

# *Populism and nationalism in a comparative perspective: a scholarly exchange*

Article

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# **Populism and Nationalism in a Comparative Perspective: A Scholarly Exchange**

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of the *Exchange* feature is to publish discussions that engage, advance and initiate new debates in the study of nations and nationalism. This *Exchange* article is on the subject of ‘Populism and Nationalism’. Each contributor addresses the following four questions on the subject: (1) What is populism and what role does it play within the context of democratic politics? (2) Does populism cut across left-right lines? (3) What is the relationship between nationalism and populism? (4) Are contemporary populist movements across Europe and the West comparable? Our aim is to generate a thought-provoking conversation with regards to the rise of populism in Europe and the West.

## **Introduction**

Daphne Halikiopoulou, University of Reading

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Often used as an umbrella term to describe the electoral success of parties and individuals that claim to speak on behalf of the ‘pure people’ pitted against a ‘corrupt elite’, populism has attracted increasing scholarly attention and dominated headlines in recent years. Populism takes many forms, spanning continents and cutting across left-right lines. It is often used to describe both parties of the right, such as the French Front National (FN), the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), the Sweden Democrats (SD) and the Alternative for Germany (AfD) among others, that oppose immigration and seek to restore national sovereignty; and of the left, such as the Greek Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA) and the Spanish PODEMOS, that pit the people against an exploitative economic elite. The term has also been used to describe the election of Trump in the US and Brexit in the UK. These phenomena have often raised concerns about the direction of democratic politics, the rise of the

extremes and a form of nationalism that is exclusionary, violent and confrontational. Does populism erode democratic politics? Does it cut across left-right lines? What is its relationship with nationalism? And are contemporary populist movements across Europe and the West comparable, or is populism just a buzzword used to describe disparate phenomena? In this first *Exchange* article, Bart Bonikowski, Daphne Halikiopoulou, Eric Kaufmann and Matthijs Rooduijn address these questions in a discussion format. Our aim overall is to advance the debate by exchanging views on the various dimensions of the topic that remain controversial.

All contributors see populism as thin-centred and agree on many of its core features: anti-pluralism, anti-elitism and the juxtaposition of a virtuous people against elites and fifth columns. With regards to the relationship between populism and democracy, all contributors agree that populism *can be* hostile to liberal democracy. According to Bonikowski, this hostility has been particularly marked in the politics of the radical right that combine populism, nationalism and authoritarianism. Bonikowski and Halikiopoulou both agree that populism is not new but that its expression in the current era does pose new challenges, centred on the manifestation of populist ideas in mainstream politics. According to Kaufmann, populism can be negative insofar as it erodes respect for liberal institutions, minorities and reason, the most obvious cases being Hungary and Poland. Finally Rooduijn argues that because populism is incompatible with the liberal pillar of contemporary democracies, it is accompanied by the danger of the ‘tyranny of the majority’.

Their views diverge, however, on whether populism also has a positive role to play in democratic politics. Halikiopoulou posits that populism is always negative. Her

argument is that, by rejecting liberal democratic institutions and processes, populism rejects the very basis upon which our representative democracy is premised. So while she agrees that in theory populism is democratic because it draws on the democratic ‘will of the people’, in practice it is only pseudo-democratic, because the implementation of the popular will translates into a rejection of the institutions that offer the key checks and balances that make democracies function. Populism is thus always conducive to authoritarianism.

Bonikowski, Kaufmann and Rooduijn on the other hand argue that populism is not inherently, and not always, a negative force. According to Bonikowski, suggesting that populism is necessarily predatory on democratic institutions would entail conflating it with authoritarianism. But while the two often coincide, they are in fact analytically distinct. If we look beyond the radical right, which combines populism, nationalism and authoritarianism, we may observe a form of populism profitably used by mainstream political candidates without threatening the norms of democracy, as has long been the case in U.S. Furthermore, Kaufmann argues, populism has a role to play in invigorating democracy where elitism structures the system. Rooduijn concurs that populism *can* be a force of good as it may serve as a democratic corrective by bringing issues ignored by the mainstream to the fore of the political agenda.

With regards to the ability of populism to cut across left-right lines, all contributors agree on the chameleon-like character of populism and argue that while right-wing populism pits the people against a cultural elite, left-wing populism pits the people against an economic elite. Focusing on the commonalities, Bonikowski suggests that consistent across both types is the moral opposition between the elites and people. He

adds that neither phenomena are new, discussing examples from Latin America and the US. Kaufmann contends that it is also important to appreciate the distinctions between the two phenomena. For example, radical right voters are not motivated by material concerns in the way that radical left voters are. Halikiopoulou is highly critical of using populism as a buzzword to describe a variety of phenomena that in fact differ fundamentally from one another. Rooduijn suggests that, while indeed a range of far right and far left parties have become increasingly populist in the past decades, we must not assume that all far right and far left parties are populist.

With regards to the relationship between populism and nationalism, all contributors share concerns about the conceptual confusion between the two terms. They agree that nationalism and populism are not necessarily the same, although they do have elective affinities and often- but not always- coincide. The contributors' views, however, diverge on what a conceptual disaggregation of the two terms entails and how different types of nationalism relate to populism. Bonikowski argues that although analytically distinct, populism and nationalism (as well as authoritarianism) are all components of the radical right. Their fusion has given radical-right party narratives particular potency by channelling diffuse grievances into powerful out-group resentments. Indeed, these ideas are so tightly coupled that in many cases, populism itself can serve as a dog-whistle for ethno-nationalism.

Kaufmann, on the other hand, rejects the notion that most western populist right movements (he excludes Golden Dawn and the Eastern European parties) are ethno-nationalist in the Kohnian sense because despite the remarks of extremists within such parties, they are not currently seeking to limit citizenship to members of the ethnic

majority nor to purge the nation of minority groups. He argues instead that the form of nationalism that currently characterises western populist right movements is what he terms ‘ethno-traditional nationalism’, i.e. the desire to maintain or protect the traditional ethnic character of the nation - which can make room for a minority presence, but not necessarily a ‘majority minority’ scenario. This narrative focuses on preventing rapid change to what is perceived to be the nation’s traditional ethnic composition.

While Halikiopoulou agrees with Kaufmann that the term ‘ethnic nationalism’ is ill-suited to describe the narratives of Western European far right parties, she suggests that the latter are adopting a civic nationalist narrative in order to augment their electoral appeal. This does not entail that their main focus is no longer the exclusion- or indeed the scapegoating- of the out-group. On the contrary, it entails that they are able to justify this exclusion on ideological rather than biological criteria of national belonging, by ‘speaking’ the language of democracy and liberalism. The civic nationalist narrative is, therefore, strategically beneficial for such parties, as it allows them to broaden their electoral appeal and enter mainstream ground. In this sense she agrees with Bonikowski that through their nationalist narratives these parties channel different grievances into out-group resentment. But she is more explicit in arguing that they are more successful doing this through the adoption of a civic, rather than an ethno-national narrative.

Rooduijn applies the ethnic-civic distinction to the understanding of left and right-wing populism. He suggests that the conceptual conflation between populism and nationalism often leads to the erroneous conclusion that populists are necessarily

nativists and argues that left-wing populists tend to combine their populism with the inclusive, civic variant of nationalism, whereas right-wing populists are more inclined to link their populist discourse to an exclusionary version of nationalism.

Finally, in terms of the extent to which the phenomena in Europe and the West we term populist are comparable, all contributors consider the tensions between identifying commonalities that allow us to draw generalizable conclusions on the one hand, and appreciating the specificities of particular cases on the other. As such they agree that the populist phenomena are comparable, but that this it is important to point to variations between cases and identify patterns depending on case and circumstance. Rooduijn's main point here is that despite their differences, these phenomena are comparable, because after all, comparability does not entail that the phenomena need to be identical. Bonikowski focuses on between-case variations, suggesting it is important to take into consideration the different role of various factors, for example race in the US and the refugee crisis in Europe. The overarching pattern, however, is the link between populism, nationalism and authoritarianism prevalent in many of the cases. When these combine, the result is an erosion of social democratic politics. The key to how this will develop is how the mainstream responds.

Halikiopoulou also identifies patterns. She distinguishes between the predominance of the civic far right in Western Europe, ethnic far right in Eastern Europe and the far left in Southern Europe. The election of Trump in the US and Brexit in the UK she considers different phenomena, and suggests that Brexit is the best example of populism. Kaufmann contends that ethnocultural and demographic drivers are central to right-wing populism in the West, while material concerns are important for left-



wing populism. He also distinguishes between Eastern and Western Europe. The former is characterized by trauma and humiliation from the past resulting in authoritarianism; the latter by an imperfect fit between ethnicity and politics which results in the prevalence of anti-immigration. Here he disagrees with Halikiopoulou who suggests that both cultural and economic concerns motivate voters within the context of the new transnational cleavage.

In the next section of this article the contributors outline their arguments in detail, in response to four specific questions with regards to the relationship between populism and nationalism.

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### *Exchange*

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## **1. What is populism and what role does it play within the context of democratic politics?**

**Bart Bonikowski:** There is considerable consensus in the political science literature concerning the core definition of populism: It is a form of politics predicated on a fundamental moral opposition between an irredeemably corrupt elite and a virtuous people, with the latter seen as the only legitimate source of political power (Mudde 2007). The vilified elites are typically elected politicians, but, depending on the ideological orientation of the actors making populist claims, they can also include state bureaucrats, business leaders, intellectuals, representatives of organized labor, or any other dominant group perceived as having violated the interests of the people.

Furthermore, populism tends to be critical of intermediary democratic institutions, because they are seen as having been captured by elite interests and as constituting barriers to the people's unmediated expression of their political will.

This minimal definition demonstrates that populism is not inherently a left- or right-wing phenomenon, but rather, that it is always employed as a framing device for other, more comprehensive ideologies, from socialism to ethno-nationalism. In the case of ethno-nationalist populism, the targets of moral vilification are not solely elite actors, but also ethnic, racial, religious, or cultural out-groups, which are perceived as threats to the "true" people. Having ostensibly co-opted elites for their own ends, such groups are blamed for a variety of social ills, from crime and economic problems to terrorism and cultural decay.

Aside from these agreed-upon features of populism, there are remaining scholarly debates about both the nature and consequences of populist politics. These complexities tend to be glossed over in contemporary commentary on the topic, which often conflates populism with radical politics in general. Consequently, it is useful to consider some characteristics that should *not* be ascribed to populism.

First, populism is not an ideology. It is not a thoroughly articulated theory of society with extensive prescriptions for social reform, nor is it a deeply held set of beliefs that shapes politicians' policy behavior. Consequently, many scholars have relegated populism to the status of a "thin-centered" ideology that is always combined with other more coherent political positions. While useful, this approach still assumes that populism is an essential attribute of political actors: some are populist while others are

not. I would argue that instead, we should view populism as an attribute of political claims, that is, as a way of framing political messages. From this perspective, populism is something political actors do, not something they are. This allows for the possibility that the same politician may rely on populist claims in one setting but not in another. In this vein, my research on the United States has shown that populism can vary across the presidential campaigns of the same candidate and even across the duration of a single campaign, and that this variation is associated with the candidate's relative position in the political field (Bonikowski and Gidron 2016). A discursive, rather than ideological, conception of populism can also make sense of the fact that Donald Trump ran a populist electoral campaign, but that his anti-elite rhetoric has subsided considerably since he took office.

Second, populism is not inherently xenophobic, racist, or Islamophobic, nor is it necessarily predatory on democratic institutions. To ascribe to populism these characteristics is to conflate populism with two other related but analytically distinct phenomena: ethno-nationalism and authoritarianism. The radical right in Europe often combines all three elements, as did the Trump campaign in the United States, which is why commentators tend to assume their unity. When one looks beyond these examples, however, it becomes clear that populism need not rely on exclusionary nationalism, as in much contemporary radical-left politics from Bernie Sanders in the United States to Podemos in Spain, and that populism can be profitably used by mainstream political candidates without threatening the norms of democracy, as has long been the case in U.S. political discourse. And yet, populism has been particularly powerful on the radical right, where it has been effectively combined with a persistent vilification of immigrants, Muslims, and other minority groups, where majoritarian

claims have been used to challenge minority rights that are the heart of pluralist liberalism, and where democratic norms and institutions have been portrayed as inconvenient hurdles in the path of the people's triumph over elite self-interest. This is so, because populism, nationalism, and authoritarianism share certain elective affinities that, when combined, make for a particularly potent source of political mobilization, a point to which I will return.

Third, even when it does take on nationalist and authoritarian traits, populism is not simply an irrational form of politics. There is a tendency to see the grievances represented by populist parties and candidates solely as products of ignorance, prejudice, and demagoguery. While perhaps comforting to those who do not share the concerns of radical-right supporters, such an interpretation is itself a symptom of the deep chasm between the moral commitments of elite commentators and the perceptions and experiences of those who favor populist politics. To be sure, there are myriad worrisome anti-pluralist and socially regressive aspects to the radical right, but the structural forces that have led to the rise of this form of politics are real, and they are felt viscerally by those voters who are most affected by rapid social change. Without addressing economic dislocation, perceptions of collective status loss, and widespread social and cultural insecurity—as well as the reality of political polarization and ineffective governance—moralistic dismissals of voters attracted to ethno-nationalist populism are unlikely to reverse the contemporary tide of radical politics. At the same time, the challenge is to offer solutions to real grievances without legitimating exclusionary ideologies and infringing upon the rights and protections of minority groups.

Finally, populism is not new. It is tempting to view the current moment as unprecedented, but anti-elite politics have a long history in democratic societies, as do nationalism and authoritarianism. In Europe, variants of the current mix of populism and nationalism have their origins in the radical-right parties of the early 1980s, but they also carry disturbing echoes of the inter-War years (though one should be careful with overly simplistic parallels between the two periods) (Kitschelt 1995; Ziblatt 2017). In the United States, multiple conceptions of nationhood, including those predicated on ethnoracial exclusion, have competed over the country's entire history (Smith 1997) and populism has been so endemic that Martin Seymour Lipset saw it as a core attribute of U.S. political culture (Lipset 1989). Moreover, as Levitsky and Ziblatt (2018) argue, authoritarian, anti-elite, and exclusionary tendencies have always been present in contemporary democracies (accounting, for instance, for about a third of the population in the United States, on average). The question then is not why such ideational currents exist, but rather why they have found effective expression in the mainstream politics of the current historical period.

**Daphne Halikiopoulou:** Populism draws on a fundamental dichotomy between 'us' the people and 'them' the elite (Mudde 2004). Populists claim to speak in the name of the people- an entity, which they deem both indivisible (Freedon 2017) and in direct confrontation with whatever elite they identify as the enemy (Vasilopoulou et al 2014). There are long debates in the field about whether populism is an ideology, strategy or communication style (Mudde 2004; Brubaker 2017; for an overview of different perspectives see Gidron and Bonikowski 2013). Whether belief, tool or style however, what is important about populism is precisely the ideal type of society- of democratic politics- that it envisages.

Populism is a vision of legitimating collective choice. It is a worldview of how we make political decisions in society and how these decisions are justified. The key to populism is that it is both illiberal (Pappas, 2016) – or anti-pluralist- and democratic. The vision of democratic politics it offers is antithetical to liberal democracy because its key tenet is that decisions made in society are legitimate only if they are made from below; in other words if they reflect the general will of the people. Such decisions are not only legitimate but also morally superior (Riker 1982: xii). In this sense populism undermines constitutionalism, the Rule of law and parliamentary scrutiny. It does so on the premise that elite-level decisions, which involve liberal democratic institutional paths, lack legitimacy because they do not represent the popular will.

Populism can therefore justify authoritarianism by invoking an anti-pluralist and illiberal form democracy. Its vision rests on the (pseudo) democratic premise of the supposed embodiment of the popular will. This is why I contest the view that populism is good for democratic politics because it gives a voice to the discontent neglected by the mainstream. Populism is toxic for democracy. The insistence on equating part of the people with all the people (Müller 2016) as well as the urgency with which those who wish to implement the will of the people react (Freeden 2017) are reminiscent of a number of dictatorial regimes claiming legitimacy from below. Take Freeden's (2017) example of Brexit and the urgency with which politicians have sought to implement it, clashing with those who attempt to place it under the scrutiny of legislative and judicial institutions. This is a feature often found in authoritarian, not open societies (Freeden 2017:6). In simple terms, although in theory populism

draws on substantive democratic principles, in practice it undermines pluralist democracy.

**Eric Kaufmann:** Populism, at root, is about anti-elitism. It can adapt to a range of ideologies such as Islam, socialism or ethno-nationalism. I partially agree with those (Mudde 2004; Stanley 2008) who view it as a ‘thin’ ideology that combines with other ‘thicker’ ones. However, one can take this characterisation too far. On this definition, nationalism is also a thin ideology: it can adapt to liberalism, socialism, multiculturalism, religion and racism. Moreover, other ideologies can be combined, as with Christian socialism, so the thin-thick prefix is a matter of degree rather than a categorical distinction.

Populism also entails a conception of the ‘people’ as a morally superior entity to the elite. This notion of the general will – and the associated concept of the common good - is viewed by some as anti-pluralist, and therefore illiberal and anti-democratic (Müller 2017: 102). Yet even established politicians invoke concepts such as ‘the people’ and the common good so I tend to consider these idioms of democratic politics rather than monistic attempts to quash difference. Once again, there is no hard line between populism and normal democratic politics.

Indeed, it can be argued that many useful ideas, including freedom of speech, universal manhood suffrage and the labour movement emerged on the back of populist political movements. This is because – notably in majoritarian systems - parties may be coalitions of interests in which local party ‘franchises’ can air their interests but only an approved subset filters up to the national political arena (Carty

2002). Elites sharing common outlooks, social backgrounds and interests can rise to the top of parties and commandeer their factions, thereby removing particular policies, worldviews or discursive styles from contestation. They may also be socially connected to the upper echelons of the bureaucracy and judiciary. Thus established forms of pluralism may prevent other interests from being expressed. So while populism can endanger liberal democracy, it may also renew and invigorate it, enhancing pluralism.

Populism can be both a sincere belief or a style deployed by a politician who is in fact committed to retaining the status quo. V.O. Key's landmark (1949) study of populism in the southern United States in the early twentieth century showed how many populists – apart from mavericks like Huey Long in Louisiana - played to the common man during elections but subsequently became co-opted by the elite or essentially maintained policies that benefited that elite. Thus populism becomes a style designed to manipulate an emotive electorate to benefit those who wish to enter the elite.

**Matthijs Rooduijn:** Populism is an essentially contested concept. It deals with “an essential impalpability, an awkward conceptual slipperiness” (Taggart, 2000: 1). The term could be used to refer to a small-scale bottom-up movement, a strong charismatic leader, or a radical right political party. It is therefore not strange that there are many different definitions out there. Nonetheless, many scholars nowadays agree that populism is an ideational phenomenon (a discourse, thin ideology or style) that concerns the antagonistic relationship between the good people and the evil elite (Hawkins 2010; Moffitt 2016; Mudde 2004). Kirk Hawkins (2009: 1042), for



instance, defines populism as “a Manichean discourse that identifies Good with a unified will of the people and Evil with a conspiring elite”. According to Cas Mudde (2004: 543) it is “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 politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people”.

Ideational definitions of populism imply that populism should be distinguished from phenomena such as political opportunism, far right politics or charismatic leadership. Most such definitions (including the ones presented above) are “minimal definitions” that, because they only include the core attributes of a concept, can be employed to compare ideologically divergent populist actors across cases and over time (see Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser 2012).

Defining populism as an ideational feature has two important implications. First, it means that populism could – or maybe even should – be conceived of as a matter of degree. Parties can be *more* or *less* populist (Hawkins 2009; Jagers & Walgrave 2007; Rooduijn et al. 2014). In other words: a party that strongly endorses the populist set of ideas is strongly populist, whereas a party that does not employ much populism in its discourse is only weakly populist. Second, this line of reasoning can also be applied to other actors than political parties; other actors – like media (Mazzoleni 2003) or citizens (Akkerman et al. 2014) – can be more or less populist too.

According to the “two-strand model of democracy”, a liberal democracy consists of two pillars: a democratic pillar and a liberal one (see Mouffe 2005). The core

characteristic of the democratic pillar is popular sovereignty: the idea that political power should reside within the people. According to the liberal pillar, however, the power of the people should be curbed (by means of checks and balances and minority rights) because of the always looming danger of a “tyranny of the majority”.

Populism is very well compatible with the democratic pillar. After all, populists believe that the general will should be expressed as directly and unmediated as possible (Canovan 1981). Populism is hostile, however, towards liberal democracy (Taggart 2000), because the institutions of liberal democracy stand in the way of the direct expression of the *volonté générale*. According to populists, checks and balances and minority rights delay the decision-making process, and political compromises lead to a lack of decisiveness. Populism is therefore essentially democratic, but, at the same time, hostile toward *liberal* democracy.

Although it might therefore be argued that populism poses a threat to liberal democracy, it is important to add that populists can also act as a force for good, because they often function as a democratic corrective (see Rovira Kaltwasser 2012): they channel political discontent and put issues that are neglected by mainstream parties on the political agenda.

## **2. Does populism cut across left-right lines?**

**Daphne Halikiopoulou:** Yes. Populism can be understood as an umbrella term that includes all movements, or parties, which pit the ‘pure people’ against the ‘corrupt elites’ - the minimal definition of populism (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012). The

definition of the people and the elites changes depending on whether a party is on the right or the left of the political spectrum. The right focuses on immigration and national sovereignty- the people is defined as ‘us’ the natives, who should have access to the collective goods of the state; and the elites are those corrupt outsiders and their collaborators, who seek to undermine ‘our’ sovereignty. The left, on the other hand, focuses on economic exploitation and inequality- the people are ‘us’, the exploited and economically deprived, while the elites are those associated with free trade, globalisation and Western imperialism (Brubaker 2017). There is also a mainstream, or centrist, variety: those who speak the language of populism by identifying the people against the governing party or the main opposition (Vasilopoulou et al 2014).

While it is useful to develop typologies that distinguish left and right populism, the chameleon-like nature of populism reveals an important conceptual flaw in the way that we use the term today to explain the rise of- and electoral support for- a variety of political parties. The electoral success of almost every party, which is outside the mainstream, is described as ‘populism’. Examples range from the French Front National (FN), the Dutch Freedom Party (PPV), the Greek Golden Dawn (GD) and the Hungarian Fidesz on right to the Spanish Podemos and the Greek Coalition for the Radical Left (SYRIZA) on the left. The term has also been applied to political outcomes that have enjoyed support across the political spectrum- for example Brexit; and even centrist Macron.

Everyone is- or can be- a populist. But this begs the question: who is not a populist? Simply put, what is the analytical utility of a term, which describes a variety of very different political parties and movements, and groups them together by virtue of their

common references to the people- something which is a given in every democracy? This could mean that populism is a tautology: if it explains everything, it explains nothing.

In order for populism to be analytically meaningful, and for a left-right typology of populism to make sense, we need to be able to first identify what is not populism. For example, for the radical right-wing populist category to be meaningful, we need to be able to identify a party on the far right of the political spectrum that emphasises national sovereignty and is anti-immigrant but at the same time is not populist. Similarly for the radical left-wing populist category, we need to identify a party that mobilises on inequality and economic exploitation without the populist element. This is a point both about the (im)possibility of theoretical counterfactuals and the existence of such cases empirically. This exercise will allow us to distinguish between a variety of different groups which all challenge liberal democracy in different ways (Pappas 2016).

**Eric Kaufmann:** Clearly. Left-wing populism tends to be focused on defining the people against an economic elite – those with wealth and power. It stigmatises bankers, the rich and corporations. Right-wing populism defines the people against a cultural elite – those who fail to back the cultural concerns of the ethnic majority or nation; or who support liberal and secular ideas which can erode cultural traditions. Sometimes ethnic minorities or foreigners are tarred as a fifth column in the body politic.

The two forms may blend together, but are often distinct. For instance, voters for UKIP, the Front National, Sweden Democrats or Donald Trump's Republicans are not really motivated by a distaste for the rich and powerful. The British Election Study (Fieldhouse et. al. 2018) asks five questions on anti-elitism such as 'the people not politicians, should make our most important policy decisions' or 'politicians in the UK parliament need to follow the will of the people.' This doesn't distinguish UKIP or Brexit voters from left-wing voters whereas views on immigration or economic inequality do. Immigration is the leading issue for 40 percent of Leavers but just 5 percent of Remainers. Inequality is the most important concern for 20 percent of Remainers but just 5 percent of Leavers. Immigration is the leading issue for 25 percent of those who rated Trump a 10 out of 10 during the primaries whereas just 2 percent of those giving him a 0 out of 10 prioritise it. For inequality the numbers are reversed: 37 percent of anti-Trumpers rank it their top issue against just 2 percent of strong Trump supporters (Kaufmann 2016). Populism means very different things to right-wing and left-wing voters.

In March 2017, I asked 361 white American voters in an opt-in MTurk survey, 'What annoys you most about the American elite?' Respondents could answer 'they don't annoy me,' 'they are rich and powerful,' or 'they are politically correct.' Clinton voters were actually marginally more annoyed than Trump voters by the American elite. However, what distinguished partisans was *which* elite they resented: 34 percent of Trump voters but just 9 percent of Clinton voters were exercised by the political correctness of the American elite, whereas 55 percent of Clinton voters (against 27 percent of Trump voters) were bothered by their wealth and power. While there is a current of resentment at the wealth and power of the elite across the population,

controlling for demographics, what really distinguishes supporters of right-wing populism from the left are cultural considerations. This also means right-wing populism is issue-driven, not anti-system or even anti-political elite. Therefore mainstream parties can win populist right voters back by campaigning on immigration and identity issues, as with, among others, Mark Rutte in the Netherlands, Theresa May in Britain and Sebastian Kurz in Austria.

**Matthijs Rooduijn:** Absolutely. Paul Taggart (2000) has convincingly argued that populism has an empty heart. It does not have core ideological values (except for its populist message itself), as a result of which it tends to be highly chameleonic: it adapts itself to the environment in which it occurs. Populism can, in other words, be combined with basically ever ideology – from far left to far right and from ultra conservative to highly progressive. Nonetheless, populism can most often be encountered on the fringes of the political spectrum (Rooduijn & Akkerman 2017) – at least in contemporary Western Europe.

Present-day far left and right parties are likely to be populist because they have gone through some essential changes in the last couple of decades. First, the extreme left (communism) and right (fascism) have been marginalized. Far left and right parties generally do not attack the democratic system in its entirety anymore. Instead, they now criticize the established elite. In other words, they accept the democratic rules of the game. Moreover, their respective focus on the proletariat and the nation has been supplemented with the glorification of “ordinary citizens”. They have, to sum up, become increasingly anti-elitist and people-centrist.

That radical left and right parties are inclined to be populist does not mean that all radical parties are populist or that all populist parties are radical. The *Rassemblement National* (National Rally, previously *Front National*), for instance, was not yet very populist in the 1970s. The *Movimento Cinque Stelle* (Five Star Movement) in Italy is strongly populist, but cannot be categorized as either radical left or radical right.

**Bart Bonikowski:** Because populism is not itself an ideology, it can be mobilized in the pursuit of any political project, on both sides of the political spectrum (Rooduijn and Akkerman 2017). One can blame allegedly corrupt political elites for siding with immigrants and minorities, as do many contemporary radical-right candidates, but populism can also frame economic claims about the ostensible complicity of elites in maintaining an oppressive capitalist system, as do left-wing candidates in Europe and the United States. What is consistent across both types of arguments is the essential moral opposition between the elites and the people that animates all populist discourse. While European right-wing populism received more attention from the media and scholars during much of the 1990s and 2000s, recent years have seen an increased focus on radical-left populism, largely due to the rise of viable left-populist parties and candidates in Southern Europe (e.g., SYRIZA in Greece and Podemos in Spain), as well as in the United States (most notably, Bernie Sanders). Evidence of the ideologically bimodal distribution of populism, however, is not new. There are numerous historical examples of both right- and left-wing populism in Latin America, ranging from Juan Perón to Hugo Chávez, and in the United States, where decades before Father Coughlin, George Wallace, Richard Nixon, or Pat Buchanan, the late-19<sup>th</sup>-century populist agrarian movement waged a sustained battle against urban moneyed interests. In Europe too, socialist parties have long mixed Marxist ideology

with populist appeals intended to resonate beyond their working class base (March 2011).

Even though populism is ideologically flexible, the question remains whether its left wing variants are necessarily inclusive, while those on the right are more likely to invoke exclusionary ideas targeted at ethnic, racial, and religious minority groups. There is considerable empirical evidence from contemporary politics to support such a conclusion (Judis 2016), but this does not imply that left-wing populism is by definition immune from xenophobia and chauvinism. The U.S. labor movement, for instance, has had a history of vilifying immigrants and African Americans in defense of white working-class union members (Hill 1996). Demands for the protection or expansion of welfare state institutions can also be easily coupled with restrictive conceptions of those deserving of state support, as in much European welfare chauvinism. Interestingly, the latter position is often viewed as an indicator of right-wing populist tendencies, which in turn demonstrates the difficulty of reducing political ideology to a single dimension. Finally, to further complicate matters, there are examples of populist parties that defy a simple left-right classification, such as the Italian Five Star Movement, as well as of radical-right parties in Western Europe that increasingly rely on culturally essentialist versions of civic nationalism to portray Islam as incompatible with European liberal values.

Another way to think about the distinction between left- and right-wing populism is to consider factors that have contributed to the relative success of each. There are some marked differences in the proximate policy issues that motivate supporters of each camp, which correspond to the content of the latter's populist appeals. Radical-left



voters are concerned primarily with the economy, while those on the radical-right tend to prioritize immigration as the most urgent social problem. At the root of these divergent preferences, however, is a common sense of collective status threat. While those on the left perceive their group position primarily through the prism of occupational and educational status, those on the right—with the encouragement of right-wing media and politicians—tend to define their common belonging in terms of race and nationhood. Indeed, the same underlying grievances associated with economic globalization can be channeled by elites in either direction, depending on the structural and discursive opportunities in a given national context; this may explain the geographic distribution of left- and right-wing populism across world regions (Rodrik 2018). In both cases, the primary concern of voters is with the unfair treatment of people “like them” by those who wield power, which is made all the more acute amidst conditions of economic—and for the radical-right supporters, cultural and demographic—uncertainty. What is at stake is not only objective wellbeing, but also subjective perception of having been socially devalued by elites whose status is assured by their high levels of cultural and economic capital (Cramer 2016; Gidron and Hall 2017). And on both sides of the political spectrum, such concerns are compounded by alienation from a political system that is controlled by those same elites (and their allies) and not everyday people.

### **3. What is the relationship between nationalism and populism?**

**Eric Kaufmann:** Nationalism began with the movement to recast the basis of sovereignty from the monarch to ‘the people.’ Whatever else the French Revolution was, it was certainly populist. Once the revolution succeeded, the question became

‘Who are “the People” .’ The events after 1792 showed that foreign revolutionaries like Anacharsis Cloots might not to be considered French (Giraudon 1991). So began the vexed question of defining the French nation. We see in these events an umbilical connection between democracy, nationalism and populism with a common thread being ‘the people’ rather than the elite as the fount of political legitimacy.

Where lie the differences? Consider elite-led nationalisms. The Quebec nationalism of the Parti Québécois (PQ) or Scottish nationalism of the Scottish National Party (SNP) is led by regional elites against the national elites at Ottawa or Westminster. Members of the regional political establishment, notably cultural elites in arts and letters, spearhead and lead the movement. They are nationalist in the sense of seeking to redefine ‘the people’ away from all inhabitants of the state to those of the sub-state nation. However, social hierarchies are not disrupted and these sub-state nationalists may even advance an anti-traditionalist cultural agenda. In the case of the PQ and SNP, for instance, separatism went along with support for social liberalism, immigration and a ‘civic’ definition of the nation.

Many of the separatist movements that emerged out of empires, from the Ottoman and Habsburg to the Soviet, likewise preserved the integrity of regional political elites and social hierarchies. There are exceptions. In some instances, where the local elite was aligned with the universal church or empire, it fell to lower strata to champion the nation. This was the case in Serbia and Bulgaria within the Ottoman Empire where the native aristocracy had been Islamised or replaced by Turkish landlords. The native lower clergy and merchant class provided the nationalist leadership, harnessing anti-landlord sentiment (Sugar 1969: 46-54). Indeed one Serbian nationalist leader was a

pig farmer. Anti-landlordism was also important in the Irish nationalism of the Land League in the 1880s and 90s.

Populist nationalism can also emerge when elites fail to win public support for their political project. The Easter Rising of 1916 was led by men like Patrick Pearse who initially called for a secular non-sectarian Irish nation – a relatively elite understanding of Irish nationhood. In order to rally public support, they needed to tap into the Catholic sentiments which were much closer to the lived experience of most people. At other times, populist nationalists may outflank elite nationalists, as with the BJP's Hindu nationalist challenge to the anti-colonial socialist nationalism of Congress.

The right-wing populist nationalism we see in western Europe, Australasia and the United States is arrayed against a 'globalist' cultural elite, a category which includes sections of the political and economic elite. Rather than viewing this elite as cosmopolitan, it is better to think of the liberal elite in the West before 2015 as missionary nationalist (Kumar 2003). That is, competing with other western national elites for prestige: to be first among equals in the advancement of western liberal ideals. The process is similar to the way Iran and Saudi Arabia compete to be the Muslim world's favoured Islamic torchbearer. The 'new nationalism' is an ethnonationalist challenge to liberal missionary nationalism. It targets the liberal-egalitarian norms which dominate the high culture of the West and are seen to be eroding the preponderance of the ethnic majority through mass immigration and multiculturalism. The Islamic 'threat' to liberalism is a factor, but not the main one: it

played no part in the rise of Haider in Austria and only a modest role in the success of UKIP and Trump. Terrorism is only an issue in some western countries.

Opposition to the erosion of political sovereignty is an issue for UKIP and protectionism is part of Trump's appeal, but in both cases data shows that their support base is motivated far more by threats to majority ethnic preponderance ('I don't recognise my country'). Secularism, meanwhile, is only a bugbear for Polish populists. Indeed, the Trump phenomenon represents a secular-nationalist break from the politics of the religious right which shaped the Republican Party in the 1990s and early 2000s. The religious right worked to capture offices within the system rather than overthrow it, thus was less overtly populist. Trump's base is instead motivated by the same majority-ethnic considerations that brook large in Europe, and has sought to oust the existing 'globalist' Republican elite in the RNC and parts of the Senate.

**Matthijs Rooduijn:** Nationalism focuses on the congruence of the cultural and the political community (i.e., the nation and the state) (see Freedman 1998; Gellner 1983). It could be defined as "an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity for a population which some of its members deem to constitute an actual or potential 'nation'" (Smith 2010: 9). Scholars often make a distinction between two types of nationalism: ethnic and civic nationalism. Civic nationalism is said to be inclusive and emphasizes the legal political community. Ethnic nationalism, on the other hand, is said to be exclusive and to focus much more strongly on cultural matters (Zimmer 2003).

Nationalism and populism thus have in common that they focus on an in-group: the nation in the case of nationalism and the people in the case of populism. They can therefore easily be combined with each other. However, left-wing populists tend to combine their populism with the inclusive, civic variant of nationalism, whereas right-wing populists are more inclined to link their populist discourse to an exclusionary version of nationalism (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser 2012; see also Halikiopoulou et al. 2012 regarding Euroscepticism).

It is important to emphasize that it is of the utmost importance that researchers do not conflate populism and nationalism. Although the two concepts are related, they represent different phenomena. The danger of conceptual sloppiness looms in particular when it comes to nativism – one specific form of nationalism. Nativism can be defined as “an ideology, which holds that states should be inhabited exclusively by members of the native group (‘the nation’) and that non-native elements (persons and ideas) are fundamentally threatening to the homogeneous nation-state” (Mudde 2007: 19), and is the main ideological ingredient of the radical right.

Because many of the most successful and famous contemporary populists are radical right-wing populists (Trump, Le Pen, Wilders), some commentators have come to the conclusion that populists are necessarily nativists. This is not the case. Only think of parties like *Podemos* in Spain or *Syriza* in Greece. Populism is about the vertical antagonism between “the people” and “the elite”, whereas nativism concerns the horizontal relationship between “the nation” and “dangerous others”.

It is important to emphasize that although the concepts of populism and nativism should be distinguished from each other, we should also realize that they are nevertheless closely related. Both could be perceived of as concrete manifestations of general in-group/out-group thinking. In other words: both sets of ideas tap into a more general predisposition to divide the world into “us” and “them”.

**Bart Bonikowski:** If populism, nationalism, and authoritarianism are analytically distinct components of radical-right politics, why do they often co-occur, both in voters’ beliefs and the appeals of candidates and parties? One way to think about their relationship is in terms of elective affinity (Weber 2010), with each pair within the triad sharing certain points of articulation that make their combination particularly fruitful. Because populism is a culturally thin phenomenon with few ideological entailments, the content of the binary categories of the corrupt elites and the virtuous people must be filled with substantive content that draws on more complete ideologies.

The construction of the elites is typically relatively straightforward: left-wing populism tends to target economic elites, while right-wing populism focuses on elected officials, civil servants, and intellectuals. The definition of the people is more difficult, however, because the ostensible claim to speak for the entire polity does not lend itself to cleavage-based politics. As a result, populist claims often rely on vague language, such as first-person plural pronouns. While this allows members of any group to see themselves as represented by the speaker, political claims are more powerful when they galvanize an in-group identity (Mason 2018). One tried-and-true method for doing so is to activate strong feelings of ethno-national identification.

By increasing the salience of otherwise latent cultural cleavages concerning the meaning of nationhood, which are present in all democratic societies, radical-right actors are able to channel diffuse grievances, both economic and cultural, into powerful out-group resentments (Bonikowski 2017a). Voters who espouse restrictive nationalist beliefs (Bonikowski and DiMaggio 2016; Bonikowski 2017b) see in populist politicians the promise that the rightful stewards of the “real” nation can turn the tide of cultural change and return the nation to its past glory, when the aggrieved majority unapologetically occupied a position of power. Nationalism infused with populism enables a politics of resentment and nostalgia, which is as much a battle against elites as it is a reassertion of dominance over ethnic, racial, and cultural minorities. Indeed, anti-elite claims can become a dog-whistle for ethno-nationalism, giving the latter plausible deniability and an air of respectability (Bonikowski and Zhang 2017). At the same time, because the political opposition is framed as a morally corrupt enemy of the nation, this justifies extraordinary measures against them, even if they require the violation of democratic norms (Levitsky and Ziblatt 2018). It is this zero-sum view of politics that explains why populism and authoritarianism are often mutually reinforcing.

**Daphne Halikiopoulou:** Populism and nationalism both place an emphasis on the collective. They have teleological visions and posit that the society they envisage is morally superior. In addition, they are both divisive, feeding off the creation of dichotomies and the categorisation of social groups behind conflict lines. But while populism pits the people against the elites, nationalism pits the in-group against the out-group.

It is possible to be both populist and nationalist- and indeed a number of parties that we term ‘right-wing populist’ are. But it must also be possible for a populist not to be a nationalist and vice versa. This point is similar to my point above about left and right populism. It must be conceptually and empirically possible for the two categories to be distinct in order for them to be analytically useful.

This is where the concepts of ‘thin’ and ‘thick’ populism become problematic. Thin populism is the minimal definition that focuses on the antagonistic relationship between the ‘pure people’ and the corrupt elite (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2012). Given, however, that references to the people are widespread in a democracy, this minimal definition is often criticised as not enough (Brubaker 2017). ‘Thick’ populism then adds more dimensions to the people versus elites axis, for example an inclusion/exclusion axis i.e. nationalism (Brubaker 2017). But herein lies the problem: we often end up defining a party or movement as populist not because of its populist attributes, but because of other attributes, such as its nationalism or radicalism. In this case, what does the categorisation of a party as populist, in addition to nationalist and/or radical add to our understanding? To put it another way: if nationalism is always a feature of the radical right- as the literature agrees- what then is the difference between a radical right-wing party and a populist radical right-wing party?

There is greater explanatory power in nationalism than there is in populism I would argue. Nationalism is a helpful concept when understood as a supply-side driver of radical right party support. Parties use it in their programmatic agendas to mobilise voters by portraying their solutions to multiple insecurities as legitimate. In Western Europe successful radical right- wing parties have done this by abandoning ethnic



nationalism and adopting instead a civic variety which ‘speaks’ the language of democracy and stresses liberal values, in order to justify their exclusionary agendas (Halikiopoulou et al., 2013).

#### **4. Are contemporary populist movements across Europe and the West comparable?**

**Matthijs Rooduijn:** Absolutely. Scholars categorize such movements as populist *precisely* because they have something in common: their people-centrism and anti-elitism (Rooduijn 2014). It makes perfect sense to compare parties and movements that employ similar discourses – even if they operate within strongly divergent political contexts.

However, it is also important to emphasize that populist parties are not necessarily similar parties. Quite the contrary. There are huge differences between, for instance, *Podemos* and UKIP. Although these parties are both populist (and also Eurosceptic), they strongly differ from each other when it comes to their ideas about salient ideological issues like immigration, law and order and social justice. It is of essential importance to keep these differences in mind when comparing such parties.

Giovanni Sartori’s “ladder of abstraction” (1970) is of the utmost importance in this respect. Sartori’s general message is that it is perfectly legitimate to compare apples with oranges. They have, after all, a lot in common. Although apples and oranges differ from each other regarding taste, texture and color, both are eatable, and both come from a plant (i.e., are types of fruit). The same holds true for populists across

Western countries. They might be different in many respects, but that does not mean that they are not comparable.

**Bart Bonikowski:** There is an inherent tension in identifying shared characteristics across instances of populist politics while remaining attuned to the specificities of each case. Between-country variation, shaped by distinct historical trajectories of individual polities, is considerable, as evidenced by differences in electoral systems and governance institutions, in salient nationalist narratives and characteristics of perceived out-groups, and in the specific events that catalyze the success of populist parties. The Trump election, for instance, cannot be understood without attention to the history of racial domination in the United States, long-term patterns of migration from Mexico and other Latin American countries, the persistent vilification of President Obama, the peculiarities of the primary system and the Electoral College, and the strengthening of partisan identification associated with increasing polarization. In many European countries, by contrast, race is less significant than ethnicity and religion in fueling nationalist appeals, the refugee crisis is much more salient than labor migration, parliamentary systems present hurdles for populist upstarts (while coalition politics have countervailing enabling effects), and polarization manifests itself through weakened party affiliation and the fragmentation of party systems. Even within clusters of broadly similar causal factors, such as grievances associated with economic globalization, there are important regional differences, with trade shocks being particularly relevant in the United States and the United Kingdom (Autor, Dorn, Hanson, and Majlesi 2016; Colantone and Stanig 2018), and financial integration and capital mobility playing a larger role in continental Europe (Guiso, Herrera, and Morelli 2017; Rodrik 2018).

Yet, despite these important country specificities, it is possible to identify overarching patterns that lend themselves to general explanations. The formal structure of populist claims and the links between populism, nationalism, and authoritarianism are remarkably similar across cases. The moral vilification of elites, the appeal to the purity and political sovereignty of the people, and the portrayal of the political system as having failed the latter are present in the appeals of most radical candidates, both on the radical left and the radical right. The association of anti-elitism with the disparagement of minorities—whether immigrants, Muslims, or racial minorities—is a primary feature of right-wing populist politics across Western countries. While varied in their specifics and relative importance, the causal factors shaping the relative successes of radical actors tend to operate via similar mechanisms as well: the perceived threat to the collective status of dominant groups in society, with their identity conceived of in either economic or ethnocultural terms. Finally, these grievances are turned against political elites, as mainstream parties are increasingly seen as unresponsive, detached from voters, and ideologically undifferentiated.

The result is an erosion of social democratic politics, a rightward drift of traditional conservative parties, and a rise of radical challengers who further delegitimize conventional party politics, with potentially destabilizing consequences for liberal democracy as a whole. What remains to be seen is whether traditional parties will offer a steadfast defense of democratic norms (particularly from the center-right [Ziblatt 2017]) and develop a meaningful vision for the future that offers an alternative to the majoritarian and anti-system tendencies of the radical right (this is

especially relevant for the center-left). Thus far, the evidence on both fronts is far from reassuring.

**Daphne Halikiopoulou:** We tend to use populism as an umbrella term to cover a broad range of political outcomes, from the rise of the radical left and the radical right in Europe to the election of Trump in the US and Brexit in the UK. These phenomena are in fact very different, elected on different platforms. This does not mean that they are not comparable, as comparability does not necessarily imply that the phenomena we are trying to explain need to be identical, or similar in everything. It does, however, entail some overarching commonality. If this is absent, then comparability is limited. This is not just a theoretical problem. It is important because it goes to the core of our explanations of why particular parties are increasing their electoral support. If these are different phenomena not sharing an overarching commonality, then their rise cannot be traceable to a single cause (Pappas, 2016).

For the reasons outlined above I am not convinced that populism is enough of an overarching commonality to allow us to identify a single cause behind these diverse political phenomena. To understand them we need to identify different patterns. With regards to the niche parties of both the right and the left that have garnered increasing electoral support across Europe, which I suggest are more adequately labelled 'far right' and 'far left', I see three patterns. Trump and Brexit I consider different phenomena; Brexit in my view is the best example of populism.

In North-west Europe we may observe the increasing salience of value issues, related to the emergence of a post-materialist cleavage (Hooghe and Marks 2017). This does

not mean that material considerations are irrelevant, but rather that this cleavage is characterised by the interplay between economy and culture. Successful niche parties tend to be of the far right variety. They cater for voters' various insecurities including material and value-based by scapegoating immigration: i.e. by claiming that immigration is the core cause of a broad range of societal problems including terrorism, job scarcity and the erosion of national values. What unites these parties is a civic nationalist rhetoric that excludes on ideological rather than biological criteria.

In Southern Europe on the other hand the economy remains more salient within the context of the prevalence of material concerns, reinforced by severity of the economic crisis. Successful niche parties are mainly of the radical left variety, with the exception of Greece, which experienced both the rise of the radical left SYRIZA and the extreme right GD. These parties draw primarily on economic narratives, even the GD which stresses the economy more than immigration in its manifestos (Halikiopoulou et al., 2016). In Eastern Europe the dynamics are different, with authoritarianism prominent across the board. This is partly a legacy of the communist experience (Pirro, 2014).

The Trump and Brexit phenomena are different. These are not niche parties operating in the fringes of the party system. Trump is the elected representative of one of the two major parties in the US. Many of his voters would have been traditional Republican voters, opting for the party regardless. Why this candidate became elected is an important question but a different question to why small, niche parties enter and influence party systems in Europe. Similarly, Brexit - driven by both cultural and

economic insecurity (Halikiopoulou and Vlandas 2017)- was supported by both major UK parties and reflected Eurosceptic views that are not new to Britain.

Despite the fact that it has been supported by much of the political establishment in the UK, Brexit is a better example of populism than the emergence- or persistence- of the radical parties described above. While populism just one attribute of these parties, which use it in their rhetoric to varying extents, it is *the* defining feature of Brexit. This is why. Its implementation has been sought with urgency and emotion (Freedman 2017), and rests upon a resentment of pluralist institutions and procedures that might place it under parliamentary and judicial scrutiny. Premised on the outcome of a referendum that pitted the ‘people’ against the liberal, cosmopolitan elites, its legitimacy lies in the belief that the outcome is somehow morally right because it embodies the popular will. Brexit, in other words, is premised on the moral superiority of a decision that has been made from below. It has translated the modest majority of those who voted into a claim about the whole people and the indivisibility of that people. To return to the question about the nature of populism and democratic politics, the problem is that, of course, ‘the people’ are never *all* the people.

**Eric Kaufmann:** I think the dividing line falls between eastern and western Europe, with the Anglosphere similar to western Europe. I conceive of two forms of nationalism: one concerned with overcoming trauma and humiliation from the past, the second focused on addressing the ‘imperfect’ fit between ethnicity and politics. The former is an important ingredient in fascism and militarism and is only important in contemporary East European right-wing populism. The latter encompasses secessionist, risorgimento and anti-immigration nationalisms and is a bigger concern

in the West. As Brubaker (2017) notes, Visegrad countries along the route of the Migrant Crisis are upset about immigration for largely symbolic reasons to do with a resentment of imperialism. Refugee quotas are considered the latest in a series of humiliations and impositions, from the Treaty of Trianon through Soviet occupation to EU domination. There is also the memory of an authoritarian period before the messy world of pluralist democracy, and nostalgia for a return to that world. Something of this spirit may also be detected in Greece's Golden Dawn.

By contrast, the western populist right is almost exclusively concerned with the 'who are we?' question thrown up by immigration and multiculturalism, including the anti-colonial, anti-racist critique of national narratives. I see very little difference between parties like the FPÖ, FN and UKIP in Europe or Trump and New Zealand First in the Anglo settler societies. Even the black South African First movement is similar, though World Values Survey data on immigration attitudes suggests economic grievances may be playing a greater role there. The western movements are primarily motivated by the proportional decline of the ethnic majority in interaction with the rate of immigration. Both the minority level and rate of change are important – especially in an age when limited interstate war and ideological conflict have weakened state nationalism. The missionary nationalism represented by anti-communism or neoconservatism is giving way to what I term ethno-traditional nationalism, in which culturally-conservative political actors within society mobilise against liberal missionary nationalists *within* the country. Outward-facing state nationalism based on political friction with other polities has retreated while an inward-oriented form of cultural nationalism is on the rise.

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