particularly the assertiveness of Muslim communities and their leaders in Western societies.

12 Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 12th May, 2016 <http://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/fuer-mehrheit-gehoert-der-islam-nicht-zu-deutschland-14228666.html>

13 http://www.pvv.nl/images/stories/Reactie_op_Islam_in_Nederland.pdf

14 http://www.telegraaf.nl/binnenland/21613784/_Stop_bouw_moskeeen_.html

Context and Opportunity Structures: The Role of the Media

There is a growing body of literature in communications studies devoted to analysing how the media have contributed to the construction and perpetuation of a negative image of Muslim minority communities that is, more often than not, informed by an essentialising, if not openly racialised discourse (Schiffer 2005; Richardson 2009; Poole 2011). Stereotyping and negative representation of Muslims and Islam have been particularly pronounced in the tabloid press, which is generally tailored to lower-class readers and, more often than not, shares an ideological affinity with the radical populist right (Moore et al. 2008).

In some cases, even left-leaning journals and news magazines have done their part to reinforce the notion of Islam's fundamental incompatibility with Western values and evoke the spectres of invasion and conquest. In 2004, the German magazine *Stern*, for instance, devoted one of its issues to examining Islam (as part of a series on the big world religions). In the editorial, the author started with the observation that Islam “frequently conveys the image of an archaic religion, in which women are oppressed, mutilated and stoned to death, where those who think differently are persecuted, and where missionaries with fuzzy beards have incited a ‘Holy War’ against us ‘infidels’”. This had led to the question of whether or not ‘this religion’ was dangerous, a notion which the author rejected: Islam ‘as such’ did not pose a threat, but the frustrated young fanatics who invoked Islam as justification for their use of violence did.¹⁵

Three years later, the magazine no longer made this distinction. Now the question was no longer whether or not Islam was dangerous, but ‘how dangerous’ it was. The same year, Germany's leading news magazine, *Der Spiegel*, devoted the cover and lead article of one of its issues to ‘the silent Islamisation’ of Germany—under the provocative title ‘Mecca Germany.’

Ironically, it was *Der Spiegel* which, three years later, warned of a change that was slowly transforming Germany ‘from a tolerant society into one dominated by fear and Islamophobia’ (Follath 2010). The commentator, however, did not blame the German media for these developments but Thilo Sarrazin, the author of a polemical essay whose provocative title *Deutschland schafft sich ab* (Germany is abolishing itself) proved seductive enough to put the book on top of the bestseller lists almost immediately after its publication. This had less to do with the book's primary concerns, which were economic, than with the relatively limited number of passages that dealt with the question of the place of Islam and Muslims in German society (Meng 2015). It was Sarrazin's charge that, because of their relatively high birth rate, Germany's (predominantly Turkish and Kurdish) Muslim minority population were in the process of taking over the country and the conclusions he drew from this that caught attention and created a huge controversy. Not only did Sarrazin point out that Muslim immigrants had largely failed to integrate into German society, but he also maintained that their relatively low educational achievements and reluctance to learn German—which were crucial for their integration into the labour market—were the result of their cultural background being shaped by Islam. This, he claimed, accounted for the high level of welfare dependency of Muslim immigrants, which invariably spelled disaster.

Sarrazin's book provoked both a storm of indignation among Germany's political and intellectual elite and widespread applause from the public, who “was now discussing, with alacrity,

15 <http://www.stern.de/editorial-ist-der-islam-gefaehrlich--3554316.html>

his arguments—cultural incommensurability, feeble multiculturalism, demographic anxieties, and failed integration” (Meng 2015: 104-5). The controversy over the book thus generated a populist moment, with Sarrazin in the role of the ‘folk hero’¹⁶ breaking down the walls of political correctness and paving the way for the German version of ‘new realism’ in the debate about multiculturalism and integration. Its impact was reflected in public opinion: Between 2009 and 2016, the number of German respondents favouring a complete ban on immigration from Muslim countries almost doubled, from 21 to 41 per cent (Decker et al. 2016: 50). It also impacted politically, with the foundation of ‘Alternative für Deutschland’ (AfD), a new party which primarily sought to exploit popular discontent with the government’s bailout policies during the Euro crisis, and particularly with the emergence of ‘Pegida’ in late 2014 in Dresden, a movement which, within a short period of time, managed to mobilise tens of thousands of demonstrators against ‘the Islamisation of the West.’ The success of ‘Pegida’, in turn, had a strong impact on the AfD, causing it to adopt a radical anti-Islamic platform, based on the premise that Islam does not belong in Germany. The party’s dramatic gains in regional elections in 2015 and 2016 were a clear indication that even in Germany, which for historical reasons had been largely immune to far right political insurgency, the new master narrative of the populist radical right represented a winning formula for political success.

Context and Opportunity Structures: Visibility

In their recent analysis of Islamophobia, Abdellali Hajjat and Marwan Mohammed evoke a third factor informing the current climate which is conducive to nativist mobilisation—the growing visibility and assertiveness of Muslim minority communities in Western societies. To illustrate the point, Hajjat and Mohammed refer to an observation made by the sociologist Norbert Elias, who noted that resentment rises when ‘marginal, socially inferior’ groups no longer content themselves with their inferior position but start demanding to be treated equally, not only legally but also socially (Hajjat and Mohammed 2016: 20). This is exactly what has happened over the course of the past two decades, starting with Muslim organisations’ requests for the construction of mosques and demands by Muslim parents that schools provide halal lunches and, in some cases, that their daughters be excused from mandatory swimming classes, to occasional demands by radical Islamic preachers for Sharia law (or at least some parts of it) to be implemented. More often than not, these cases have received considerable publicity from mainstream media, adding fuel to nativist rhetoric about the creeping Islamisation of society and providing justification for nativist movements seeking to prevent the construction of new mosques and minarets (as happened in Switzerland), block attempts to take pork and sausages from school lunch menus (France) or introduce legislation banning Sharia law (several states in the USA). Each of these issues has contributed to exposing the public to the presence of Muslim minorities in Western societies and framing this presence in terms of a ‘problem’.

Nowhere has this been more pronounced than with respect to Muslim women’s attire—from the hijab and niqab to the burqa. Nothing has provoked an anti-Islamic backlash in Western societies more than encountering Muslim women wearing ‘the veil’ in public, not only on the

16 See the cover of *Der Spiegel*, September 6th, 2010

nativist right, but also among both Western and Muslim feminists, for whom the veil represents a “retreat from progressive values” at best, and at worst a symbol of subservience and oppression “used to alienate and control women under the guise of religious freedom” (Khan 2009; Alibhai-Brown 2015). Identical claims have been made by the radical populist right in their campaign against the headscarf, typically characterised as both the symbol of the “subordination of women in Islam” and “the expression of a political aim: the introduction of the Islamic legal system (Sharia)”¹⁷.

In Islam, as Geert Wilders has claimed, the “constant fixation on how women dress is the key to a proper society”, where women are submissive and subordinate to men (Wilders 2012: 52). It is for those reasons that the nativist right has made the question of women’s rights central to their anti-Islamic discourse. Starting in the most liberal democracies in northern Europe (the Netherlands and Scandinavia), this discourse quickly diffused throughout Western Europe, allowing even parties with a long history of right-wing extremism, such as the Front National and Vlaams Belang, to promote themselves as the champions of gender equality and women’s rights (Akkerman and Hagelund 2007). Vlaams Belang, for instance, launched its 2012 campaign ‘Women against Islamisation’ with a book-length pamphlet on the position of women in Islam (authored by the former Miss Belgium Anke Van dermeersch) characteristically entitled ‘Whore or Slave’ (Van dermeersch 2012). This, the party claimed, were the stark alternatives women were confronted with under Islam: adopt Western ways and be treated as a whore subject to abuse and, in the most extreme case, the threat of being murdered in the name of family honour, or submit to Islam’s archaic code of conduct and be treated as a Muslim man’s ‘exclusive property’ (Dewinter 2012: 67).

Legitimising Narratives and Populist Mobilisation against Islam

The nativist right’s adoption of the cause of gender equality and women’s rights has served as a justification for the clash-of-civilisation narrative that informs much of the nativist discourse on Islam, pitting ‘Western liberty’ against ‘Islamic intolerance’ (Van dermeersch 2012: 139). As Therese Ignacio Bjoernaas has aptly put it, the “ostensible oppression and subjugation of Muslim women by Muslim men” legitimised by Koranic doctrine, “makes Islamophobia a self-justifying doctrine” (Ignacio Bjoernaas 2015: 80). At the same time, it fits in nicely with the radical right’s populist claims of representing and defending the interests of ordinary people (in this case, ordinary Muslim women) against an elite—Western multiculturalists and Muslim fundamentalists—imposing their ideological views on the rest of society. In the process, the nativist right contributed to a narrative which constructed Muslim women as being fundamentally “trapped’ within their culture”—a narrative that extends far beyond the nativist right and which assumes that Muslim women are the ultimate victims because of their gender and their culture (Ghorashi 2010: 77; O’Brien 2015: 91). This essentialist discursive construction of Muslim women has allowed populist politicians to couch anti-Islamic propositions in terms of liberation and emancipation.

A prominent example is the leader of the Norwegian Progress Party, Siv Jensen, who for more than a decade was the leading promoter of banning the veil in Norway, arguing that the veil

17 <http://www.vrouwentegenislamisering.be/1852/?lang=en>

represented “an obstacle to the creation of an egalitarian citizen (correct quote) (Ignacio Bjoernaas 2015: 82). Jensen’s campaign against the veil was part of a larger project that used anti-Islamic discourse shrouded in feminist rhetoric to mobilise the people against the country’s ‘Left-oriented elite’, which, “in its eagerness to appear tolerant”, refused to see the oppressive nature of Islam (Ignacio Bjoernaas 2015: 85). Several factors accounted for the effectiveness of this strategy. For one, time series survey data show persistently high levels of scepticism toward Islam among the Norwegian public, with about half of the population considering Islam fundamentally or at least partially incompatible with Norwegian values¹⁸. This is particularly notable given the “strong hegemonic position” of anti-racism in Norway (Døving 2015: 64). The explanation might be found in a second finding: Although the vast majority (almost 90 per cent) of Norwegians agreed that anti-Islamic attitudes are widely shared in the country, substantially fewer Norwegians (roughly 60 per cent) thought this was something that needed to be addressed (Døving 2015: 64). Presumably, a significant number of respondents thought that there were good reasons for the negative views on Islam and Muslims, particularly with regard to the question of gender equality—a ‘national core value’ in Norwegian political discourse (Døving 2015: 69). Under the circumstances, Siv Jensen’s campaign against the veil was a perfectly rational strategy with which to gain respectability, bring her party into the mainstream of Norwegian politics and broaden its electoral appeal. The strategy proved successful. In 2013, the party entered government as a coalition partner for the first time ever.

The Norwegian story is emblematic of the diffusion of the anti-Islamic nativist master narrative during the past decade or so: Although even under Jensen’s predecessor, Carl Hagen, the party consistently rejected being associated with the radical populist right elsewhere in Western Europe, it quickly incorporated the anti-Islamic narrative into its political programme. This was also the case with other Scandinavian populist parties, most prominently the Dansk Folkeparti during Pia Kjaersgaard’s tenure as party leader, which in 2001 made the alleged threat of Muslim invasion and the displacement of native-born Danes by newcomers the central issue of its campaign for the national election (Betz and Meret 2009; Yilmaz 2012). The party’s nativist turn accounted for much of the party’s subsequent electoral gains, which made it a pivotal factor in Danish politics.

Elsewhere in Western Europe, the populist right’s transition from xenophobia to Islamophobia—in the context of a general programmatic change of focus in the direction of assimilation—was particularly pronounced in Austria, Flanders, Northern Italy and Switzerland, where in 2009, in a referendum initiated by members of the populist right, a majority voted for a ban on the construction of new minarets (Betz 2013; Krzyżanowski, 2013; Testa and Armstrong 2012). In other cases, the adoption of the anti-Islamic master narrative has boosted the electoral chances of new populist parties (as in the case of the German AfD) or helped revive the fortunes of once successful populist entrepreneurs. A case in point is Pauline Hanson, who in the late 1990s gained international notoriety after she successfully mobilised popular resentment with her claim that Australia was being ‘swamped’ by Asian migrants. After failing to get re-elected and being ejected from the party she had founded (One Nation), Hanson more or less fell into oblivion, only to re-emerge in 2016 when her party (One Nation, which she once again led) won four seats in the Australian Senate. Hanson primarily owed this success to out-

18 <http://www.imdi.no/contentassets/cd74d67fc3dc4cb89f389809dd718da9/vedlegg-3-tabellrapport-integreringsbarometeret.pdf>

spoken nativist views. Substituting Muslims for Asians, she claimed that the country was once again being swamped, only this time the threat was far more serious, given the incompatibility of Islamic culture and ‘ideology’ with Australian values. Hanson also partly owed her success to the emergence and evolution of a cultural climate which was increasingly suffused with anti-Islamic sentiment (Dunn et al. 2007; Ho 2007). They allowed Hanson to advance a number of radical measures, including a ban on immigration from Muslim countries, a ban on the construction of new mosques and a ban on the burqa and niqab in public places—measures which provoked significantly less outrage from the political establishment than had been the case with her anti-Asian tirades in the late 1990s (Switzer 2016).

Hanson assimilated her anti-Islamic arguments (for example, that Islam is an ideology rather than a religion) and policy propositions from the existing anti-Islamic narrative, which had already proven its effectiveness elsewhere. It is an instance of ideological/programmatic borrowing and imitation, facilitated by the establishment of anti-Islamic organisational networks, such as the initiative ‘Cities against Islamisation’, which brought together various Western European populist parties and anti-Islamic groups, particularly prominent websites, such as Gates of Vienna, Politically Incorrect or The Religion of Peace, and social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, which have been instrumental in the transnational and transcontinental transmission and dissemination of the anti-Islamic discursive frame (Oboler 2013; Ekman 2015).

Identity Politics and the Future of anti-Islamic Nativism

The adoption of Anti-Islamic nativism by the populist radical right has given these parties new opportunities to further strengthen their (already strong) appeal among lower-class voters while gaining new ground among middle-class constituencies (Oesch 2013). This has put new pressure on the mainstream parties to renegotiate their position with regard to the new ‘social line of conflict, which is informed by cultural identities rather than social issues’¹⁹. In the past, mainstream parties have been largely impervious to programmatic contagion by the radical populist right, even if they have been far less reluctant to employ populist rhetoric (Rooduijn et al. 2014). Given the dimensions of the challenge posed by the growth of Muslim minorities in almost all Western liberal democracies and their increasing visibility and assertiveness, as well as the passions they have provoked (particularly with respect to the ‘veil’), the mainstream parties’ position is hardly likely to prevail (Joppke 2013).

The focusing on the ‘challenge of identity’ and the question of Islam by leading French conservative politicians, most notably Nicolas Sarkozy, in preparation for the presidential election of 2017, might well prove indicative of things to come given the particularly strong competitive position of the French populist radical right under Marine Le Pen (Sarkozy 2016; Fillon 2016; de Villiers 2016). With popular bestselling commentators, like the French ‘polemicist’ and former TV presenter Eric Zemmour (2016), conjuring up images of a coming civil war in Europe, and nativist movements and parties evoking the spectre of the ‘great replacement’ and ‘Eurabia’, Islamophobia (in the true sense of the word) is likely to prevail in Western liberal democ-

19 The Austrian Chancellor Christian Kern in Kahlweit (2016).

racies for the foreseeable future, continuously fuelling a moral panic that provides fertile ground for populist mobilisation by nativist political entrepreneurs.

The appeal of anti-Islamic nativism opens up new opportunities to analyse a number of aspects of populism that have so far been neglected. The role of emotions in populist mobilisation is prominent among them. Nativist entrepreneurs have proven to be highly effective in arousing and appealing to a range of passions—from fear to anger, indignation and resentment. Passions, as Michael Walzer has noted, are central to theoretical debates about identity politics and nationalism, yet often ‘hidden’ (Walzer 2002: 617). Identity politics, as we have seen, lies at the very heart of the contemporary nativist agenda. Anti-Islamic nativism provides fertile ground for research which explores the emotive mechanisms that inform successful populist mobilisation.

The growing importance of identity as a salient political issue is intimately tied in with globalisation. One of the most striking cultural manifestations of globalisation has been the weakening of traditional territorially grounded identities in favour of new trans-territorial ones associated with migration (Vertovec 2001). From this perspective, the nativist right’s preoccupation with the question of Islam and of identity (national or Western) in general follows a certain logic. So far, studies that link populism and globalisation have largely focused on economic issues, such as the impact of de-localisation on unskilled labour and the impact of migration on the welfare state. The integration of culture and emotions into a comprehensive theoretical framework sensitive to the socio-economic and sociocultural impact of globalisation is bound to enhance our understanding of contemporary right-wing populism.

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CHAPTER 23:

MEDIA POLITICS AND POPULISM AS A MOBILISATION RESOURCE

Franca Roncarolo

Scholars that have dealt with populism have basically agreed upon two of its aspects. The first aspect, despite the wide-ranging scope of the debate, is that the concept of populism continues to present “constitutive ambiguity” (Mény and Surel 2002: 1) and remains somewhat indefinite as it is, in general, “quintessentially mercurial” (Taggart 2000: 2). The second aspect is that the connection between the media and populism is as relevant as—actually—still far insufficiently investigated (Aalberg and de Vreese 2017). These two observations are usually brought up independently of one another. However, it is possible to question whether the strategic nature of communication and the difficulties involved in investigating the link between media logic and populist style can in fact explain the conceptual vagueness that is so often lamented. On the one hand, it seems clear that the development of the media system has changed both the way politics is covered and the relationship between politics and citizens. It has thus contributed to the present “audience democracy” (Manin 1997), which promises to put an unmediated relationship between a leader and the people at the heart of its policies. On the other hand, it seems evident that the typical mediatisation processes of the last few decades (Esser and Strömbäck 2014) have led political actors to learn the rules of the media and have forced them to adopt new styles of political communication, which are more people centred and, in general, more in line with those that are considered the typical features of contemporary populism (Aalberg et al. 2017). Apart from us asking to what extent the media has supported the rise of neo-populism, it appears more appropriate to investigate a double hypothesis: first, that a consistent part of what is defined as populism is in reality the image taken on by mediated politics, and, second, that populist political communication above all represents a resource that can be used to mobilise citizens in the crucial moments of permanent campaign (Blumenthal 1982).

After a short reconstruction of the development of studies conducted on the relationship between the media and populism, the analytical perspective taken here will be discussed, while the logics and functions of populist communication in different phases of the political process will be briefly differentiated between in the last part of the chapter.

Media and Populism: Still an Obscure Relationship?

Taguieff was among the first to clearly indicate the role of the media in supporting the return of populism on the international political scene. In an important essay written in the nineties, he described twin aspects of the phenomenon (Taguieff 1995). On the one hand, he emphasised the contribution of the press in making the term populism popular, using it as a framing device to identify any new political phenomena that were closely observed and stigmatised. On the other hand, he also coined a suggestive term for identifying a new type of populism: ‘tele-

populism', which is "adapted to the needs of television mediatization and liable to orientate all the typical classes of populism" (Taguieff 1995: 125). These were the years in which, as Taguieff himself recalled, Sartori had raised the alarm about 'videopolitics', and even though there was no systematic analysis of tele-populism in the essay, the urgency with which the new conceptual categories were applied was principally sustained by the impact of the empirical case studies conducted at the beginning of the nineties (from the case of Ross Perot in the United States to that of Silvio Berlusconi in Italy, to mention just the most famous examples).¹ In spite of the success of the terminology coined by Taguieff, some years passed before the relationship between the media and politics was subjected to more systematic and in-depth analysis. This absence of research was—at least partially—first overcome through a book by three scholars of communication (Mazzoleni et al. 2003), who revisited the area by approaching it from a comparative perspective.

In this case, the work began by stating a preoccupation shared by many: "A theme of much commentary these days is 'political elites on the ropes!'" as Jay G. Blumler observed in his brilliant foreword to the volume, in which he also identified the communicative factor as being among those that "have conspired to undercut [politicians'] standings with the publics they are supposed to serve" (Mazzoleni et al. 2003: xv). Even more importantly, Mazzoleni's analysis in the introductory chapter, which framed the comparative research that followed by focusing on the relationship between "The Media and the Growth of Neo-Populism in Contemporary Democracies", was in fact dedicated to the communicative factor and its relevance in understanding contemporary forms of populism. According to Mazzoleni, it was necessary to consider three aspects here. First, there was 'media populism'², that is, the tendency of television and newspapers to follow their own commercial objectives by satisfying popular tastes and demands, ultimately creating "a formidable precondition for the diffusion of 'popular-populist' sentiments within society" (Mazzoleni 2003: 8). It was therefore necessary to consider the different but related roles undertaken by the 'tabloid media' and the 'established media' in the process of diffusing populism. Last but not least, there was evidence that—not unlike traditional politics—populist parties and groups would attempt to take advantage of the mutual dependence between the media and politics and put into practice communication strategies in order to guarantee themselves crucial media access and attention.

Not all the theoretical premises mentioned by Mazzoleni can be traced back to the comparative research—still of an explorative nature—that the authors involved in the project conducted in eight case studies. In fact, when reading the volume today, it appears rather evident that the authors themselves were concerned above all with focusing on the possible role of the media in supporting, even if it was involuntary, the success of populist groups. The conclusions were quite clear: whatever the intentions and perspective adopted by the news media, whether tabloid or high-quality journalism, their media coverage would end up giving an advantage to contentious political figures in that it "enhances their visibility and furthers their ends, by producing some kind of public legitimation" (Mazzoleni et al. 2003: 236).

Notwithstanding their avoidance of a wide-ranging analysis, the first attempt to explore the relationship between the media and neo-populism remains a reference point that even today is

1 It was by starting with exactly these same case studies that Taguieff developed his hypothesis of tele-populism and proposed integrating Margaret Canovan's typology with this new idea (see also Taguieff, 2002).

2 As far as the concept of 'media populism' is concerned, which was intended to indicate a set of populist tendencies within the same media institutions, see Kramer (2014).

of the utmost importance. First, considering the contribution of the tabloid media to the rise of popular discourse has influenced all subsequent works on the subject. Indeed, by highlighting a systematic connection between the advent of commercial media, the transformation of the information system as a whole and the emergence of new modes of engaging in politics which put people at its centre, it made a large contribution to explaining the rationale of current forms of neo-populism. Moreover, since the approach proposed by Mazzoleni in the 2003 volume put the political effects of mediatisation at its heart, it laid down the premises for an original analysis that would later allow scholars to understand the development of populist communication more clearly by grasping its unitary logic in both its soft-form and hard-form manifestations (Mazzoleni 2008; 2014).

The possibility of attributing forms of populism that have different levels of intensity and comprehensiveness to a common matrix was at the centre of another seminal contribution to the field of research in which Jagers and Walgrave (2007) asserted the by now well-known conception that populism is a political ‘communication style’.

When they wrote their by now much-cited article, Cas Mudde (2004) had already scaled down the ideological dimension of populism by labelling it a ‘thin ideology’. But they deserve credit for having made an additional step towards unveiling the light nature of the concept by proposing ‘a thin definition’ that in practice cancels out the ideological question and adopts a minimalistic conception of populism as “*a political communication style of political actors that refers to the people*” (Jagers and Walgrave 2007: 322; emphasis added by the author). Reduced to a nucleus comprising the symbolic and rhetorical relationship with the people, populism here can ultimately and above all be summarised as the tendency to manifest “closeness to the people simply by *talking about* the people” (Jagers and Walgrave 2007: 323; emphasis added by the author), but it can also be identified according to four types. Besides the first, identified just by the mere presence of any reference to the people, and for this reason defined as ‘empty populism’, there are another two types that are characterised by the inclusion of two typically conflicting aspects. First, when antagonism towards anyone outside a mythic community is linked to an appeal to the people, exclusionary populism is generated. Second, when antagonism towards elite groups bolsters the references that are made to the people, an anti-elitist form of populism is produced. Only when these three forms are joined together can complete populism arise.

The main reason for the success of this model is probably due to both its minimalistic and all-embracing nature. It is sufficiently general and flexible to accommodate the different degrees of intensity used from the populist platform, while it includes the various types of populism that have been identified in previous literature on the topic, ranging from mainstream populism (Mair 2002) to the present-day xenophobic populism of the right or the anti-establishment form advanced by the left. The fundamental belief that populism, ultimately, “is a master frame, a way to wrap up all kinds of issues” (Jagers and Walgrave 2007: 322) represents, as will be shown later, the most critical aspect of this approach. In fact, it makes the definition so general as to transform it into a kind of hollow vessel: if everything that is people-orientated can be defined as populism, then would it not follow that everything in the realm of media-

tised democratic politics is automatically populist?³ In order to avoid the concept being hollowed out in such a way, is it sufficient to adopt a more restrictive approach such as that taken by Cranmer (2011), who only considers references to the people made by politicians? Cranmer limits her approach to politicians who explicitly propose their role as advocates or make references to accountability and legitimation, which serve as indicators of populism. The hypothesis proposed here takes a different approach.

Before I elaborate on this hypothesis in detail, it is worth mentioning another analytical model. The volume *Populist Political Communication in Europe*, which was the result of the work of a large network of scholars and was supported by the European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST) project, has been used to analyse research and public debate on populism in 24 European countries from a comparative perspective (Aalberg et al. 2017). The central tool they propose is a “heuristic model for the analysis of political communication”, which has the merit of enriching the overall picture of populism in two key ways. First, it introduces a dynamic element, highlighting the processual nature of the relationships that trigger populism. Second, it makes the analytical scheme more complex by considering the interaction between the media, politics and citizens on three levels. Beneath the macro level of structural and situational contexts, there is the meso level, at which political and information organisations work, and finally the micro level. Here, the ways in which citizens’ predispositions interact with direct exposure to and messages from the media and politicians are positioned at the centre of attention. The scheme considers the impact these interactions have on individuals’ attitudes and behaviour at a cognitive and emotional level. Unsurprisingly, the analytical scheme produces an overall picture that is difficult to summarise in just a few lines and does not appear conclusive. However, as far as the avenues of enquiry that follow are concerned, it confirms the heuristic fragility of the concept of populism: “except for mentions and appeals to ‘the people,’” Stanyer, Salgado and Strömbäck (2017: 357) concluded, “not a single distinctive feature could be seen as common to all the different European populist political actors.” All that therefore remains is to begin again with the scheme proposed by Jagers and Walgrave, as the authors of the volume themselves did, although with an awareness of some of its limitations.

True Populism or Simply the Effects of Mediatisation?

It should be noted that there is the risk of defining populism merely as a form of politics that has adapted to the new media environment. It is not by chance that the effects of mediatisation emerge from all the types of populism proposed by Jagers and Walgrave. Empty populism is the best example here. How is it possible to overlook the fact that at the base of those discursive strategies, which systematically lead political leaders to exhibit their closeness to the people and to propose themselves as champions of the ordinary citizen, there is a reflection of media logic (Mazzoleni 2008)? In other words, one can see the residual effect of the mediatisation process during the years in which journalists, searching for faces to put to issues, accelerated the personalisation of politics, while simultaneously increasingly strengthening more di-

³ A reinterpretation of the model, which emphasises the possible ways in which different types of populism overlap, has been suggested by Reinemann, Matthes and Sheafer (2017: 16) For an even more radical approach to populism as an ‘empty signifier’, see Laclau (2007).

rect relationships between leaders and citizens. It is evident that, while the parties were progressively entering a period of crisis, the media approached citizens as a collective audience but also pushed principal characters into the centre of the public arena. The media faced a political sphere that often lacked a voice due to the difficulty of governing complex problems and difficult changes. They articulated the preoccupations of society, bringing civil committees and various movements to the fore, while conducting the role of advocacy. At the same time, they offered politicians a way out. Talk-show presenters taught politicians lessons on political disintermediation,⁴ while the opportunities that an ever more diversified media system offered made it attractive for the leaders to engage with the public in different ways to garner people's support for their leadership and political programmes. Needless to say, the 'peopolisation' of politics (Dakhli and Lhéroult 2008; Dakhli 2010), with its strategies to get closer to citizens through popularisation (Street 2016), fundamentally changed the ways of thinking about political leadership and how to exercise it.

Should it come as a surprise that all this has become common practice within the framework of mediatisation? Consequently, is it possible to call the putting into practice of these lessons populism or even empty populism? Above all, if populism is a style, is political communication in general simply populist, but with different degrees of intensity? It is significant that mention has been made of "Blair-style populism" (Canovan 2004) and of Cameron's populist tendencies (Alexandre-Collier 2015). Similarly, attention has been paid to Renzi's populist language (Tarchi 2015) and rhetoric (Salvati 2016), while several studies "have claimed the importance of populism in both the victories and the defeats of American presidential candidates, ranging from Reagan to Clinton and from Bush Jr. to Gore" (Mudde 2004: 250). Analogous questions and reflections are also valid when passing from the purely formal level of style to that of content.

Even in the case of anti-elitist populism, for example, it is difficult not to observe the echo of anti-political protests that emerged in response to negative daily media coverage. Indeed, because of the journalistic task of denouncement and their commercial interests, newspapers and television programmes have predominantly represented the vices of politics and its weaknesses, ending up constructing a representation of an evil governmental elite that stands in opposition to the mythic image of the 'good people'. This image can become even more favourable when the media itself suggests the need for a new form of politics that is at least formally more open to the issues citizens face (Mastropaolo 2012). It is difficult not to see a reflection of these processes of disintermediation, initially triggered by the mainstream media and then diffused by digital media, in the anti-elitist form of populism. Indeed, these processes have made the ideas of being excluded from power and relegated to the margins of society by elite groups less and less acceptable to public opinion (Canovan 2004; Alvares and Dahlgren 2016). And these same processes have offered leaders the opportunity to present themselves as spokespeople for political dissatisfaction and the frustration of those who feel excluded.

Using the same analytical perspective, one can also ask whether it is possible to identify typical elements of mediatisation in the exclusionary populism that is rooted in identification and aims to reinforce a sense of belonging to the "imagined community" (Anderson, 2016). One can assert that the logics of polarisation have contributed greatly to triggering explosive exclu-

4 The concept of disintermediation was introduced into media studies by Chadwick (2007: 232). See also Chadwick (2006) and Mancini (2013).

sionary populism. Polarisation was partly generated through attack advertising (Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1995), which has since become radicalised due to the effect of a more and more aggressively partisan and extreme media,⁵ but also through the frequent use of social networks as echo chambers, in which the repetition and affirmation of similar opinions has stimulated intolerance towards diversity.

Naturally, the presence of xenophobic content is an important element in qualifying the more general tendency towards polarisation, which pits insiders against outsiders within each group in the wider context of contentious politics (Tilly and Tarrow 2015). However, this aspect also merits further investigation. In fact, more focused analyses are needed in order to understand to what extent exclusionary politics belongs to the realm of rhetoric and to distinguish between authentic xenophobic propaganda and true ideological opposition to ‘others’ (foreign people, immigrants and so on) from simple forms of ‘straight-talking’, which reveal problems that are usually left unspoken. Again, if “paradoxically the fact that we live in an ever more closely surveilled society has had the effect of intensifying the ‘sense of existential insecurity’” (Furedi 2009: 197), is it not in some way inevitable that political communication should intersect with waves of “public anxiety” (Silverman and Thomas 2012: 284) concerning highly relevant issues such as terrorism and immigration?

Overall, the problem seems to be twofold. First, as has already been mentioned, there is confusion about the different types of political communication in mediatised democracies and the exact attributes of populism. Second, there is the long-standing question of the role the media plays in supporting the emergence and success of forms of politics that are called populist. Although, overall, one cannot fail to agree with the critical overview with which the anthology composed by Aalberg and his colleagues concludes that there is still an inadequate volume of empirical research on the subject, it is, however, also possible to try to advance some more precise considerations.

The Role of the Media in Supporting the Rise of Political Actors Defined as Populist

Much has already been said about the role of the media in supporting the coming to power of a form of politics orientated in a populist direction (Mazzoleni et al. 2003; Mazzoleni 2008; Aalberg et al. 2017). However, among the aspects that deserve further exploration are the ambivalence of the media’s role, interaction between citizens’ concerns and the attention given to populist actors by the media.

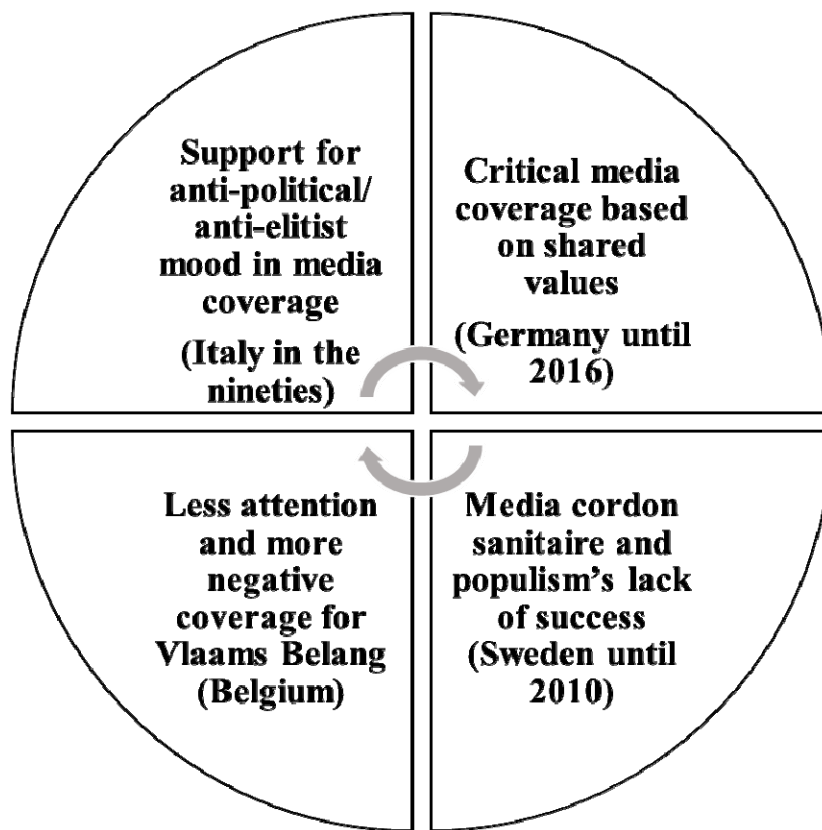
In fact, as has already been mentioned, not only can the media system be an ecological factor that favours the emergence and spread of messages that can be conventionally defined as populist, but it can also be considered to have a critical role, as it is potentially able to produce unintended effects for at least two complementary reasons. First, populist political actors can turn criticism of the information elite to their advantage. They can do this easily by both accusing journalists of being part of the maligned establishment and by exploiting the traditional

5 On the concept of extreme media being distinct from partisan media, see recent contributions from Taylor (2017), for whom ‘extreme television media’ comprises ‘those television shows that use bombast, derision or sarcasm to castigate or praise politicians, political actors or issues’. For an overall analysis of the polarising effects of partisan media, and of the contemporary media system, see Levendusky (2013) and Prior (2013).

underdog position that is generated when the media limits the amount of coverage reserved for a figure who is supported by a part of the public, above all when they present their ideas in a negative, critical or sarcastic tone. Clearly, from this point of view, the climate of public opinion in the country and, more generally, the orientation of the given societal values is decisive here. The second aspect that should be considered concerns the more or less willingness of citizens to embrace the content at the heart of the populist political offer.

If we explore the relative relationship between the attention dedicated to populist themes by the media and the orientation of public opinion, four typical situations emerge. On the basis of the available research on different national cases, it is possible to obtain a better understanding of the dynamics through which the populist message achieves greater or lesser diffusion (see Figure 23.1).

Figure 23.1: Media Coverage and Citizens' Attitude Towards Anti-elitist and/or Exclusionary Messages



The first typical situation is found in the convergence of a climate of opinion strongly oriented towards radical and serious change among the governing elites and a media discussion that supports that request for change, while encouraging anti-political protests. This is what occurred, for example, in Italy at the beginning of the Nineties. The coverage of views by a section of the media and the opportunities allowed by popular television (Street 2016) came together to diffuse criticism of the political parties (Roncarolo 2002). The call for a new form of

politics thus contributed to the success of two political parties in Italy that have often been considered populist—Forza Italia and Lega Nord (Tarchi 2008; Bobba and Legnante 2017)—but also led to the collapse of the First Republic.

In contrast to this situation, Sweden had been considered an exception to the populist rule until a few years ago (Strömbäck et al. 2017). In fact, according to research findings, it was only after 2006 that the cordon sanitaire against populist insurgency, which until then had functioned well, started to weaken, and the media began to pay increased attention to the Swedish Democrats. This resulted in a realignment of some of the electorate and the first partial success of this marginal party in the 2010 election, which culminated in it entering the Swedish Riksdag with 5.7 per cent of the vote (Oskarson and Demker 2015).

Some intermediate cases of the typology are, for example, those in Belgium and Germany. In Belgium, even though there has never been an outright media cordon sanitaire against populists, journalists have paid less attention and given more negative coverage to the Flemish radical right-wing populist party Vlaams Belang, which, up until its recent decline, nevertheless enjoyed a long period of increasing electoral success (De Cleen and Van Aelst 2017).⁶ The German case, on the other hand, has been specular. In Germany, until recent signs of tension emerged, a wide agreement on the values of German society accompanied the critical attention the media paid to political parties in general (and parties with populist features in particular), which has made the country exceptional at European level in its substantial lack of support for populist parties at national level, at least until the success of Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) in various regional elections in 2016 signalled the probable start of a new phase (Fawzi et al. 2017).

This first draft of a typology, which references only a few cases by way of example,⁷ cannot in any way claim to identify any certainties concerning the role of the media in supporting political actors who, in political debates, are defined as populist. Moreover, the typology should be made more complex to take into account the differences between popular and elite newspapers, which—although they are situated within the overall context of the progressive commercialisation of the media—are still not detectable (Rooduijn 2014). Similarly, much more attention should be paid to the political effects of media criticism and the uses that political actors can make of it (Esser et al. 2017). However, putting journalistic orientations and those of the citizens in systematic relation to one another again highlights the limits of considering the direct influence of the media and presents, instead, the opportunity to consider the media's effects in somewhat ecological terms.⁸

6 Before its recent decline, Vlaams Blok, later known as Vlaams Belang, had experienced continuous electoral growth from the end of the eighties to the mid-2000s and reached a particularly high peak in the 2004 political elections, when almost one out of four voters (24 per cent) voted for its proposals (De Cleen and Van Aelst, 2017: 99). Two examples of variations to the situation in Belgium can be mentioned here. First, the case of Lega Nord in Italy, whose electoral vote grew up to 1992 despite the indifference of the mainstream media and today is still the subject of essentially critical coverage outside the official channels of the party and right-wing newspapers. The second, more complicated case is that of France, which, in spite of a somewhat critical journalistic attitude towards the Front National, has witnessed an increase in the space reserved by the media for Jean-Marie Le Pen and later, above all, for his daughter Marine. Such increased attention can be attributed, on the one hand, to the growing commercialisation of the media and, on the other hand, to the increasing importance of the topic of immigration in contemporary society (Hubé and Truan 2017; Charlot 1986).

7 The British case, which deserves its own analysis on account of its relevance and complexity (Stanyer, Archetti, and Sorensen, 2017; Akkerman, 2011), is among the important examples that are missing here.

8 See the documentation collected on the Media Ecology Association site (<http://www.media-ecology.org>).

Conclusion: The Populist Style as a Resource for Mobilisation

It is from this perspective that reflections on populism can be narrowed down better. Two different aspects, which are connected to each other, should especially attract our attention and be drawn upon in future research. The first concerns the use of a populist repertoire as a resource with which to respond to the challenge of establishing a relationship of trust with those citizens who are extremely critical, if not wholly disenchanted, with politics (Albertazzi and McDonnell 2008). The second aspect refers to the functions that the populist style can have with respect to the need to conduct political leadership in the context of what Mair (2002) has defined as ‘populist democracies’, namely those democracies where parties have in fact stopped working as intermediaries between the demand-side and supply-side of representation. All this has to be done while attempting to take advantage of the opportunities new and old styles of media present, but also while managing their negative effects and keeping their destructive potential under control.

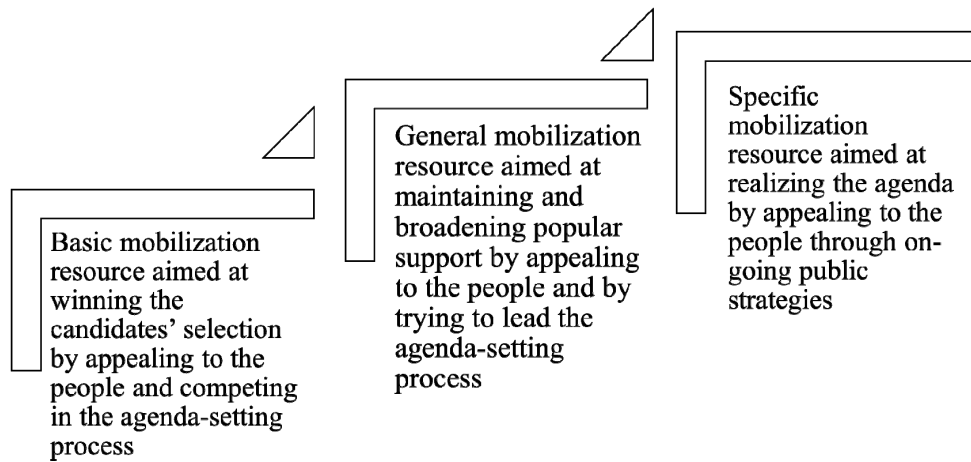
If it is indeed true—as has been suggested here—that what Jagers and Walgrave have called ‘populist style’ is instead, to a very large extent, just the political communication style adapting to a new environment that is more widely exposed to the media, it should then be pointed out that such an adaptive process is much more wide-ranging than has so far been considered. This process not only necessitates learning the grammar of the media and its simplified or personalised logic, but it also, above all, necessitates responding to the new demands of a profoundly transformed society, which the media has helped render more independent but also more anxious and uncertain. It is a society that is much more individualised than was the case in the past, less trusting, and forced to face an infinitely more complex world without traditional cultural and ideological points of reference. It is a society in which the people are exposed to media narratives on a daily basis, which—whether deliberately or not—feeds society’s uncertainties and fears and thus maximises its anxieties. Needless to say, this society has had to experience an extraordinarily long and intense economic crisis over the last decade, to which some citizens have responded with protests against austerity as part of anti-establishment movements (della Porta et al. 2017; Gerbaudo 2017), while others have responded with reactions that many have judged to be populist (Inglehart and Norris 2016; Kriesi and Papas 2015), and almost everyone has experienced preoccupations and resentment.

Apart from the necessity of responding to the challenges of social change, interpreting demands and governing contradictions, present-day political leaders find themselves in the difficult situation of having to compete in order to push through their proposals without being able to count completely on the support of their parties. This implies, among other things, that it is necessary to establish relationships with the citizens as a whole that, on the one hand, are direct and unmediated and, on the other hand, reinforce the attraction the people have towards discursive structures.

Both forms of pressure—one that demands speaking for and responding to the expectations of disillusioned citizens and one that obliges an individual to compete in order to obtain and exercise political leadership without the mediation of a party—contribute to the establishment of populist communication (see Figure 23.2). Whoever puts themselves forward as a candidate in electoral competitions and whoever governs—but also whoever from the opposition challenges the majority—is thus required to employ a form of political communication that can effective-

ly reach the citizens. They must forcefully point out their distance from traditional elites and, at the same time, give credible reassurance and a sense of belonging by presenting idealised visions and, at the same time, giving concrete objectives. In order to do this, they must navigate a complex media environment and be able to dominate not only traditional media logic, which operates on the basis of extreme simplification and ‘spectacularisation’, but also follow the imperatives of disintermediated horizontality. However, above all, they must make communication the strategic resource for permanent mobilisation with the aim of supplanting instability with political consensus. Since politicians need to continuously reinforce their ability to lead, they cannot reduce the intensity of their communication, soften their tone, cease to maintain connections with their potential electorate or cease to make the electorate feel part of a shared project centred around the keyword ‘us’.

Figure 23.2: *Populistic Communication Style as a Mobilisation Resource During Campaigning and Governing*



In such a context, dedicating oneself unflaggingly to gathering support from citizens by utilising a people-centred repertoire of communication and anti-elite rhetoric thus becomes an almost indispensable imperative within the social and political environment. The tone and intensity of the appeal to the people will surely change according to the national culture and the leaders by whom it is made. Moreover, in the different phases of the cycle between one election and another, the forms of communication can partly change according to factors that merit further empirical investigation. However, it seems clear that, globally speaking, populist actors respond to the basic requirement of keeping the hearts of the people mobilised.

In fact, in the context of the permanent campaign, it is not always possible to totally renounce the logic of mobilisation, not even when a party eventually passes from an election battle to the task of setting up a government's agenda. This is in part because continuing to feed passion among one's followers can compensate for the inevitable cooling off of tone and the moderate tendencies that characterise the act of taking on the responsibilities (and constraints) of directing public affairs, differentiating messages according to whether one is addressing the political arena or the public. It is also in part because keeping one's own constituency mobilised with appropriate rhetoric, even in a populist vein, can become a way of guaranteeing resources, which can be used during crucial moments of political battles to exert pressure.

It is worth considering whether much of the political communication that is characterised as populist is not also this: a way of trying to hold responsiveness and responsibility together, while attempting to survive the impossible challenge of actually delivering what the people want within the framework of the constraints the economy imposes.

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CHAPTER 24:

POPULIST AND NON-POPULIST MEDIA:

THEIR PARADOXICAL ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND DIFFUSION

OF A RIGHT-WING IDEOLOGY

Benjamin Krämer

Are the media populist, and if they are, in what sense? Or do the media unwillingly foster populism even if they are declaredly anti-populist? This contribution discusses populism in and by the media, that is, coverage by the mass media that can be termed ‘populist’ in different senses.

Krämer (2014: 48) has introduced a concept of media populism in the narrow sense. It is characterised as “the use of [certain] stylistic and ideological elements by some media [...]: the construction and favouritism of in-groups [the homogeneous ‘people’ that are in the majority, but nonetheless construed as subaltern], hostility towards and circumvention of the elites and institutions of representative democracy, reliance on charisma and common sense, and appeal to moral sentiments (thus, on an emotionalising, personalising, and ostentatiously plain-spoken discourse)”. Populist actors, in general, can also claim to represent this in-group and that they are able to capture the will of this people, and demand that it should be directly implemented against the resistance of the corrupt and conspiring elite without regard for sensitivities, complicated procedures or minority rights (cf. Krämer, forthcoming b). In a broader sense, media outlets and actors can also claim to represent the people or work towards the implementation of its will.

Populism has often been described as a thin ideology (Abts and Rummens 2007; Elchardus and Spruyt 2016; Mudde 2004; Rensmann 2006; Stanley 2008). However, thinness can be understood in at least two interconnected ways. First, it is argued that populism has not reached the same level of theoretical elaboration, or even scientification, as other ideologies, such as liberalism or socialism (Hawkins 2009). Second, populism is said to cover fewer aspects of social life and politics, or to only consist of a core that needs to be complemented by other ideological elements in order to form a fully fledged ideology. Some aspects are indeed more important to typical populist worldviews and are typically adopted by populist movements (Rooduijn 2014), such as a particular way of ‘decontesting’ the concept of ‘the people’,¹ which results in anti-elitism, anti-out-group bias (which is more pronounced in the case of right-wing populism), and the claim to directly represent and implement the popular will. Further elements are probably not completely arbitrary but more compatible with the interpretation of the core concepts of populism and other peripheral features (for an overview of such elements and various definitions, cf. Diehl 2011; Pappas 2016). The core of populism is then combined with further elements to form more concrete ideologies held by groups of actors—whole

¹ On this morphological approach to ideologies, cf. Freeden (1996). He assumes that ideologies interpret contested political concepts such as liberty, equality or justice in a way that is specific to each worldview. While fully fledged ideologies ‘decontest’ all relevant concepts, thin ideologies only cover a limited number of them.

worldviews with utopian and practical aspects, as theorised by Mannheim (1929); (cf. Ivaldi and Swyngedouw 2006; the authors also refer to Mannheim in characterising right-wing populism). For example, many (right-wing) populist actors also hold and express typical attitudes on other issues—such as gender relations, climate change, cultural policy, etc.—that derive from, or that are consistent with, the core elements of populism. The present argument mainly refers to European right-wing populism (cf., for its elements, Betz and Johnson 2004), because an analysis of several types with their commonalities and differences would be quite complex.

It is argued here that (right-wing) populism is, or has evolved into, something like a fully fledged ideology. It can still be considered thin because it lacks founding figures and theoretical key works, but it is increasingly theorised—albeit at a certain price, as we will see—and has its own intellectual roots, which may nevertheless be identifiable (cf. Finchelstein 2014). It seems that for some parts of the population, this ideology is not too thin; it provides guidance in the interpretation of the most different political and social phenomena, in their political practice and even with regard to aspects of their lifestyles.

In some contexts, it may be useful to strictly define populism as a thin ideology, reduce it to its core or conceptualise it as a discursive frame or strategy; I do not consider these conceptions and the one adopted here mutually exclusive. In order to understand the wide variety of relationships between populism and the media, a thicker concept of populism seems more appropriate—as is a broad conception of media populism. We should certainly differentiate between the media being populist themselves (as suggested in the narrow definition of media populism above) and other ways in which their activity fosters or sustains populist worldviews. Different categorisations have already been proposed in the literature, such as ‘news value populism’ or ‘tabloid populism’ (Bos and Brants 2014). The aim of this contribution is to develop a framework for the interpretation and classification of media populism by reviewing previous research and complementing it with further aspects. It will be argued that, in the broadest sense, the media can be ‘populist’ in at least six ways that all have somewhat paradoxical implications. The first four sections discuss media populism in a broader sense—ways in which the media indirectly, and even unwillingly, reinforce populism—while the two remaining sections discuss media populism in the narrower sense. The first types of media populism can be considered paradoxical because non-populist or anti-populist journalism may foster a worldview that is at odds with the foundations of the liberal and pluralist public sphere this type of journalism strives to realise. The remaining types of media populism can either be paradoxical in the same way if they only form a smaller part of the overall coverage by an otherwise non-populist medium. Or the paradox may consist, for example, in the unclear and sometimes unintended relationship between media populism and other populist actors. Media populism may be intended as a substitute for other actors’ populism but may reinforce its appeal, or the populist media may want to support populist leaders but find themselves in competition with them over who really speaks for the people.

Fuelling anti-elitism by routinely reporting negative incidents involving elites and acting as democracy's fourth estate, even in a way that undermines democracy

If the mass media are sufficiently free, they tend to and are expected to be critical toward elites, focusing on problems, harm, misconduct, scandals, opportunism, personal interests and crises in politics and other fields (for example, it is not uncommon for journalists to consider themselves watchdogs, cf. Hanitzsch 2011, or advocates of social change, cf. Hanitzsch et al. 2016). If journalists and media organisations embrace a critical and independent role, political scandals and value changes in journalism and in the overall population will call existing institutions into question. Furthermore, if journalism has to demonstrate its independence towards increasingly aggressive political PR, this will lead to an increase in negativism (Lengauer et al. 2011).

Routines of reporting that focus on problems and controversy can be considered highly functional for a democratic system. At the same time, negativism (as well as a merely strategic or opportunist framing of politics) may cultivate distrust in elites and, possibly, also in the political system as a whole. The vast body of literature on distrust and cynicism fuelled by the media, as well as the arguments and evidence of their positive effects on participation, cannot be reviewed here in detail (cf. Bennett et al. 1999; Capella and Jamieson 1996; Newton 1999; for an overview: Barthel and Moy 2015). As a consequence of negativist coverage, citizens from certain milieus may turn away from non-populist democracies and towards more authoritarian models or populist forms of representation (for a discussion of the relationship between media malaise and populism: Mazzoleni 2003).

However, while the media's function as a countervailing power to party politics and governments may lead to anti-institutional undertones in coverage, many media organisations and actors are closely intertwined with political institutions, and many also stick to the norm of impartiality, therefore extending their critical coverage to both non-populist and populist actors. Negativism or criticism of elites does not equal populism.

While tabloid media run a considerable share of positive stories (Engesser et al. 2014), they also typically tend to frame a large part of their coverage with regard to the opposition between politicians or elites and the people (Klein 1998). If their audience relatively lacks understanding of political processes—and if political self-efficacy is already low among some of their users—negativism, a focus on people instead of issues and generalised anti-elitism in tabloid reporting may particularly suggest populist interpretations to this part of the population.

Negativism and strategic framing, as well as further news values, routines, frames, etc., can have populist implications without a medium being affiliated with populist movements. Coverage is often ethnocentric, confirms established issues, frames and discourses (for example, once a social group has been defined as a threat), and focuses on surprising and controversial short-term events (see below), as well as personal responsibility, instead of structural explanations (which is in line with populist conceptions of leadership, anti-institutional attitudes and conspiratorial thinking).

Providing platforms for participation and media criticism without responsiveness

By providing online platforms for self-expression and discussion, media organisations seem to promise new opportunities for people to participate more directly in discourses and, ultimately, in the political process. If they are dissatisfied with how journalism functions in general or particular contributions in the media, they can also voice criticism of the media. People's wishes for participation and accountability may express themselves in a pluralist and deliberative mode. However, if the political system and journalism fail to respond to the demands of citizens, this may foster or at least confirm populist, anti-elite sentiments.

This could also be the case if a gap between the attitudes of functional elites and the clientele in each respective field (voters, media users, etc.) manifests itself if one compares regular coverage and contributions by media users (even if this impression is highly biased by the self-selectivity of commenters). In this case, populism and anti-media populism (populist criticism of the media) in particular can manifest themselves in the comment sections and discussions on media platforms. However, functionalities for participation can be framed in either a more deliberative or more populist way, and journalistic content can be populist, non-populist or anti-populist. Therefore, we should not conclude that online participation or new media technologies foster populism *per se*. This depends on particular constellations, which would have to be interpreted from a populist perspective, that is, as a sign that popular and elite views differ and popular demands are ignored by an elite. That elite would then only create opportunities for pseudo-participation, but not respond to popular demands, and conspire to force its views on the people. If one does not subscribe to this populist view, this does not exclude scholarly critique of participatory features of online platforms (for example, as driven by commercial rather than democratic aims, a means of maximising page impressions and data accumulation, or as the exploitation of audience labour to create content for free). However, this criticism should not be projected onto a critical audience, whose criticism may be driven by different motives and interpretations that may or may not be inspired by populist worldviews. Still, providing opportunities for participation may paradoxically fuel populist hostility towards the functional elites and institutions in politics and journalism.

Responding to the news value and self-stylisation of populist actors and providing them with a platform

The controversial discursive styles and political strategies of populist actors (both in 'anti-party parties', cf. Decker 2006, and populist movements outside the political system) fit into schemata that usually trigger journalistic coverage. Even if many media outlets and journalists are far from sympathetic towards populist actors and ideologies, they direct the public's attention towards them and contribute to the normalisation and legitimacy of populism—which, however, may lead to a decrease in the news values of populist actors, as suggested in life cycle models of populist movements (Herkman 2015; Stewart et al. 2003).

On the other hand, populist provocation may lead to shifts in the limits of what can be said publicly, and populists may be able to impose their own definitions of issues, timing and

claims of expertise and representation. For example, right-wing populists have contributed to a discourse in which migrants and refugees are mainly seen in terms of cultural compatibility and deviant behaviour. While this hegemony is not unchallenged, these populists have constantly fuelled moral panic by means of provocative intervention, which have then initiated debates based on their premises (Yılmaz 2012).

Haller (2013) describes these provocative strategies of smaller—and, in particular, populist—parties as intentional self-scandalisation: Actors willingly transgress moral boundaries and count on the scandalisation of this behaviour by the media and other political actors. It is a means of attracting attention, creating a conflict in which controversial issues have to be discussed on populists' terms, polarising the electorate and mobilising one's own supporters. Furthermore, the meta-message of such intervention can be that the elites do not take the issue seriously or may even suppress its discussion, and that this is the reason why such drastic means are necessary.

However, in order to be successful, some parts of the population must not be repelled by the provocation—otherwise the scandalisation of the provocation would not lead the populist followership to close ranks. There must be some ideological agreement in some milieu, and further factors may render populist intervention acceptable, or even admirable, to some. If virtually everyone was outraged by the provocation, it would not have any particular strategic value besides increased media attention. Such intervention is particularly effective if a sufficient part of the population accepts the aforementioned meta-message.

The fact that media coverage of populist actors is often personalised may contribute to explaining the function of self-scandalisation. This line of explanation has been developed for cases in which neo-liberal and exclusive populists are successful among the same electorate whose interests should incline them towards at least a more inclusive, class-based variety, or whose group identity has even been constituted by the politics of inclusive 'plebeian', instead of ethnic, populism.² Filc (2011) refers to the particular habitus of the more recent right-wing populist leaders in order to explain this seeming paradox. Their down-to-earth—or even provocative—style invokes a feeling of belonging, as if they are a part of—or keep in touch with—the people, and that their clientele is taken seriously (even if this inclusion works by excluding further underprivileged groups). This style implies that, as opposed to the rest of the political elite, these leaders are not afraid to say exactly what concerns the common people, whereas the language of the elite seems to be intentionally nebulous and jargon-laden in order to obfuscate the truth and their interests.

Personalised coverage then allows for the identification of this habitus more easily. However, style cannot be separated from content. While identities and social categories may shift and the habitus remains the same, the tone seems to validate the concrete message, namely that the leaders indeed speak for the in-group, which they provocatively set apart from some out-groups. Conversely, if parts of the clientele already tend to accept the exclusive ideology, the

2 While the meaning of the term 'neo-liberalism' is contested and has changed over time, in the context of present-day populism, it mainly refers to movements that have advocated policies of deregulation, privatisation and cuts in social welfare benefits, and underlying ideologies that favour individual and economic freedom over state interventions (cf. Boas and Gans-Morse 2009 on these and other meanings). In some cases, neo-liberal populist actors emerged from movements whose success had been based on the inclusion of socially disadvantaged groups, as opposed to the exclusionary populism based on ethnic and cultural boundaries that these actors then adopted (Betz 2001; Filc, 2011).

provocative style and message seem all the more justified to them, and the reactions confirm the underlying worldview.

Whether the media scandalise provocative interventions or refuse to address the issues populists construct and try to place on the political agenda, these actors may also use such reactions strategically. They can complain about the unfairness of the mainstream media and the neglect, or even censorship, of the views of an allegedly large part of the population, or even the ‘true’ and natural interests of the people. Sometimes the media react to these accusations by devoting a great deal of (or as some may say, disproportionate) attention and coverage to populists and their messages. For example, the frequent accusations of liberal bias raised against US mainstream media may have contributed to the favourable coverage and mainstreaming of the Tea Party, constructing it as a movement that represents ordinary citizens with legitimate concerns and offers new and viable political ideas (Guardino and Snyder 2012).

The paradoxical conclusion of this is that non-populist media respond to populist provocation even if the strategy of intentional self-scandalisation is obvious because of the professional routines triggered by the news value of these interventions. Populist media criticism (or anti-media populism) can almost rule the journalistic field because it forces journalism onto the defensive by appealing to professional norms, which leads to even more intensive coverage of populists.

Supplying evidence of populist constructions of out-groups

If the media cover deviant behaviour by members of out-groups, populists tend to use such news reports as evidence of more general problems caused by these out-groups and their inherent disposition to violate social norms. In particular, if coverage is framed in a way that emphasises cultural differences in general—or the race, ethnicity, religion, etc. of perpetrators of crimes—this may contribute to an essentialised distinction between the people and the out-group.³ Such coverage seems to confirm the view that the characters of ‘the people’ and the out-group are fundamentally incompatible.

It is not completely clear who has contributed more to the establishment of this construction, the mainstream media and political actors or populists, and who has profited most—populists who created or only rode the wave of anti-immigration politics, or other political actors who were restrictive in terms of immigration anyway or became so in response to populists (cf. Mudde 2013 for a discussion). However, this conception of immigrants seems almost impossible to escape even for the most non-populist actors; populist interventions and media coverage of the issue may have contributed to the spread and normalisation of populist rhetoric in the political field (on the mainstreaming of populist discourses on immigration: Curran 2004).

While a certain type of media populism has been termed ‘tabloid populism’, there is no unambiguous evidence to support the hypothesis that the tabloid media are more populist than oth-

3 For example, on racial stereotypes as well as mentioning the opposite accusation of the media being biased by ‘political correctness’, cf. Entman and Gross (2008), or on stereotypes concerning Muslims, cf. the meta-analysis by Ahmed and Matthes (2016). For an overview on media and stereotypes, including those related to crime and terrorism, cf. Behm-Morawitz and Ortiz (2012).

ers (Akkerman 2011; Bos et al. 2010). However, this conclusion could be due to measurement issues. If media content is analysed by identifying the core elements of populism, they may not be particularly prevalent in the tabloid media because these concepts are quite abstract when used explicitly. On the other hand, content analyses that focus on the manifest presence of the core elements have to neglect peripheral elements and episodic manifestations of populist narratives. For example, tabloid media reports on crime or moralising coverage of elite misconduct may not convey a populist ideology in its abstraction but may provide episodic evidence of such a worldview.

As in the previous section, this pattern of reporting is not necessarily populist in the sense of the above definition. Therefore, media coverage may paradoxically confirm populist worldviews despite the good intentions of journalists or their convictions that they innocently report ‘what really happened’, for example, that a crime occurred and the offender was a migrant.⁴ However, some media outlets may complement reports on single incidents with campaigns that explicitly construct a popular will. We may remember headlines in tabloid newspapers that employ the imperative and make demands to politics (on the things ‘we’ [the ‘people’] want ‘them’ [the politicians] to do about ‘them’ [the out-group])). Populist groups then use reports on out-groups (for example, on Muslims in the case of European right-wing populism) as evidence of their worldviews. This leads to another paradox, which Holt and Haller (2016) have called the populist communication paradox: Despite their criticism of the media as part of the elite, populists tend to uncritically accept media reports that confirm their assumptions.

Supplying catchwords, slogans and interpretive frameworks for populism—and anti-media populism

Media outlets may spread information about incidents that can be used as evidence of populist worldviews (which may be unavoidable to a certain degree) and frame them in ways that emphasise anti-elite and anti-out-group perspectives (which is not unavoidable). Editorials, columns and media reports have also coined or repeated expressions and made claims that can serve as truly populist interpretive frameworks for incidents and issues, such as the concept of ‘Islamisation’, the idea of political correctness gone mad and left-wing cultural hegemony, criticism of gender theory, nationalist myths and constructions of a national character, and culturalist and racist essentialisation of particular out-groups, etc.

Across different issues, the populist right cultivates a sense of injustice; an elite has become culturally dominant and infiltrated the system, which it now uses to its own advantage by installing a dictatorship of political correctness and undermining traditional values and institutions (Betz and Johnson 2004). Populist leaders and conservative journalists have claimed that they alone have the courage to speak for the silent majority, whose interests are no longer represented and may even be dangerous to express.

In the case of one of the key issues of populist politics—migration—, it is obvious how most of the media have accepted the premises of populist discourses, either by endorsing them directly

⁴ On the relationship between exposure to news on crime and immigration and voting for right-wing populist parties, see Burscher, van Spanje and de Vreese (2015). Smith (2010) also found that insecurity due to crime, in particular in conjunction with immigration, creates opportunities for right-wing populist parties due to their issue ownership.

or by responding to them in a way that confirms the populist way of framing the issue. Certainly, the direct and indirect effects of populist actors and other factors can be estimated differently. However, the definition of ‘the people’ as *ethnos* has almost superseded other social categories, such as social class and other descriptions of society and its antagonisms, which are not based on cultural differences (Yılmaz 2012). Even those who do not subscribe to dystopias of Islamisation, such as left-wing commentators, intellectuals and even many researchers, assume that immigration from Muslim countries will naturally create tensions and that the rise of right-wing populism is a reaction to migration (instead of realising the effort needed to construct this incompatibility; the success of right-wing populism is not the result of the presence but of the salience and stereotyping of migrants, cf. Yılmaz 2012).

This culturalist discourse may be somehow acceptable for mainstream commentators for two reasons (cf. Betz and Johnson 2004). First, the populist distinction between the in-group and the out-group avoids the charge of racism because it emphasises diversity and incompatibility instead of superiority, and it focuses on the struggle against (alleged) privileges or the levelling down of differences, resistance to threats to cultural identity, national unity and tradition. Second, this discourse refers to liberal values such as democracy, human rights and, in particular, women and LGBT rights in order to characterise out-groups (such as Muslims) as backward and question their ability to integrate.

Yılmaz (2015) summarises the results of this discourse as follows: Migrant workers (that may or may not benefit the economy) have come to be defined almost exclusively as Muslims, and the working class (among other milieus) has been attracted by parties that denounce an elite conspiracy to further Islamisation.

The mainstream media have not only contributed to constructing interpretive frameworks compatible with populism in the debate on migration, but also with regard to other issues. For example, right-wing populism does not only define itself by its opposition to migration, Islamisation, multiculturalism, etc., but also to the deconstruction of gender order (or shortly, by “anti-genderism”, see: Siri 2015). Again, a great discursive effort has been necessary in order to construct the issue. Sexist, homophobic and transphobic, and similar attitudes are certainly not uncommon among the general population. However, gender equality and the tolerance or acceptance of different sexual orientations, ways of life and forms of partnership are, at least by their own accounts, firmly established in mainstream political parties and media. Nevertheless, populists have been partly successful at constructing a concrete threat (cf. Siri 2015). While there is no danger to individual heterosexual marriages and nuclear families, etc., an abstract group has to be evoked, which is then threatened by extinction due to childlessness and by the confusion and moral corruption of children due to ‘early sexualisation’ or ‘homosexual propaganda’. Generally, populism does not typically invoke concrete threats to the immediate everyday life of its clientele, but to a ‘people’ with its culture and as a ‘body’ (*Volkskörper*). Everyone can feel abstractly threatened; any action by elite actors or out-group members is an attack on the people as a whole and gives everyone the right to resist.

The mainstream media have not necessarily adopted or given a forum to the most extreme scenarios, conspiracy theories and slurs. However, some types of comments regarding gender issues have made their way into the mainstream media because of their entertainment value, for the sake of diversity and controversy, or as legitimate expressions of the feelings of the ‘silent majority’. Columnists have expressed their disdain of gender studies and endorsed biologicistic

conceptions of gender, lamented the celebration of sexual minorities, or expressed their—as they describe it, authentic and ineluctable—revulsion of feminism or men kissing men.

Populism, sometimes in complicity with the media, constructs a crisis of identity and the traditional way of living (in terms of national culture, gender, family, etc.), a crisis of justice (where the in-group is treated unfairly by the elite and in contrast to purported privileges for out-groups) and ultimately a crisis of representation. Recent research on populism therefore emphasises that populism is not simply a reaction to an external crisis, but that it also performs it spectacularly (Moffitt 2015). It continuously defines problems that, according to the populist worldview, reflect each other and all point to a more fundamental crisis—the antagonism between the people and the ruling class. The crisis is perpetuated by the staging of spectacular and controversial, but seemingly authentic, media events. Strong, ‘unideological’ leadership and the simplification of political procedures are proposed as solutions to the crisis (Moffitt 2015).

Paradoxically, the anti-elite attitude and sense of crisis cultivated by this type of populist communication (which may in part come from the media themselves) can then also be turned against the established media (seen as just another element of an evil elite). The result can be fully fledged anti-media populism, which increasingly manifests itself on social media platforms and in populist alternative media. The mass media may also contribute to anti-media populism more directly. Parallel to the case of the United States, as described by Major (2015), conservative actors and the media have been successful at establishing the idea of a general left-wing bias among the mainstream media in many countries. Conservative columnists in the mainstream media and publications from a conservative counter-public sphere have claimed that conservative positions and widespread common-sense attitudes and concerns are falling victim to politically correct censorship. These ideas can then pass over to the populist conception of an elite conspiracy, in which most journalists participate.

Thus, the mainstream media, including the quality press, could contribute to the consolidation of previously existing populist (or ‘proto-populist’) attitudes, make them expressible and legitimise them by developing intellectualised and euphemised versions of populist sentiment. Journalism can thus be populist in a broader sense by (even unwillingly) providing symbolic examples or, more directly, by spelling out elements of populist ideologies.

In addition to journalists, some public intellectuals who have been given a forum in the quality press have contributed to the legitimisation of ideas such as migrants as invaders, the loss of sovereignty and national identity, the destruction of a natural order of the sexes and the loss of virility in Western countries, etc., using polished styles, jargon and references to intellectual history. They are able to capture right-wing populist sentiments and shift the discursive climate without facing the same accusations and evoking the same associations (for example, with Nazism) as populist leaders (cf. Müller 2016, on the German case).

However, another paradox lies exactly in this theorisation of populism. Conservatism has been described as an ideology that is developed when a traditionalist *doxa* (an unquestioned, seemingly natural or self-evident belief) is challenged (Bourdieu 1981). Mannheim (1929) characterises it as a worldview that is only elaborated *ex post* when traditions are fading or being questioned. However, populism—similar to conservatism—is on the defensive when it begins to be theorised. Intellectualism conflicts with the idea that good social order is grounded in group’s natural features and in common sense, not abstract historical processes and reasoning

(on more recent conservative or right-wing populist movements, cf. Siri 2015). Therefore, increasing theorisation of a conservative ideology or utopia can be considered at odds with its own foundations and may not resonate well with every milieu that subscribes to the world-view.

Serving as a substitute for populist leaders

The idea that charismatic leadership is a defining feature of populism can be criticised both on theoretical and empirical grounds. The concept of charisma does not seem sufficiently clear when explaining the success of populist leaders. The concept remains tautological if one does not specify the relevant properties of the leader and if it is not clear whether leaders have to be similar to their followers or if they need other properties—it rather seems that a particular habitus is required (for different views on charisma, cf. Abts and Rummens 2007; Filc 2011; McDonnell 2016; Müller 2014; Priester 2011). Furthermore, some populist movements seem to lack a single and distinct leader. However, it may still be argued that this is a deviation from ideal-typical populism, and these movements still tend towards the typical form of leadership whose establishment can be expected sooner or later (possibly fostered by the media's tendency towards personalisation of coverage). In any case, populism favours simple, direct and—most often—personalised forms of representation instead of complex procedures, bureaucracy and all other kinds of institutions that usually guide and restrict political processes (Abts and Rummens 2007; Canovan 1999; Urbinati 2013).

As leadership is certainly not irrelevant, media outlets or individual journalists can then be populist 'leaders' themselves. They convey a populist worldview by selecting and interpreting issues from a distinct populist perspective. In some cases, they even claim to represent the people by speaking for them or even acting in their interests. If this claim to representation and leadership is populist on a formal and ideological level, media actors can form coalitions with populist actors, contribute to their rise or compete with them.

Krämer (2014) has discussed a number of structural conditions that make it easier or more difficult for the media to claim populist leadership. For example, it seems possible for them to bypass the political system and directly communicate with 'the people'. However, they are often closely linked to political institutions and actors, and their seemingly direct and authentic communication is the product of organised and specialised labour as well as professional training.

From a certain perspective, this type of representation can be considered even more 'populist' than direct democracy. It can be assumed that the populist conception of democracy is plebiscitarian and Bonapartist, not deliberative or participatory (Abts and Rummens 2007); the homogeneous, or at least majoritarian, will of the people has to be registered once and for all. A referendum is a redemptive act (Canovan 1999) that brings an issue to a final decision and a lesson, or even punishment, for elites. Lengthy discussions and the laborious elaboration of solutions or compromises are incompatible with the idea of a pre-existing and unitary will—complex procedures are even considered a means to weaken that will, avoid its implementation and divide the people (Canovan 1999). From the perspective of ideal-typical populism, it could be even more desirable to appoint leaders who are able to intuit and enforce the popular

will (Müller 2014). Media organisations or actors who do not focus on balanced reporting and deliberative reasoning, but on a function as a *vox populi*, could still lack direct formal power; however, they can pressure elites to follow the will of the people and thereby implement that non-pluralist, anti-institutional and somehow effortless or even consumerist conception of democracy.

In some cases, media populism could be a substitute for other populist actors. Even actors in the explicitly populist alternative media have to decide if they side with populist parties or movements or remain independent. Some populist media may weaken the positions of other populist actors, but this may be the weakest of the paradoxes discussed here. Two or more populist actors (for example, a populist party or leader and a populist tabloid newspaper) will probably not cannibalise each other just by communicating their ideologies. This will probably only happen if, for example, a tabloid paper starts attacking and actively competing with populist political actors (because scandalising some misconduct seems even more attractive than appealing to a populist worldview, or because, despite its ideological commitment, the paper is attached to the elite or certain values; cf. the campaign of the German tabloid ‘Bild’ against the right-wing populist party ‘Republikaner’, as opposed to the Austrian case, Art 2007⁵).

Maybe another paradox is even closer to the truth: Populists claim to represent the people, and they can sometimes secure the intention or unwilling complicity of the media. However, right-wing populist movements can be seen as a (sometimes rather fierce and violent) rear-guard battle of some milieus against cultural change. Populist attacks against migration, gender equality and sexual diversity, social welfare benefits, etc. may even encourage the mainstream media to close ranks, strongly defend anti-populist positions and thereby foster cultural modernisation. If a larger proportion of journalists and other media producers feel that their liberal values are under attack, they could be even more inclined to defend and promote these values and to give a forum to those who represent these values or who are affected by populist rhetoric and policies. They may thus contribute to the further de-traditionalisation and pluralisation of lifestyles, an openness towards migration and cultural diversity, the acceptance and normalisation of previously stigmatised ways of life, etc. and thus to the cultural change that right-wing populists oppose.

Conclusion

As the previous argument shows, the relationship between populism and the media cannot be reduced to one simple line of causality. On the one hand, populism is compatible with a num-

5 Art (2007) proposes an explanation of the different success of the right-wing populist parties ‘Die Republikaner’ in Germany and the ‘Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs’ (FPÖ) in Austria. While other parties, civil society actors and the media strongly opposed the Republikaner, Austrian actors have tried to ‘tame’ the FPÖ by cooperating with the party. In particular, Art (2007) contrasts the reaction of the German tabloid newspaper ‘Bild’ with its Austrian counterpart ‘Kronen Zeitung.’ While the latter praised and defended the FPÖ leader Jörg Haider even before his electoral successes and after a number of scandals, ‘Bild’ strongly campaigned against the Republikaner. The party was successful in a number of elections during the late 1980s and 1990s, and the newspaper can be classified as conservative and populist. However, as Art (2007) argues, the German elites and press are more sensitive to right-wing extremism, and the founding editor of ‘Bild,’ Axel Springer, had committed his newspaper to strictly opposing anti-Semitism and right-wing extremism. Therefore, despite its own use of many elements of a right-wing populist worldview and style, it may be argued that the newspaper contributed to preventing the rise of right-wing populist actors (with the recent exception of the Alternative für Deutschland), despite its occasional support in the early stages of their emergence.

ber of common mechanisms that simplify social interaction and the functioning of social systems such as journalism or the political system. For example, social categorisation, a monocentric, local perspective on society, an in-group bias and an emphasis on particularistic relationships, and a focus on negative events and threats, etc. reduce complexity. Some of these principles can be considered functional to a certain degree. On the other hand, the populist worldview relies on a number of—*a priori* improbable but seemingly natural—historical and discursive constructions, such as certain ethnic and religious stereotypes, gender roles and the idea of an *ethnos* or nation itself.

The framework presented in this chapter is partly supported by empirical research or previous theoretical arguments, and is partly original and speculative. When theorising the relationship between populism and the media, we can draw on and critically engage with the rich body of literature concerning the concept of populism, which has also been adapted with regard to the media and discourses. Recently, for example, Aslanidis (2015) suggested replacing ideology with the concept of framing, which can more easily be operationalised in content analyses. The analysis of the relationship between populism and the media, the author argues, would no longer have to struggle with the complex and contentious notion of ideology. Instead, he proposes simply counting the use of core elements of populism if they are employed to construct political issues and propose solutions. Furthermore, large-scale and complex studies have causally linked media coverage with the rise and fall of populist parties (see Boomgarden and Vliegthart 2007, and Pauwels 2010 for a critical discussion; Koopmans and Muis 2009; Walgrave and de Swert 2004), which also have to be based on reliable, ‘thin’ measurements of populism in the media. They have to reduce populism to a manageable number of core elements that can easily be identified when explicitly mentioned in the media. These types of analyses should be pursued further by testing different mechanisms that link particular types of media coverage to particular types of populism (that differ with regard to their peripheral elements), including those mechanisms that lead to the containment of populism (Deacon and Wring 2016). However, we should complement these ‘positivist’, standardised and hypothetico-deductive approaches with interpretive, historical and comparative ones that understand populism as a whole worldview and practice in which people grow into biographically (Kemmers 2015). Furthermore, overly thin conceptions of populism may allow for simple and reliable measurements but neglect important aspects of populist political communication and some of the diverse connections between an increasingly fully fledged worldview and the media.

Previous research has predominantly focused on journalism, while popular culture should be included in theories and studies of populism and the media. The relationship between popular culture and populism is not as clear as the common etymology suggests (Krämer 2014; Krämer, forthcoming a). For example, some populist movements and leaders see their ability to entertain as proof of their connection with the common people, and popular culture may reproduce social categories associated with a populist worldview. However, cultural change, such as new gender roles, the growing acceptance of multiculturalism, etc., has increasingly manifested itself in popular culture. Therefore, popular media content may be one of the factors that reinforces a sense of crisis, decline, loss of identity and nostalgia (Betz and Johnson 2004) in certain milieus that feel their worldview and lifeworld is no longer represented in the media and threatened by these changes. Then, popular culture contributes to driving those milieus into protest and making the media the target of anti-media populism.

As indicated at the beginning, the above theses mainly refer to European right-wing populism. There is a certain trade-off between the depth of an analysis of a single variety and the potential of large-scale comparative analyses. This may be the reason why existing and ongoing international studies on populism and the media tend to focus on the least common denominator or core of populism and why we lack studies that link particular cultural and structural contexts to particular varieties of populism that constitute fully fledged ideologies.

In the present context, however, it may be useful to end by outlining some normative and practical implications of the theoretical considerations outlined above, even if these conclusions are restricted to a particular type of ideology. As opposed to populist conceptions, many media outlets and actors are guided by a pluralist vision of society and politics. However, the functioning of this type of journalism can play into the hands of populist actors just by it striving for diversity, balance and objectivity. In its own interest or based on normative considerations, it should therefore reflect its instrumentalisation by, or complicity with, populism if it wants to avoid fostering movements that oppose some of its own principles.

For example, the media should not constantly provide episodic evidence of populist world-views. Instead, they should take a systemic and multi-perspective view on society and insist on alternative distinctions and explanations. For example, they should contribute to deconstructing the essentialist representation of out-groups by populists. In contrast to their claims, ethnicity is not simply a person's true nature, and journalism is not less truthful and objective if it refuses to mention it in every instance and seeks for alternative and, often, more informative descriptions.

Populists should also have to prove themselves in all policy areas. If they manage to draw attention to certain problems and contribute to the construction of a crisis around certain issues, their issue ownership cannot go unchallenged. It is certainly common for all kinds of political actors to present themselves as experts on certain issues or even strategically construct these issues. However, the news value of populist positions and statements, or their emphasis on certain issues, should not force the press to uncritically accept such constructions, for example, by inviting populists to almost any talk show on immigration, but not on other issues.

The media should offer more alternative visions of society than the simple hierarchical and segmentary populist model (cf. Krämer, forthcoming b), alternative criteria for the evaluation of political phenomena, other forms of social and media criticism, and identities that are compatible with pluralism and cosmopolitanism.

In the face of anti-media populism, journalists should not confirm the self-definition of populists as victims of censorship too easily. It would be in their own interest not to succumb to constant populist criticism, but point to existing privileges (of the in-group that populists claim to represent and of the populists themselves, who often dominate certain discourses in reality) and disclose the rules that guide their decisions on how to cover political actors.

Journalism should ideally be discursive in two ways: It should insist that the *volonté générale* is not already fixed but has to be elaborated argumentatively (at least according to deliberative as opposed to populist conceptions of democracy). At a meta-level, journalism should partly give up the idea that it has to become invisible behind the seemingly objective product and make its decisions and the underlying reasons transparent (for example, by arguing why minorities or populist actors are treated the way they are instead of simply implementing some conventional rules). By insisting on pluralism and discursivity (including public discussion of

its own norms), journalism can then set itself apart from populism, while covering it in a justifiable way.

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