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## Exclusionary vs. Inclusionary Populism: Comparing Contemporary Europe and Latin America

Although there is a lively academic debate about contemporary populism in Europe and Latin America, almost no cross-regional research exists on this topic. This article aims to fill this gap by showing that a minimal and ideological definition of populism permits us to analyse current expressions of populism in both regions. Moreover, based on a comparison of four prototypical cases (FN/Le Pen and FPÖ/Haider in Europe and PSUV/Chávez and MAS/Morales in Latin America), we show that it is possible to identify two regional subtypes of populism: exclusionary populism in Europe and inclusionary populism in Latin America.

IN THE PAST DECADES POPULISM HAS BEEN A MAJOR TOPIC OF ACADEMIC INTEREST in various regions of the world, most notably East and West Europe and North and South America, and at least a minor topic in the other regions. At the heart of much of the interest in populism, both in and outside the scholarly community, is its complex relationship with democracy. In fact, a growing number of studies deal with the impact of populism on democracy explicitly (see, among others, Albertazzi and McDonnell 2008; Mény and Surel 2002; Mudde 2007; Panizza 2005; de la Torre and Peruzzotti 2008).

One of the key aspects discussed in the literature is whether populism is exclusive or inclusive (or both). Interestingly, the findings seem largely regionally determined, as most studies on Latin American populism emphasize its inclusive character (see, for example, Collier and Collier 1991; de la Torre 2010), while almost all scholars of European populism stress its exclusive nature (see, for example,

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Berezin 2009; Betz 2001; Rydgren 2005). As few cross-regional studies of populism exist, and most generic studies of populism remain fairly theoretical and empirically voluntaristic, these clearly contradictory findings have not given rise to much debate.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, any cross-regional comparison would be hampered by the wide variety of definitions used in the field.

To overcome the conceptual confusion and regional isolation of previous studies, this article investigates whether populism is exclusive or inclusive (or both) cross-regionally and by consistently using one definition of populism. Empirically, our particular focus is on four cases in the 1990–2010 period: for Europe we study Jörg Haider and the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) and Jean-Marie Le Pen and the French National Front (FN); for Latin America we analyse Bolivian President Evo Morales and the Movement for Socialism (MAS) and Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez and the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV).<sup>2</sup> We selected these particular cases because they represent prototypical examples of the current type of populism that is prevalent in these respective world regions. The cases are helpful for undertaking exploratory research and developing tentative conclusions that should, of course, be further tested by future studies.

The article is structured in three sections. We begin by developing our conceptual approach and showing its advantages over alternative definitions of populism. The second section explains the case selection and provides basic information about the four selected populist actors. Finally, the third section compares European and Latin American populism (by means of our four case studies) on the basis of its inclusionary and exclusionary features. Building upon the distinction of Dani Filc (2010), we analyse populist actors in both regions according to three dimensions of inclusion/exclusion: material, symbolic and political.

While populism always entails both exclusionary and inclusive features, different types of populism can be distinguished on the basis of this distinction. Today, European populism is predominantly exclusive, while Latin American populism is chiefly inclusive. Two factors are crucial for understanding these different regional patterns: on the one hand, the way in which populist actors define who belongs to ‘the people’ vis-à-vis ‘the elite’, and on the other hand, the ideological features that are attached to the particular populist ideology of the actors. In addition, we will show that despite the differences between the two types of populism, both share a problematic

relationship with liberal democracy and strive for the repoliticization of specific issues, that is, topics that intentionally or unintentionally are not being addressed by the establishment.

## POPULISM DEFINED

The concept of populism has been contested for decades, between disciplines and within disciplines, between regions and within regions. This is most visible in the seminal edited volume of Ghita Ionescu and Ernest Gellner (1969), in which the different authors present a broad variety of highly diverse definitions. While some progress towards consensus has been achieved in recent decades, particularly within European literatures, dissensus still reigns supreme, particularly between regions.

As Ruth Collier (2001: 1814) has pointed out, the main problem of defining populism lies in the fact that the existing conceptualizations encompass very different traits as defining properties of populism. Thus, populism is usually defined on the basis of quite incongruous and even opposite attributes. Moreover, the very notion of populism tends to receive a negative connotation in both the scholarly and public debate, since it is commonly analysed as a pathological phenomenon. Therefore, it is not an exaggeration to state that populism is usually seen as a dangerous trend that, by emphasizing a rigid interpretation of the ideas of popular sovereignty and majority rule, may pursue problematic goals such as the exclusion of ethnic minorities and the erosion of horizontal accountability (see, among many others, Rosanvallon 2008).<sup>3</sup> In short, establishing a definition of populism represents a challenge, not only because of the absence of a consensus on its defining properties, but also due to the normative considerations about it.

How to develop a concept of populism that overcomes normative and regional biases? In our opinion, the most promising way is to follow Giovanni Sartori's approach (1970), which is characterized by the promotion of minimal definitions. These include only the core – necessary and sufficient – attributes of a concept. The advantage of minimal definitions is that, because they are based on a reduced number of attributes (little intension), they can be applied to analyse a great range of cases (high extension). Our minimal definition conceives of populism as '*a thin-centred 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 politics should be an expression of the volonté générale (general will) of the people’* (Mudde 2004: 543, italics in original). In the following two subsections we first explain the key elements of our definition in more detail, and then underline its advantages over alternative definitions.

### *Key Elements of the Concept*

The proposed definition is in line with the work of several authors who use an ‘ideational’ approach, that is, they assume that populism is first and foremost a set of ideas.<sup>4</sup> However, in contrast to most of the definitions developed within this approach, ours seeks to foster the study of populism from a theoretical *and* empirical perspective. In this sense, we follow what Gary Goertz (2006: 5) has called a ‘realist perspective on concepts and definitions’. This means that concept analysis involves ascertaining the fundamental constitutive elements of a phenomenon, which in turn are relevant not only for developing hypotheses and explanations, but also for undertaking empirical research. In this view, it is crucial to focus on the concept’s internal structure and its constituent parts.

By using the notion of a ‘thin-centred ideology’ developed by Michael Freeden (1996), we postulate that populism is a particular set of ideas that is limited in ambition and scope. Thin-centred ideologies such as nationalism and populism habitually appear in combination with very different concepts and ideological traditions that are key to their capacity to make sense to larger constituencies. Not by coincidence, Paul Taggart (2000) has argued persuasively that populism has a chameleonic nature: it appears in different times and places, but is always constituted by aspects of its environment that resonate with ‘the heartland’. This implies that in the real world there are few, if any, pure forms of populism (in isolation), but rather subtypes of it that show a specific articulation of certain ideological features (Laclau 1977).

Thick-centred or macro ideologies have a dense morphology that has several core and adjunct concepts that are crucial for developing an overarching network of ideas that offers answers to all the political issues confronting a society. By contrast, thin-centred ideologies have an identifiable but restricted morphology that relies on a small number of core concepts whose meaning is highly

context dependent. As a consequence, thin-centred ideologies are unable to offer complex arguments and often adjust to the perceptions and needs of different societies (Freeden 1998: 751). In the case of populism, there are three core concepts: the pure people, the corrupt elite and the general will (see also Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2013).

All manifestations of populism are based on the moral distinction between 'the pure people' and 'the corrupt elite'. Whereas the former is depicted as a homogeneous and virtuous community, the latter is seen as a homogeneous but pathological entity. Although it is true that all manifestations of populism make use of this Manichean language, not all of them develop the same perspective when it comes to specifying who belongs to 'the pure people' and who to 'the corrupt elite' (Canovan 1999: 3–4). Hence, both concepts should be conceived of as empty vessels, filled in different ways by different actors. This is not a trivial remark; as we will show in this article, undertaking an empirical analysis on how populist actors and parties define 'the pure people' vis-à-vis 'the corrupt elite' is a fitting method for identifying subtypes of populism.

Equally important to the moral distinction between 'the pure people' and 'the corrupt elite' is the appeal to the general will. Oddly enough, this aspect is often overlooked in the scholarly literature. Populism is not only about attacking 'the elite' and defending the interests of 'the common people'; it is also about the very idea that all individuals of a given community are able to unify their wills with the aim of proclaiming popular sovereignty as the only legitimate source of political power. Seen in this light, populism is a set of ideas about how politics should function that echoes Rousseau's republican utopia of self-government.

In summary, we conceive of populism as a thin-centred ideology that has three core concepts. These three core concepts represent the sufficient and necessary criteria for defining populism: all of them must be present in order to categorize a phenomenon as 'populist'. Hence, actors or parties that employ only an anti-elitist rhetoric should not be categorized as populist.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, discourses that defend the principle of popular sovereignty and the will of the people are not necessarily instances of populism. In summary, the concept that we propose assumes that populism is a common set of ideas, but not that all political actors and constituencies adhere to the populist ideology (at every time) (Mudde 2004: 545).

*Advantages of the Concept*

According to Goertz (2006: 27–35), good concept-building is characterized not only by presenting a definition based on necessary and sufficient conditions, but also by identifying its negative pole. Certainly, this is something that scholars of populism have not devoted enough attention to. As a consequence, existing definitions of populism are often so broad or vague that they are highly problematic for use in empirical research.<sup>6</sup> To make explicit the opposite of a concept is helpful for sharpening the analysis, particularly when it comes to drawing clear boundaries in order to avoid conceptual confusion and fostering empirical research. In our case, there are two direct opposites of populism: elitism and pluralism.

Elitism is also based on the Manichean distinction between ‘the people’ and ‘the elite’, but has a mirror image of the morality. In other words, elitists believe that the people are dishonest and vulgar, while the elite are superior in cultural, intellectual and moral terms (Bachrach 1967). There is a long tradition of elitism within political thought that is often used to attack populist ideas. By way of illustration, Plato’s argument that experts, or so-called ‘guardians’, should be in charge of the government, because democracy easily degenerates into rule by the mob, is an argument that has been raised (directly or indirectly) by many concerned with the emergence of populists in the contemporary world.

Pluralism offers a view about society totally different to that of elitism and populism. Instead of thinking about a moral distinction between the homogeneous people and elite, pluralism assumes that societies are composed of several social groups with different ideas and interests. For this reason, pluralists favour the proliferation of many centres of powers and maintain that politics should reflect the preferences of as many groups as possible through compromise and consensus (Dahl 1982). Hence, pluralism takes for granted that it is impossible to generate something like a ‘general will’ of the people. The latter is seen as a construction through which despots are enabled to commit atrocities in the name of the people. Indeed, ‘the term “pluralism” has increasingly been used to refer . . . to ethnic, cultural, or religious groups, usually in a fashion that advocates wide latitude for such minorities to be able to pursue their own specific traditions and ways of life’ (Plattner 2010: 89).

Having laid out the two opposites of populism, it is easy to understand that populism is not a key ideological feature of all political actors. In fact, most mainstream parties in Europe defend the pluralist world view of liberal democracy and rarely employ the moral distinction between 'the pure people' and 'the corrupt elite'. Even in Latin America only a minority of chief executives can be categorized as populists (Hawkins 2010). This means that populist actors are not ubiquitous, and that they do not have absolute freedom in developing ideological partnerships (Stanley 2008: 107). To maintain their populist nature, populists have to refer continuously to not only the Manichean distinction between 'the pure people' and 'the corrupt elite', but also to the Rousseauian idea that politics should be the expression of the general will.

In summary, we define populism as a thin-centred ideology with three core concepts and suggest that in the real world populism hardly ever exists by itself. It has a 'chameleonic' character: populism can be left-wing or right-wing, organized in top-down or bottom-up fashion, rely on strong leaders or be even leaderless. At the same time, by identifying two opposites of populism, we propose a conceptual approach that is helpful for drawing the boundaries of the phenomenon in question. For the sake of clarity, two more advantages of our definition should be stressed.

First, this concept can and has been applied in empirical research around the world (see Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012) and is close to many definitions used in studies in Europe (Arter 2010; Stanley 2008) and, increasingly, Latin America (Hawkins 2010; Ramirez 2009; de la Torre 2010). Consequently, the minimal concept proposed here travels well, and permits us to identify the 'lowest common denominator' present in all expressions of populism. Second, in line with suggestions from leading scholars in the field (Canovan 1984; Mouzelis 1985), this concept permits us to argue that instead of elaborating a generic theory of populism, the identification of *subtypes* of populism should be the starting point of the analysis. In a second step, we can compare these subtypes in order to deal with specific research questions, such as the study of the ambivalent relationship between populism and democracy.

It is important to underline that other minimal definitions of populism have been proposed. In fact, in recent years, a growing group of scholars have started to work with (personal interpretations of) the definition developed by Kurt Weyland (2001: 14), who

argues that populism 'is best defined as a political strategy through which a personalist leader seeks or exercises government power based on direct, unmediated, uninstitutionalized support from large numbers of mostly unorganized followers'. Relying on this definition, Kenneth Roberts (2006) has analysed the formation of subtypes of Latin American populism that differ in their respective levels of organization in both civil society and the partisan arena.

Although we agree with Weyland's methodological approach (2001) (that is, the establishment of a minimal definition that seeks to avoid the problem of conceptual stretching and tries to suspend normative considerations about populism), we disagree with the core attributes of populism that he proposes. While we do not deny that particular expressions of populism might have an elective affinity with certain organizational aspects – for example, charismatic leadership and a style of communication characterized by the absence of intermediaries – we argue that these kinds of organizational aspects are not defining properties of populism. As Kirk Hawkins (2010: 40) has pointed out, 'political organizations such as religious parties and millenarian movements have charismatic leaders and low levels of institutionalization early in their organizational life cycle, but usually we do not consider them as populist'. At the same time, many phenomena that are broadly considered populist either lack a charismatic leader (for example, the original US Populists) or are organized in well-established parties (such as populist radical right parties in Europe).

Finally, by defining populism as an ideology, instead of as a political strategy, it is possible to grasp that the emergence and endurance of populism is linked to both supply-side and demand-side factors. This is an important point since the concept of political strategy puts too much emphasis on the leader, overlooking that under certain circumstances there might be constituencies which adhere to a populist ideology. In fact, the political strength of particular manifestations of populism is related not only to the existence of strong leadership but also to the development of a populist ideology that is flexible enough to include the perceptions and needs of different constituencies. In the language of Laclau (2005: 40), 'The so-called "poverty" of the populist symbols is the condition of their political efficacy – as their function is to bring to equivalential homogeneity a highly heterogeneous reality, they can only do so on the basis of reducing to a minimum their particularistic content'.



## CASE SELECTION

Before we start with the analysis of our four cases, it is worth briefly discussing the case selection rationale for this article. After all, one could argue that the chosen cases are not representative of the types of populism that are predominant in Europe and Latin America today, and that there is thus little ground for making generalizations. In this sense, it is important to highlight that our methodological stance relies on the analysis of *prototypical* cases with the aim of offering some tentative conclusions that should be tested further in future studies analysing more cases (Gerring 2007: 91). With this caveat in mind, we believe that these four cases represent a good starting point for undertaking a cross-regional comparison of contemporary populist forces in Europe and Latin America.

Populism is a relatively new phenomenon in Europe that has come to prominence with the formation of the populist radical right party family in the 1980s. The parties that belong to this family share three ideological features – nativism, populism and authoritarianism – and their electoral fortunes have differed widely, from strong and fairly stable parties such as the Italian Northern League (LN) to flash parties such as the League of Polish Families (LPR) and consistent failures such as the British National Party (BNP) (Mudde 2007). As almost all European mainstream parties adhere to the values of pluralism, Europe is not fertile ground for the populist set of ideas. Furthermore, radical leftist parties in Europe have only rarely employed populist discourses (March 2011). One of the few examples of electorally successful European left-wing populism is the German party The Left, which has a populist discourse that is not combined with nativism (Decker 2008; Hough and Koß 2009).

In short, populism seems to experience a kind of ‘marriage of convenience’ with the radical right in Europe today; there are only a few isolated cases of successful non-radical right populism in contemporary Europe.<sup>7</sup> Although there are many populist radical right parties and leaders in Europe, we focus here on the two cases that are prototypical for the larger family: Jean-Marie Le Pen’s National Front (FN) in France and Jörg Haider’s Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) in Austria.<sup>8</sup> Both are among the oldest and most established cases of the populist radical right party family in Europe and can be seen as prime examples of the type of populism that is predominant in contemporary Europe.

In contrast to Europe, Latin America has a rich tradition of populist leaders, movements and parties since the beginning of the twentieth century. Indeed, it is possible to identify three 'waves of populism' in Latin America: classic populism of the 1940s and 1960s (for example, Juan Domingo Perón in Argentina and Getúlio Vargas in Brazil), neoliberal populism during the 1990s (for example, Alberto Fujimori in Peru and Carlos Menem in Argentina) and finally radical leftist populism since the 2000s (for example, Chávez in Venezuela and Morales in Bolivia) (for an overview, see Freidenberg 2007). Of course, there are important differences among the variety of populist experiences that have emerged in this world region, particularly in terms of the proposed economic policies and the role played by the leader.

We selected the cases of Morales' Movement for Socialism (MAS) and Chávez's United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) for two reasons. First, we seek to analyse contemporary populism in Latin America. Second, these are the two current cases that have generated most debate in and beyond the scholarly community. It is important to note here, however, that the literature has emphasized the inclusionary aspect of both left-wing and right-wing populism in Latin America. For example, Kenneth Roberts (1995) and Kurt Weyland (1996) have demonstrated that the so-called 'neoliberal populists' implemented economic measures that generated the exclusion of a variety of organized sectors, such as state employees, but they also included the very poor through targeted distributive policies.

Before we present some basic information about our four case studies, we need to clarify a last point: the focus on leaders *and* parties. Clearly, the two are deeply interlinked, which often makes it difficult to differentiate between the ideas of the former and the latter. That said, European political systems are mostly parliamentary regimes that centre on more or less well-organized political parties, while Latin American political systems are predominantly presidential, centred on strong individual leaders with often weakly organized movements or parties tied to them. Interestingly, France is an exception within Western Europe; it has a semi-presidential system that is a mixture of the parliamentary and presidential system and combines well-organized parties with strong leaders within them. Hence, in Europe we focus chiefly on parties and in Latin America on leaders. In all cases, however, we take

**Table 1***Results of the Case Studies in the Key National Elections, 1990–2010 (in %)*

<i>Europe</i>				<i>Latin America</i>			
<i>Austria</i> (FPÖ/Haider)		<i>France</i> (FN/Le Pen)		<i>Bolivia</i> (Morales/MAS)		<i>Venezuela</i> (Chávez/MVR)	
2008	17.5	2007 <sup>b</sup>	4.7	2009	64.2	2006	62.9
2006	11.0	2007 <sup>a</sup>	10.4	2005	53.7	2000	60.3
2002	10.0	2002 <sup>b</sup>	11.1	2002	20.9	1998	56.2
1999	26.9	2002 <sup>a</sup>	16.9				
1995	21.9	1997 <sup>b</sup>	14.9				
1994	22.5	1995 <sup>a</sup>	15.0				
1990	16.6	1993 <sup>b</sup>	12.7				

Notes: <sup>a</sup> presidential elections, first round; <sup>b</sup> parliamentary elections.

Source: European Journal of Political Research Political Data Yearbook (various years); Political Database of the Americas, <http://pdba.georgetown.edu>.

the discourse of these leaders and their parties as a proxy for the subtype of populism that is predominant in Europe and Latin America today.

It is now time to present the electoral and political relevance of our four cases studies (see Table 1). Reflecting the different political systems, we present the share of the vote for the last two decades in parliamentary elections for the Austrian case, in the presidential elections for the Latin American cases, and in both for the French case. These data permit us to state an obvious but nevertheless important fact: while the populist radical right party family is a modestly successful electoral force in Europe, reduced to political minority status, in contemporary Latin America populists belong to the strongest political actors, sometimes obtaining even more than 50 per cent of the votes. Consequently, populist leaders in Latin America at times receive a direct mandate from the people to govern, as with Morales in Bolivia (since 2005) and Chávez in Venezuela (since 1998), while European populist parties have come to power only as junior partners within a coalition (as was the case in Austria in 2000–7).

In short, European populist are much less successful in electoral terms than their Latin American brethren. This means that actors such as Haider and Le Pen may have many ideas, but few chances to implement them, while leaders such as Chávez and Morales can promote new initiatives and have the power to put them into

practice. Having provided some crucial background information on the four populist forces in the two regions, it is now time to compare populism in Europe and Latin America based on one of the key dimensions that are debated in the scholarly literature: inclusion vs. exclusion.

## INCLUSION VS. EXCLUSION?

The issue of inclusion versus exclusion is probably the most important question discussed in the scholarly debate, particularly in terms of the relationship between populism and democracy. While most literature on Latin America speaks of the inclusive capacities of populism, and virtually all literature on Europe emphasizes the exclusive character of populism, few authors are particularly clear about the exact nature of the inclusion/exclusion. So, to make a credible comparative assessment of the exclusionary and inclusionary features of populism in Europe and Latin America, we first need a clear conceptual framework.

The basis of our framework comes from a recent study of the political right in Israel, in which Filc (2010: 128–38) distinguishes between three dimensions of exclusion/inclusion: material, political and symbolic.<sup>9</sup> These three dimensions summarize the more implicit literature on exclusion and inclusion well. As Filc does not explicitly define the different dimensions, but rather describes them by listing examples, we will start each subsection by providing a clear and concise clarification of the essence of the respective dimension. Then, we analyse populism in Europe and Latin America, respectively, on the basis of the four cases, focusing on both exclusionary and inclusionary features.

### *The Material Dimension*

Exclusion and inclusion on the material dimension refer to the distribution of state resources, both monetary and non-monetary, to specific groups in society. In the case of material exclusion, particular groups are specifically excluded from access to state resources, for example jobs or welfare provisions. Regarding material inclusion, groups are specifically targeted to receive (more) state resources; sometimes to overcome long-established patterns of discrimination

against these groups. Material inclusion is not specific to populism; in fact, it is a defining property of clientelism, which might explain the confusion in some literature over the relationship between populism and clientelism.<sup>10</sup>

*Latin America.* Both Chávez and Morales have put into practice original policies seeking to improve the life quality of weak socioeconomic groups. For instance, Chávez's government has implemented several 'social missions' (*misiones sociales*) – specific organizations and policies targeted at the poor that bypass the traditional institutions of the Venezuelan state and are financed directly by the presidential office (Meltzer 2009). These missions include, among other initiatives, health care programmes, expansion of primary education, distribution of subsidized food and housing provision services. Morales has also promoted policies to foster the inclusion of the poor in Bolivia – for example, through the implementation of cash transfer programmes to school-age children and the improvement of an old age pension paid to all Bolivian citizens over the age of 60 (Domingo 2009: 132–3).

This increased spending on social policy is evidence of the emphasis these leaders place on the necessity of establishing measures to help poor people. These measures are financed by two main sources: on the one hand, the rising prices of commodities such as gas and oil in the world economy, and on the other hand, the attempt to build a new political economy of development, in which the state has to play a key role, particularly in terms of imposing new rules of the game to foreign companies. Accordingly, the material inclusion of the poor promoted by Chávez and Morales is directly related to an anti-imperialist rhetoric and their adherence to the ideology of *Americanismo*, which has its origins in the anti-colonial struggle against the Spanish Empire and defends the existence of a common regional identity between the inhabitants of Latin America (Lynch 1987).

However, populist actors such as Chávez and Morales have also implemented some measures that (intentionally or not) have provoked material exclusion for certain social groups. The economic establishment indeed maintains a difficult relationship with Chávez, because his redefinition of the role of the state vis-à-vis the market has generated both winners and losers within the Venezuelan business elites (Gates 2010). Moreover, since the electoral triumph of Morales, Bolivia has seen the rise of a 'conservative autonomy movement' in Santa Cruz

(the richest region of the country) that fights against the taxation policies implemented by the central government (Eaton 2011).

*Europe.* Given the fundamentally different economic, social and political situation in Europe, it comes as no surprise that material inclusion would play out very differently here. Unlike Latin America, both Eastern and Western Europe have mostly very affluent and egalitarian societies. This does not mean that there are no socio-economic differences, but the weakest groups can still rely on a more or less extensive welfare state and enjoy full civil and political rights. And, whereas in Latin America the emphasis is on *establishing* the conditions for a good life for 'the people', in Europe populists primarily focus on *protecting* these conditions, which they consider increasingly threatened by outside forces (notably immigrants). Hence, their prime focus is on the exclusion of the outgroups rather than on the inclusion of (parts of) the ingroup.

One of the key aspects of the populist radical right programme is welfare chauvinism, where a fairly generous welfare state is generally supported for the 'own people', but 'aliens' (such as immigrants, refugees or Roma) are to be excluded from most of the provisions. These parties have proposed a broad variety of policies that would more or less introduce a different legal system for 'aliens' with regard to general social services, jobs and social housing. The most infamous example of these proposals is the 50-point programme of the FN (Front National 1991), which was copied and elaborated into a 70-point programme by the Belgian populist radical right party Flemish Bloc (now Flemish Interest, VB) a year later. Criticized by opponents for creating an 'apartheid regime', these programmes include proposals for limited child and unemployment benefits as well as property rights for 'non-European aliens' (Dewinter 1992: 27–8).

The motivation is not only exclusionary, however. Many of these proposals follow the guiding principle of 'national preference', or in FN terminology *Français d'abord* (the French first), that is, the idea that the country's 'own people' should have priority in jobs, housing and welfare (see, for example, Davies 1999). The argumentation for introducing a policy of national preference is often at least in part inclusionary, in the sense that the populists argue that these basic requirements can only be guaranteed for the (socially weakest member of the) 'natives' if 'aliens' are excluded. Thus, immigration is understood as a zero-sum game: either the 'outsiders' obtain

something at the cost of the 'natives', or the latter advance their material incorporation as a result of the exclusion of the immigrants.

### *The Political Dimension*

In political terms, exclusion and inclusion refer essentially to the two key dimensions of democracy identified by Robert Dahl (1971, 1989): political participation and public contestation. Political exclusion means that specific groups are prevented from participating (fully) in the democratic system and they are consciously not represented in the arena of public contestation. In contrast, political inclusion specifically targets certain groups to increase their participation and representation. In most cases these groups were already part of the electorate, that is, they had the legal right to full political participation and representation, but were ignored and marginalized by the political establishment.

*Latin America.* Radical democracy is the type of political order that best represents the aspiration of contemporary populist leaders in Latin America (de la Torre 2010: 146–73). By calling for a 'revolutionary democracy' or a 'real democracy', they criticize the elitist character of Latin American democracies and plead for broader political participation (Zúquete 2008). For them, political inclusion means less the expansion of the right to vote and more the generation of new instruments, which should strengthen the 'voice of the voiceless'. In this respect, neighbour associations and social movements are seen as mechanisms by which the popular sectors can be empowered, while intermediary organizations in general, and political parties in particular, are mistrusted.

The Venezuelan PSUV, for instance, promotes the formation of a 'protagonist and participatory' democracy, which is based on both plebiscitary mechanisms and communal councils. The latter are structured along the so-called 'Bolivarian Circles' (*círculos bolivarianos*), groups of eight to ten people who seek to engage in consciousness raising and community projects at the grassroots level (Hawkins 2010: 166–94). At the same time, the Bolivian MAS has supported the formulation of a new constitution that establishes that political participation can be exercised through direct democratic channels, such as a Constituent Assembly, referendums and town meetings (Gray Molina 2010: 62). Furthermore, in an interview

in 2002 – admittedly before he came to power – Morales stated: ‘for me the vote is a secondary issue, I believe more in social struggles, because protests and blockades allow us to change laws, annul decrees and enforce the passing of laws’ (quoted in Stefanoni 2008: 367).

In summary, contemporary populism in Latin America favours the political representation of groups that have been discriminated against and whose voices have not been taken into account by the establishment. One of the consequences of this ‘empowerment’ of excluded sectors is the triggering of a process of elite circulation: indigenous and lower-class people have access to the parliament and the government, so that these institutions are no longer reserved exclusively for upper-class citizens. In effect, by articulating anti-neoliberal mass mobilization, current populist leaders are able to advance a political agenda that keeps in mind popular sector demands (Silva 2009). The ideology of *Americanismo* is an important element in the defence of the model of radical democracy and in the attack on ‘foreign’ forms of political rule that allegedly are not well suited to enhance the self-government of the Latin American people.

Although the political initiatives promoted by Chávez and Morales have triggered more political participation, they have also undermined the rules of public contestation. For instance, Allan Brewer-Carías (2010) has analysed in detail the way in which the new constitution of Venezuela not only favours the concentration of power in the executive branch, but also undermines the right of the opposition to challenge the government and offer alternative points of view. Similar criticisms have been made of Morales in Bolivia, since he has also relied on ‘the people’ as the constituent power in order to undertake constitutional reforms that do not necessarily protect the checks and balances that are inherent to liberal democracy (Cameron and Sharpe 2010).

*Europe.* European populists do not really advance a radically different model of democracy, but they do want it to be more responsive to the native people. They believe that free and fair elections are not enough because the main parties do not provide ‘the pure people’ with a real choice in vital matters such as European integration or immigration. They argue, not without reason, that ‘the elite’ have decided, behind closed doors, to keep these issues from the



agenda. In this sense, populist radical right parties can be seen as politically inclusive, since they are giving a voice to a 'silent majority' that feels socially threatened. However, these parties are trying to win the support of the electorate not so much by defending economic policies in favour of the working class as such (as social democratic and communist parties have done in the past), but rather by promoting the exclusion of all those who are not natives.

To circumvent this elite conspiracy, and in Le Pen's terms to 'return the word to the people' (*rendre la parole au peuple*), most populists call for the introduction of plebiscitary measures such as people's initiatives, referendums and recall. The FPÖ was particularly active, and partly successful, in calling for referendums on 'party patronage and privileges' (1987), 'the foreigner question' (1993) and the European Union (1997) (Müller 1999: 311). They also argued that 'premature removal from office' should be made possible by referendum for a broad variety of positions, ranging from the federal president to local mayors (FPÖ 1997: 17). All these measures were meant to break the power of 'the corrupt elite' and give political power back to 'the pure people'.

Various populist radical right parties have also been inclusive in terms of their political personnel. While the vast majority of representatives of the mainstream parties are older middle-class men with a higher education (often in law) and a white-collar public sector job, parties such as the FN and FPÖ have at times had higher levels of blue-collar workers among their representatives than even the social democratic parties in their country. In addition, populist radical right parties tend to have more young and new representatives, many without a university degree and from the private sector or from classically less represented public sector jobs (notably the police). In other words, while the strict party elite of populist parties in Europe have fairly similar social demographic and socioeconomic characteristics as those of non-populist parties, the parties' representatives tend to be more representative of 'the common people' than of the 'political class' that dominates the political mainstream.

At the same time, the populist radical right has vehemently opposed the extension of political rights to 'aliens'. Most notably, it rejected the extension of local voting rights to non-citizens – as did most right-wing parties, incidentally. But some parties would go so far as to call for limited political (and religious) rights for 'alien' citizens

such as Muslims. For example, parties like the FN want to revoke official recognition of Islamic honorary services and drastically limit the number of mosques (for example, Dewinter 1992; Front National 1991). In essence, what they support is an ethnocracy, or ethnic democracy, based on a distinctly ethnic *Leitkultur* (leading culture) that is above political debate. This fits perfectly with populism's radical interpretation of majority rule and its negative position on minority rights, which are often denounced as 'special interests' (Mudde 2007: 138ff.).

### *The Symbolic Dimension*

The symbolic dimension is the least tangible, but not therefore the least important. With regard to populism, it essentially alludes to setting the boundaries of 'the people' and, *ex negativo*, 'the elite'. When populists define 'the people', in their rhetoric and symbols without referring to (characteristics and values of) certain groups, the latter are symbolically excluded (for example, Roma in Eastern Europe). Similarly, when particular groups are linked to 'the elite', they are implicitly excluded from 'the people'. At the same time, when groups are explicitly included in the definition of 'the people', – into the 'we' or 'us' instead of the 'them' and 'they' – these groups are symbolically included (for example, the so-called 'un-shirted' in Perón's Argentina).

*Latin America.* Without a doubt, the inclusionary processes guided by the PSUV and MAS also have a symbolic dimension. By offering a discourse that emphasizes the worth of 'the people', they dignify the existence of an important number of the population that is not only poor, but also suffers different forms of cultural discrimination. Not surprisingly, Chávez and Morales do not dress and talk like the elites do, but rather as ordinary people, so facilitating the identification of the masses with the leader. To paraphrase the terminology of Canovan (1984), they attain symbolic inclusion through the shift of portraying the people as 'the whole nation' to defining it as 'the plebs'. At the same time, by adhering to the ideology of *Americanismo*, they wave the flag of anti-imperialism and condemn the presence of foreign powers that are interlinked with the local oligarchy.

In this regard, the political trajectory of Morales is particularly interesting. Before winning the presidential elections, he stated that in

Bolivia 'there is a national sentiment of dignity. The elections are going to be an arm wrestling between the consciousness and the money. The poor and the excluded are helping us to advance' (quoted in Stefanoni 2008: 361). Nevertheless, Morales has put special emphasis on the incorporation not only of the indigenous population but also of the coca-grower communities – a segment of the Bolivian society that has a veiled identity due to the war on drugs promoted by the US (Rivera Cusicanqui 2008). It is worth noting that Morales' approach is quite novel, since Latin American populists have normally elaborated a notion of 'the pure people' that left no room for the indigenous population as such. In fact, classical populists were inspired by a corporatist mode of political incorporation that assumed that the excluded population were either workers or peasants, but not indigenous (Yashar 2005).

The language of Chávez and Morales is not only inclusionary, since they defend a concept of 'the people' that does show little respect to certain powerful minorities living in their countries. By developing an anti-elitist discourse, they make use of the Schmittian friend/foe distinction and proclaim that the establishment is a dangerous entity that impedes the formation of a 'transparent' relationship between governed and governors (Peruzzotti 2008). Seen in this light, leaders such as Chávez and Morales are prone to develop a discourse that frames the establishment as an enemy of 'the people' that should be eradicated. Moreover, by defining 'the corrupt elite' as the *partidocracia*, the leaders and members of the political establishment are implicitly excluded from 'the people'.

*Europe.* European populist radical right parties have always claimed to be the voice of the (classless) 'silent majority', despite the fact that they have often been supported disproportionately by the working class (Betz 1994). For instance, at the end of the 1990s, both the FN and the FPÖ had the strongest support among blue-collar workers in their country (see, for example, Mayer 2002; Plasser and Ulram 2000). In a more cultural and moral sense, the populist radical right speaks for the 'common people', that is, everyone but the elite (including 'the intellectuals'). Hence, for the 1995 presidential elections Jean-Marie Le Pen presented himself in the following terms: 'I am nothing more than a French citizen like any of you . . . I know your fears, your problems, your worries, your distress, and your hopes because I have felt, and continue to feel them' (quoted in Fieschi 2004: 166).

According to the European populist radical right parties, the common people are disenfranchised because of an elite conspiracy. In this sense, these parties fight for the inclusion of the key issues and positions of the politically excluded against the political elite. It is exactly because they are part of the people that they know what the people want and are excluded from the elite. As one famous slogan on a Haider poster reads: 'They are against him, because he is for you' (*Sie sind gegen ihn, weil er für Euch ist*). Similarly, Le Pen campaigned with the slogan, 'The outsider champions your interests' (*L'outsider défend vos couleurs*) (Fieschi 2004: 168).

That said, the European populist radical right mainly focuses on the exclusion of non-native groups (Mudde 2007: 63ff.). The groups that are to be excluded range from criminal illegal aliens (opposed by all parties) to legal non-citizens (such as guest workers and refugees) to citizens of foreign decent (for example, Muslims) to ethnic minorities (such as Slovene speakers in Austria). The proposed exclusion is multifaceted but always refers to cultural elements.

So, even though the European populists claim to be the 'voice of the people', it is always an ethnicized people, excluding 'alien' people and values. The inclusion is mostly implicit, as populist parties devote much more attention to defining the various outgroups than the own ingroup. In other words, they remain vague on who 'the Austrian people' or 'the French people' exactly are, and what defines them, yet everyone instinctively knows that, for example, Muslims are not part of '*wir*' or '*nous*' (us). It is mostly through their visual propaganda (mainly posters) that the own group is visualized (that is, white, well kept, and so on).

It is in this symbolic dimension of exclusion that European populists have arguably been most successful. As Jean-Marie Le Pen proclaimed triumphantly on the evening of his defeat in the second round of the 2007 presidential elections: 'We have won the battle of ideas: the nation and patriotism, immigration and insecurity were put at the heart of the campaign of my adversaries who spread these ideas with a wry pout' (quoted in Berezin 2009: 246).

## CONCLUSION

The question of whether populism is inclusive or exclusive is at the core of much research and has led to strongly opposing conclusions.

Given that the existing studies tend to use highly diverse definitions of populism and are regionally specific, we analysed the question by employing a single definition, a cross-regional perspective and a clear framework with regard to exclusion/inclusion. Our analysis of the FN/Le Pen and the FPÖ/Haider vis-à-vis the PSUV/Chávez and the MAS/Morales shows that both aspects are present in all cases (see also Canovan 1999), but that in material, political and symbolic terms European populists can be labelled primarily as *exclusionary*, while Latin American populism are predominantly *inclusionary*.

Moreover, Latin America populism predominantly has a socio-economic dimension (including the poor), while Europe populism has a primarily sociocultural dimension (excluding the 'aliens'). This can be partially explained by the different socioeconomic situation in the two regions. Following Ronald Inglehart (1977), Europe has reached a level of development where post-material politics are at least rivalling socioeconomic politics for importance, while Latin America is still a long way from this 'silent revolution' because of the continuing high levels of socioeconomic disparity and poverty.

In this sense, the European populist radical right is a modern phenomenon, an example of the new politics that emerged as a consequence of the 'silent revolution' (see also Ignazi 1992; Inglehart 1977). While identity politics is usually associated exclusively with 'left-wing' or 'progressive' political actors such as the new social movements or the Green parties, the European populist radical right is in essence also a post-material phenomenon, based first and foremost on identity rather than (material) interest. As some scholars have recently demonstrated, Western Europe is experiencing the emergence of a new political cleavage that is primarily centred on cultural issues and is producing a transformation of the party system in many countries of the region (see, among others, Bornschier 2010; Kriesi et al. 2008).

In contrast, while identity does play a role in contemporary Latin American populist movements (see, for example, Madrid 2008), overall they are still primarily involved in materialist politics. Indeed, most Latin American countries have seen the formation of left-of-centre governments in recent years. Part of the explanation for this 'turn to the left' lies in the failure of the policies of the Washington Consensus to tackle the levels of inequality in the region, allowing leftist forces to develop a successful political platform centred on the socioeconomic realm in general and on material redistribution in particular (Levitsky and Roberts 2011).

The comparison of Latin American and European populism helps us further to demonstrate that populism hardly ever emerges in a pure form. Consequently, populism is almost always attached to certain other ideological features that are related to particular grievances existing in different regional contexts. In the highly unequal Latin American world this is predominantly *Americanismo*; in the post-material European world it is mainly nativism. Whereas the former is a discourse that emphasizes anti-imperialism and supposes a fraternal identity between the inhabitants of Latin America, the latter is a xenophobic version of nationalism, according to which the state should be inhabited only by members of the native group, and non-native (alien) people and values are perceived as threatening to the nation state. The associated ideological features also, in part, explain why European populists are predominantly exclusive, and Latin American populists chiefly inclusive.

While the difference between a Latin American inclusionary populism and a European exclusionary populism has held true at least since the 1990s, it is important to note that in both regions the conception of the groups that should be excluded from, and included into, society has varied over time. In this regard, the contemporary populists in both Europe and Latin America have made important innovations. The European populist radical right's emphasis on excluding Muslims is relatively recent, and strongly related to the terrorist attacks of 9/11 (see, for example, Betz and Meret 2009), while the emphasis on inclusion of the indigenous population is a fairly new development within Latin American populism (see, for example, Madrid 2012).

By arguing that European populism is predominantly exclusionary and Latin American populism is primarily inclusionary, we are not claiming that the former inevitably has a negative impact on democracy, while the latter exclusively embodies a positive force for democracy. In fact, we should be very careful about making normative judgements about populism, since the latter can be both a threat to and a corrective for democracy (see Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012; Rovira Kaltwasser 2012). For instance, populist actors and parties usually give voice to groups that do not feel represented by the elites and obligate them to react and change the political agenda to include these marginalized voices. But populist forces might also refer to the idea of popular sovereignty with the aim of dismantling the checks and balances that are inherent

to liberal democracy. In other words, the *repoliticization* of society that is fostered by all types of populist forces has an ambivalent impact on democracy.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> It is only in the highly insular and politicized literature on American populism that the inclusion vs. exclusion debate is somewhat present. For a more open-minded discussion, see the introduction in Formisano (2007).

<sup>2</sup> In 2005 Haider and several prominent party members left the FPÖ and formed the Alliance for the Future of Austria (BZÖ). Furthermore, in 2007 the 'Fifth Republic Movement' (MVR) was dissolved and merged into the 'United Socialist Party of Venezuela' (PSUV).

<sup>3</sup> For an interesting analysis of the negative connotation of the word 'populism' in the media, see Bale et al. (2011).

<sup>4</sup> For instance, a well-known specialist on US populism defines the latter as 'a language whose speakers conceive of ordinary people as a noble assemblage not bounded narrowly by class, view their elite opponents as self-serving and undemocratic, and seek to mobilize the former against the latter' (Kazin 1995: 1). A similar concept can be found in a recent book (Albertazzi and McDonnell 2008: 3) on contemporary populism in Western Europe, in which populism is defined as 'an ideology which pits a virtuous and homogenous people against a set of 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'. Finally, an ideological definition of Latin American populism has been proposed by de la Torre (2010: 199), who understands populism as a political phenomenon characterized by a 'Manichean discourse that presents the struggle between the people and the oligarchy as a moral and ethical fight between good and evil, redemption and downfall'.

<sup>5</sup> For instance, this problem arises in a recent research note that maintains that 'anti-elitism alone is a pretty good indicator of populism' (Rooduijn and Pauwels 2011: 1278).

<sup>6</sup> Take, for example, the following definition: 'Populism is a *dimension* of political action, susceptible to syncretism with all forms of movements and all types of governments. Thus a single party dictatorship can legitimate itself by populist means, while a liberal-pluralist democracy does not rule out the possibility of a seizure of power by a populist leader through normal voting procedures. Whether dimension or style rather than ideology or form of mobilization, populism is so elastic and indeterminate as to discourage all attempts at a rigorous definition' (Taguieff 1995: 25. italics in original).

<sup>7</sup> The most important exception is the Italian party Forza Italia of Silvio Berlusconi. This party is largely idiosyncratic, however, and fully dependent on its leader, who seems to have left active politics since his third and last government came to an end in November 2011.

- <sup>8</sup> Le Pen was succeeded as FN leader by his youngest daughter Marine in 2011, while Haider left the FPÖ in 2005 and died in a car crash in 2008. Still, both parties continue to be largely defined by these two leaders.
- <sup>9</sup> In fact, Filc (2010: 128–38) also provides an analysis of the different types of inclusion and exclusion of populism in Europe and Latin America in his book, but the analysis is very basic, limited to only inclusion in Latin America and exclusion in Europe, and exclusively focused on historical populism in Latin America (that is, the 1940s to 1960s).
- <sup>10</sup> Particularly in Latin America there is a tendency to associate populism with clientelism, since the former usually makes use of the latter. However, populism is a particular type of ideology or discourse, while clientelism is a particular mode of exchange between electoral constituencies and politicians in which voters obtain some material goods (such as direct payments or privileged access to employment, goods and services) for their support of a patron or party. And while in Latin America populism shares aspects of material inclusion with clientelism, populism's political and symbolic inclusion sets it apart (see Filc 2010; Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007).

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