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Did Somebody Say Populism? Towards a Renewal and Reorientation of Populism Studies

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ABSTRACT

Responding to the recent explosion in scholarly analysis of populism, this paper offers a conceptual mapping and critique of the dominant schools of thought within the burgeoning field of populism studies. In the first half of the paper we suggest that two broad conceptions of populism – one associated with Cas Mudde, the other with Ernesto Laclau – have come to dominate the field. Yet neither of these approaches, we argue, are able to satisfactorily capture the *specificity* of contemporary forms of radical politics. Thus, the second part of the paper examines possible responses to this conceptual impasse. On the one hand, we recommend a move towards more theoretically and sociologically enriched accounts of populism, by drawing on the insights and concepts of political sociology, political theory and cultural studies. On the other, drawing on recent work by Benjamin De Cleen, Jason Glynos and Aurelien Mondon, we suggest a partial reorientation of populism towards thinking about populism as a signifier (rather than as a concept). In so doing, we conclude with a call for greater sensitivity to, and awareness of, the role that discourses *about* populism (including scholarly discourses) play in sustaining existing relations of power and ideology.

Introduction

Over the past few years there has been a veritable explosion of studies on populism in its different manifestations in response to the contemporary rise of right wing movements across Europe and Britain and the more modest successes of left wing parties in countries like Greece, Spain, Portugal and Scotland. Indeed, populism has become a blanket descriptor for 'resistance' or 'insurgent' politics, with political actors of all stripes and forms finding themselves labelled "populist".[1] While the surge of scholarly effort to think through the theory and practice of populism is welcome, and has thrown up some interesting insights and provocative analyses, taken as a whole, this literature remains curiously inchoate, muddled and even misleading.

Against this backdrop, the aims of this article are three-fold. The first is to offer a conceptual mapping of the prevailing meanings that have been ascribed to populism and to

characterize what we see as the two dominant schools of thought that inform these definitions. The second aim of the article is to evaluate each of these paradigms, and their theoretical offshoots, in light of their conceptual coherence, empirical applicability and explanatory potential. The third is to suggest two alternative, potentially reinforcing, routes that scholarship on populism can and should take.

In light of these aims, we proffer two overlapping arguments developed across two sections of the article. The first is that two broad, but incompatible conceptions of populism have come to dominate what was once a more varied, eclectic and multi-disciplinary field of inquiry and that neither of these definitions - one which paints it as an *ideology* and the other as a *political logic* - when operationalized, are able to capture the *specificity* or significance of this allegedly new burst of radical politics. Our second argument is that there are at least two possible responses to this conceptual impasse, which are potentially mutually reinforcing. On the one hand, we recommend a move away from the 'parsimonious' or 'minimal' definitions of populism currently on offer towards a more theoretically and sociologically enriched account of populism, one that develops inductively from ethnographic work and draws on the insights and concepts of political sociology, political theory and cultural studies. It is only through detailed, context specific empirical research and careful conceptual reflection that we might discover what the unique features of populism, if any, consist in. On the other, drawing on recent work by Benjamin De Cleen, Jason Gylnos and Aurelien Mondon, we want to encourage academics to be more curious about the uses and abuses of this new trope and explore 'the work' that it does in disciplining our contemporary political terrain. In this way, we are suggesting that while populism may be a blunt instrument both conceptually and empirically, it is in fact a powerful *signifier* that is re-articulating a range of discourses around the future possibilities of resistance politics and its relationship to democracy.

Part 1: Mapping Incompatible Populisms: Between an Ideology and a Logic.

This first part of the article offers a conceptual mapping and critique of what we take to be the two dominant approaches to populism. In each case we will explore the genus of populism that each camp defends, its attendant concepts and the vision of politics that emerges from each narrative. We then go on to examine several offshoots of each paradigm, exploring the more specific ways in which this concept has been operationalized as well as deployed to make political arguments.

A. Populism as 'Thin Ideology'

We begin with the work of Cas Mudde which – often alongside his co-author Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser – constitutes the most widely cited body of work on contemporary populism. Indeed, contrary to familiar proclamations about the meaning of populism being

highly contested,[2] there is something of a Muddean consensus in current political science scholarship on populism with a long list of scholars from different backgrounds referencing Mudde's work as their key starting point.[3]

As is well known, Mudde and his colleagues define populism in relation to ideology. Mudde's oft-quoted definition reads as follows:

> 'populism is best defined as *a thin-centered ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, 'the pure people' and 'the corrupt elite', and which argues that politics should be an expression of the* volonté general *(general will) of the people*'.[4]

In these terms, populism must be understood as a 'mental map', accompanied by particular discourses, through which people come to understand the world and articulate their grievances and aspirations.[5] The specific content of these ideas stem from a political determination and moral judgment that the well-being of 'the people' is being trammeled by the special interests of a 'corrupt elite'. To this extent populism embodies a defensive politics seeking to reclaim the putative rights of the common people, treated as a unified sovereign entity, against the demands and injunctions of an unaccountable ruling cadre. It is, by definition, anti-establishment in ethos and prone to justifying practices and/or policies that seek to capture the general will of the people, e.g., referenda and plebiscites, and that are responsive to their 'common sense'.[6] Given its restricted set of core concepts - the 'pure people', the 'corrupt elite' and 'general will' –, however, it must be remembered that populism is a *thin* ideology which gains life and practical purpose only when combined with thicker, more established host ideologies such as nationalism or socialism.[7]

When applied to empirical case studies, the picture of 'populism in action' that emerges is one driven by the passionate exhortations and gestures of high profile leaders (e.g. Hugo Chavez, Marine Le Pen, Jorg Haider) and their associated parties.[8] These leaders are typically presented as strong and enterprising, although Mudde makes it clear that charismatic leadership, while often on display in populist politics, is by no means a necessary component of it.[9] 'The people', by contrast, are often far less visible and when they do emerge onto the scene they are depicted as a rather reticent, malleable and small c conservative lot. Indeed, Mudde even goes so far as to say that what separates latent populist followers from other 'protest prone' groups is 'their reactiveness: they generally have to be mobilized by a populist actor, rather than taking the initiative themselves'.[10] Thus, for Mudde and his colleagues, populism is constituted through a hierarchical relationship between political leaders and 'the people', engineered and sustained primarily by enterprising professional politicians.

Despite the very widespread uptake of Mudde's 'minimal' definition among comparative political scientists,[11] we want to suggest that there are a number of conceptual and methodological problems with his conception of populism. The first concerns the *genus* of populism as an *ideology*. Apart from the fact that Mudde and Kaltwasser say very little about the status of the set of ideas that feed into populism or how they hang together, the progenitor of term 'thin ideology' - Michael Freeden - has politely, but quite firmly refuted the equation of these two concepts, arguing that the former (populism) has none of the necessary features of the latter (ideology, whether thin or thick), i.e. an intellectual history, a vision of a transformative alternative, and 'the potential to become full' if it incorporates elements of other ideologies.[12] Dismissing this elision as incoherent, he describes populism as an 'ideationally insubstantial fingerprint',[13] that is more 'emaciated' than thin-centred'.[14] We agree and would add that once this is admitted, then it must also be acknowledged that the defining force shaping the content and form of populism is in fact its 'secondary' or 'host' ideology. Whether it be mobilizing people to action, constructing a template to make sense of the world or providing the basis for a broad national agenda, it is the substantive ideological visions of so called 'populist' leaders (from right-wing to nationalist to socialist) that do all the work in sustaining it and provide most of the explanation about it.[15]

Leaving aside these doubts about the genus of populism and its conceptual coherence, there are also methodological challenges that need to be addressed. One of them is that in order to quantify and measure the depth and scope of populism, scholars have preferred to shift their gaze from ideology to the discursive content of a leader's 'political talk' which can be more easily traced, coded and quantified. Thus, finding populism becomes an exercise in word searches and word counting as scholars scour the speeches and manifestos of putative populist leaders looking for references to the 'people' or the 'elite'.[16] This move to the discursive realm is justified because it is seen as the only way in which ideology can be operationalized without having to add another theoretical element to the definition.[17]

Now while we accept that this kind of lexical analysis makes sense if populism is reduced to set phrases or specific words, as opposed to a more expansive notion of ideology, the problem of what Stijn van Kessell calls 'degreeism', i.e., seeing populism as (potentially) present everywhere, albeit to different degrees, raises its head.[18] After all, how do we know when we have moved from an incident of populist rhetoric to a fully-fledged populist politics? What is the tipping point, and does it depend on how many times reference is made to key terminology (e.g. 'the people' or 'corrupt elite') or over how long a period a discourse is freighted with this language? And, perhaps more importantly, if populism is and can be present everywhere through language, then it is not clear why we have become so fixated with it. In other words, unless we can develop and operationalize populism as a 'classifier' concept which is able to demarcate 'a circumscribed universe of populist actors'[19] whose actions represent an exceptional as well as enduring rendition of

politics, then it is less clear why we need to worry about it at all, either conceptually or politically.

Having identified what for us are a few of the serious problems with this minimalist definition of populism, let's move on to examine some theoretical offshoots of the Muddean approach that seek to further concretize populism as a distinct form of politics. The first is put forward by Jan-Werner Müller and Takis Pappas who argue that populism must be understood as a form of 'democratic illiberalism' and therefore must be treated with caution and contained. The second put forward by Benjamin Moffitt prefers to see it as the embodiment of a distinct 'style or performance' of politics. As we shall see, what holds these two strands of thought together is their shared assumption that populism starts life as a set of ideas which are then automatically translated into a specific range of actions, policy decisions and performances.

Starting with Müller, whose book *What is Populism?* was compulsory reading for the Princeton class of 2021, populism is presented as 'a particular moralistic imagination of politics, a way of perceiving the political world that sets a morally pure and fully unified … people against elites who are deemed corrupt or in some way morally inferior'.[20] Thus, although he does not deploy the term ideology, he clearly sits in the ideational camp, seeing populism as primarily fuelled by attitudes, beliefs and values which then orient and give meaning to a set of political practices. Moreover, in a similar fashion to the Muddean vision, populism is rendered visible and potent through the machinations of a self-appointed leader who seeks to gain the trust of and represent a constituency of misguided, angry people who seemingly passively follow their charismatic messiah. Finally, alongside Mudde, Müller also emphasises the underlying moralistic nature of populist politics in which citizens are pitted against each other in a zero-sum game of good vs. evil. Differentiating populists from good liberal democrats, Müller explains that the former '…will persist in their representative claim no matter what; because their claim is of a *moral* and symbolic – not an empirical – nature, it cannot be disproven' (Muller 2016, *emphasis added*, p. 39). Leaving aside the bizarre notion that only populists are prone to the repetition of erroneous claims, regardless of the facts, it is clear that Müller sees moral outrage as one of the lynchpins of populism.

Where he diverts from the Muddean camp is his insistence that the defining feature of populism is its anti-pluralism rather than its anti-elitism. While many forms of protest politics can take a stand against elites, it is only populists who unapologetically extol the virtues of a 'highly exclusionary identity politics' in which the 'real' or 'true' people are presented as indivisible and outsiders as a threat to the popular will. It is this anti-pluralism which poses the greatest danger to democracy stoking as it does the conditions of possibility for not only democratic illiberalism, but also for authoritarianism.[21] In this way, unlike Mudde, Müller sees no virtues to populism at all, rejecting the idea that it can ever be a corrective to democracy: clearly only the ground of liberal pluralism can secure freedom

and democracy for Müller and any and all challenges to this creed are beyond the pale. The notion that there may be tensions between the defence of liberalism and the practice of democracy and that current configurations of global power in a neoliberal age may aggravate these, are given little attention in the text.[22]

In a very similar vein, Pappas, indicts populism as a form of democratic illiberalism explaining that it 'fail(s) to abide by the three most fundamental principles of political liberalism, namely, the acknowledgement of multiple divisions in society; the need to try reconciling such divisions via negotiated agreements and political moderation; and the commitment to the rule of law and the protection of all minority rights'.[23] Drawing explicitly on Mudde's definition, he depicts populism as a world view that divides society into the good (the people) and the bad (elite) and that generates a politics that is prone to confrontation, polarization and 'political extremism'.[24] In this context, Pappas presents Syriza and previous Greek governments as dangerous to the extent that they seek to override *centrist* voices speaking out in the name of moderation and economic reform. In this way, populism of all hues, left or right, must be seen as a foe of contemporary liberal democracy reflecting, as it does, 'biased beliefs and bad policies'.[25]

Unlike his colleagues, however, Pappas's pays much more empirical and conceptual attention to the role of 'the people' as the sustaining force behind populism. For him, populism tends to thrive in countries where liberal political culture has not been embedded and therefore the people are less able and willing to act according to the 'public good'. Explaining the rise of populism in Greece, for instance, he suggests that the Greek people simply lacked the 'social capital' necessary to act in a 'rational' and 'liberal minded' way, seduced as they were by 'greed'.[26]

A second trajectory of thinking about populism which has emerged recently—exemplified by the work of Moffitt—prefers to conceptualize populism as a 'style' of politics. Understood as a mode of representation, replete with a 'playbook' of mannerisms, gestures and aesthetic flourishes, Moffitt tells us that the central features of this performance include an 'appeal to the people', an indictment of corrupt elites, a coarsening of political rhetoric which he characterizes as 'bad manners', and last but not least, an evocation of crisis – real or imagined – which serves to bring a sense of urgency and drama to the leader's calls for attention.[27] Unlike Müller, (but like some of the comparativist scholars who operationalise Mudde's definition), Moffitt sees populism as gradational in nature: in other words, leaders choose to perform these elements to a lesser or greater extent with all of them embodying some of these features of populism at least some of the time. In this sense then populism is construed as an integral part of democratic politics. And although, like Mudde, he identifies both positive and negative democratic tendencies within populism, it is clear that as a fundamentally 'opportunistic' politics whose sole purpose is the attainment

of power, populism remains a potential danger to any democratic project understood as an inclusive or plural one.

Despite Moffitt's strenuous efforts to establish his perspective as novel and distinct from that of prevailing perspectives, in the end, his work does not take us very far away from the ideational definition, a point that Mudde himself has correctly noted.[28] This is because although Moffitt takes the 'performances' of populism as the main unit of analysis, his framework requires us to see these dramatic gestures and rhetoric as ultimately driven and sustained by the *ideas and beliefs* of those who put them into action. Nowhere in this perspective are these acts of representation given a life or logic of their own so that populism can be understood as something that exists beyond the intentions of their author. In other words, for Moffitt, there can be no performance of populism without a 'populist' subject ready and willing to enact it, consciously and intentionally, in order to obtain and maintain power. This is an agent focused politics of means and ends, one in which strategy looms large. Given this focus on instrumental rationality, it is unsurprising that Moffitt says next to nothing about the influence of any 'host ideology' on these populist performances. Moreover, he also fully accepts the ideational content of the populist project as defined by Mudde, that is, 'an appeal to the people', a view of the elite as corrupt, and a vision of a sharply divided society. The introduction of 'bad manners' and a 'sense of crisis' in this context become simply add-ons in an effort to explain how leaders seek to curry favour with their followers and thereby secure their appeal to the people. Thus, while one can argue that Moffitt draws our attention to an important aspect of populism, i.e, how it is enacted and performed, at least by leaders, he does so while working firmly within the ideational framework. Even methodologically, Moffitt shares the deductive approach of the Muddean camp whereby the essential features of populism are asserted by fiat, drawn as they are from the prevailing theories of the day, and not discovered inductively through careful empirical or ethnographic research.[29]

In sum, despite seemingly different starting points, all these authors converge around several points. The first is that populism is fundamentally a mind-set and a mental map which, when put into practice, leads to a divisive politics in terms of its rhetoric, its embodied performances and its policies. The second is that all these thinkers subscribe to a deductive form of theorising in which populism is first defined conceptually and then rendered visible through the application of the definition to specific case studies. As a result, the focus has been on proving the presence, or not, of populism, rather than on exploring the conditions or grievances which give rise to it or the nature of the social and political relationships that define its particular form. Third, and related to the second, with the exception of Pappas' work, 'the people' being targeted by populist discourses are left almost entirely in the shadows of their leaders - we are given little sense of who they are, empirically or conceptually, and why they should follow or respond to their machinations, charismatic or otherwise.[30] To this extent, this body of literature on populism perpetuates a

'top down' vision of politics in which individual personalities and intentional strategic action is foregrounded. Third, all of these authors, to varying degrees, see populism as a potential threat to the political centre ground either in terms of liberal values (pluralism) or in terms of economic rationality (neoliberal market reforms). Even Mudde is increasingly framing populism as a form of democratic illiberalism in his media interventions.[31]

B. Populism as a Political Logic

Whilst the work of Cas Mudde has been the dominant influence on the study of populism in comparative politics, the work of the late political theorist Ernesto Laclau represents a second school of thought that has gained considerable traction amongst scholars in the UK and in Europe. Although Laclau's key contribution to political thought consisted in developing, often in collaboration with Chantal Mouffe, a specifically 'post-Marxist', discourse theory of hegemony,[32] populism was an ongoing concern for Laclau throughout his career, culminating in the publication of *On Populist Reason* in 2005. This work, and its attendant themes, has become a principal focus of what has been dubbed the 'Essex School' of discourse theory, Laclau's home academic institution for more than 30 years. Some of the key thinkers working within this Laclauian tradition include Panizza, Howarth, Mouffe, and Stavrakakis.[33]

In *On Populist Reason* Laclau understands populism as the manifestation of a particular logic of 'articulation' in which anti-systemic claims and demands are brought together into a (relatively) coherent counter-hegemonic formation or 'equivalential chain'.[34] This temporary, precarious coalition is afforded a semblance of unity firstly by the production of 'empty signifiers' (i.e., privileged names, concepts or ideals) that serve to unite hitherto disparate demands and secondly, by its opposition to a common enemy.[35] In sharp contrast to team Mudde, what defines populism then is not the *ideological content* of the demands being put forward, but rather the fact that they take a particular *form* which is characterized by what Laclau terms the 'logic of equivalence', one of two fundamental logics that constitute the very *ontological* fabric of politics.[36] The second for Laclau is the 'logic of difference' which serves to sustain an institutionalized, differential model of politics which presupposes that a plurality of demands can be satisfactorily addressed within the system and without recourse to social division and antagonism.[37]

But this is all very abstract. What specific actors populate populism and whose demands drive it? As opposed to the Muddean camp, for whom the emergence of populism presupposes *an already existing* constituency of people seeking to resist the elite that rule over them, for the Essex school it is only through populism, and the rhetorical devices, i.e. 'empty signifiers', deployed by their leaders, that 'the people' can be constituted as a popular subject.[38] In other words, the 'people' only emerge as a recognizable political collectivity when a series of unsatisfied demands congeal by means of the logic of

equivalence and generate new political identities around which subjects can mobilize. While the precise content of these new identities is contingent and cannot be known in advance, Laclau does characterize 'the people' as 'the underdog' who, in the context of 'a crisis of representation'[39] and heightened antagonism, face down their oppressor.[40] Of course, when the equivalential chain that articulates them as 'a people' with a shared popular identity is challenged and eventually breaks, their existence as an 'objective' social force also dissipates.

As should be obvious, populism in the hands of Laclauians is a very different proposition from that envisaged by those following Mudde. While the latter commit to an *ontic* vision and analysis of politics which sees it as an already constituted terrain whose meaning and direction can be objectively measured and mapped, even predicted with the right conceptual tools, the former see politics as an ongoing, unpredictable and contingent play of differences, a game that defies fixed meanings and cannot be studied as an already constituted entity. And although it is true that the interplay and tension between these two ontological logics of the political are galvanized and sustained through the concrete discursive actions (which include words, symbols and practices) of both charismatic leaders and grass-roots mobilizations, the trajectory and fate of any populist moment is not reducible to them, dependent as it is on a range of discursive contestations and contingent events that far exceed the intentions of individuals.

Having now summarized the central claims of the Essex School (and their differences from the Muddean approach), let us consider some of the limitations of this perspective. One stumbling block takes the form of a conceptual conflation. As Benjamin Arditi points out, at times Laclau seems to equate populism with politics writ large and yet, at other times, he implies that it is 'one possibility of politics among others'.[41] In other words, he vacillates between an ontological and ontic conception of populism.[42] But even if we sidestep this conceptual slippage, we still have a problem with his notion of populism as a manifestation of counter-hegemony because it suggests that *all* oppositional or radical politics must be conceived as populist in nature. If this is the case then populism loses any specificity of its own and becomes just another way of characterizing radical politics of all persuasions.

Of course, this move may well have been acceptable to Laclau, given that for him 'populist reason' constituted a logic of the political as such, but it is clearly not what contemporary scholars using the term want to imply. Indeed, populism in this camp is most often used to identify and defend a politics of the *left*, one that is plural, inclusive and egalitarian in orientation. And although Laclau made it clear that what he referred to as the 'ontic contents' of populism could never be predetermined and was open to articulatory practices from *both* the right and the left, his advocates such as Stavrakakis have not followed suit, arguing that right-wing movements cannot usually be considered populist

given that the key nodal points in their discourses revolve around the 'nation' or 'ethnicity', rather than 'the people'.[43] In this way while the operationalization of the concept of populism, in the Laclauian camp, encourages us to look for and make a distinction between right and left radical politics – a point that is obscured in the Muddean approach – it does not help us go much beyond this point when it comes to determining the specificity of populism in relation to other instantiations of oppositional politics.

Relatedly, a further problem, that also blights the work of those working in the Essex school, is that in the course of its operationalization the genus of populism tends to morph from a political logic to a discourse (it is hard to map a logic!) and then from there to a series of rhetorical devices and utterances, despite the fact that Laclau explicitly and emphatically rejects the conflation of 'discourse' with either ideology or language.[44] As evidence of this tendency, witness the otherwise rich and interesting accounts offered by Stavrakakis and Katsambekis, which reduce the analysis of left-wing populism in Greece to overt references to 'the people' in the discourses of the Greek governing party SYRIZA.[45] Interestingly and rather oddly, this propensity to distil populism, at least when empirically mapping it, to a series of discursive utterances on the part of both the Essex School and the followers of Mudde has nurtured a curious 'love-in' between these two camps. So much so that members on each side happily reference each other despite the fact that they are committed to diametrically opposed conceptions of populism and politics.[46] This in turn exacerbates the already muddled and conceptually confusing character of much of the populism scholarship.

In sum, despite their different, indeed incompatible, ontological starting points, both approaches reviewed here share a great deal. First, they both see populism as a form of resistance or oppositional politics that potentially poses a serious challenge to the status quo. Moreover, both camps identify and examine populism through a process of deductive theorizing, which, when operationalized, tends to foreground the language of individual leaders or the slogans of groups. To this extent, they tend to neglect a range of other features often associated with the politics of resistance in more sociologically oriented literatures. Indeed, as we shall suggest below, the politics that emerges into view in each case is a strangely dis-embodied and dis-embedded one. Last but not least, we suggest that both conceptual accounts of populism fail to demonstrate in what ways populism can be understood as a *distinct* mode or form of politics, one which can be differentiated from an ephemeral feature of politics that leaders dip in and out of, on the one hand (the degreeism problem), and from other forms of oppositional or radical politics, on the other.

PART 2: Where Now for Populism Studies?

Rather surprisingly, the 'thinness' of dominant conceptualizations of populism has done nothing to slow down its meteoric rise as the term of the hour in academic and media circles. In fact, in our view, what we are witnessing at present is a degree of conceptual overreach that threatens to swamp all our analyses of and discourses about contemporary politics, radical or not. A further worry is that the ascendancy of this concept has been accompanied by a tendency to eschew careful, nuanced analysis with the aim of understanding emergent forms of politics in favour of brash judgements and indignant anger at any and all challenges to the centre ground of politics. So where do we go from here? Given the conceptual difficulties that we think have beset the category of populism as well as its operationalization, we want to propose two alternative routes out of the conceptual impasse in which we find ourselves. The first is what could be framed as conceptual *renewal* and the second conceptual *reorientation*.

1) Renewal

The first option would be to pursue a project of conceptual renewal, aiming to develop a conceptualization of populism that 1) is able to make good on the implicit promise offered up in the existing scholarship that there is something *significant, distinct* and *unusual* about populism, and 2) avoids the conceptual and empirical pitfalls that we identified in part 1. For us, the most fruitful way of doing this would likely be to drop any and all allusions to either ideology or discourse (especially in its literal conception) as the appropriate genus of populism, especially if we want to develop a conceptual tool that is amenable to empirical inquiry.

Instead, we think that is more promising to rethink populism in light of a much smaller body of literature on populist movements which tends to be ignored in part because it is far more eclectic, sociological in orientation and case study based. Here populism is presented as a series of *collective enactments* that, while mobilizing ideologies, discourses, and forms of rhetoric, cannot be reduced to them. Moreover, these enactments are not seen as ephemeral performances by leaders, but rather as embedded, relatively *durable* and purposeful 'repertoires of action' that reflect a substantive view of the world and a desire to transform it. Understanding and conceptualizing populism from this point of view requires us to examine what a range of actors actually do and when, where and how they do it. To this end, it implicitly advocates an *inductive approach* which recognizes the context specificity of populism and admits that many of its defining features depend on the socio-economic, cultural and historical/regional terrain on which it emerges and finds life and, therefore, cannot be determined or deduced *a priori*.[47] Finally, rather than seeing populism as emanating from the ideas and actions of a leader, it presents it as a two-way street in which leaders of political parties and social movements as well as grassroots activists all participate in the construction of, and mobilize around, a *shared political project*. So, for

instance, Jansen sees populism as the mobilization of 'ordinarily marginalized social sectors',[48] an endeavour which implicates not only material and organizational resources but also the articulation of an animating rhetoric which brings people together against a perceived common enemy.[49]

Learning from this more social-movement oriented approach, we would like to propose that we reframe the genus of populism so that it centres on a *dynamic social relationship* that is generated and sustained between political leaders and 'the people' that are inspired to 'follow' them. In other words, rather than search for the intrinsic characteristics of populist actors and their discourses, it might be more enlightening to explore the ways in which both the leaders and 'the led' *co-constitute* each other through the interplay of their respective discursive claims, the embodied performances that accompany them and, in particular, the bonds and emotions generated by them. With little space to develop this idea, we simply want to gesture here to two lines of inquiry that may be worth exploring as we attempt to grasp populism as a potentially *sui generis* mode of resistance politics.

The first concerns the role of *affect.* It is our view that the specificity of populism – as a distinctive type of 'socially produced reciprocity'[50] – might be partly captured by considering the affective dynamics that constitute it. Defining affect is, of course, a troublesome task. But a helpful definition for our purposes is offered by Jon Protevi, who argues that affect potentially encompasses two different, but connected facets of human experience: on the one hand, affect refers to 'being affected' – 'the somatic change caused by an encounter with an object' and on the other, it references 'the felt change in the power of the body, the increase or decrease in perfection, felt as sadness or joy', i.e. something akin to what we might ordinarily call 'emotion', but that is not reducible to it.[51]

If affect matters to politics, in general, and possibly populism, in particular, how might we begin to gauge its role and effects? Jenny Gunnarsson Payne's fascinating recent essay on populism, affect and political mobilization suggests a number of potential avenues for research. Drawing on Laclau, Gunnarsson Payne stresses two key moments in the process of (populist) identity formation: first, the vertical dimension, which captures the ways in which 'political subjects are *affected* by a political idea or leader and come to identify (invest in) with a political project'; and second, the horizontal level, which highlights how political subjects 'affect each other… in the formation of political collectivities'.[52] What might be specific to populism then, is an *intense* form of affective investment along *both* of these trajectories simultaneously, i.e. subjects identify with a specific political leader and, in so doing, affirm their sense of communion with a broader political community who feel the same way. Seen in this way, populism becomes, among other things, a series of performative acts in which the distinction between the identity of the 'leader' and that of the 'people' becomes blurred as they fuse, for a time, into one. Notwithstanding this

potentially useful starting point for exploring the particular dynamics of populism, it is clear to us that more conceptual and empirical work is required before this conceptual category can make good on the promise of being able to pin down the *specificity* of populist politics.

A second, and connected way of comprehending the 'staying power' of populism, concerns the *epistemic* dimension of populist politics. For our intuition here is that the affective force of populism may derive, at least in part, from its capacity to articulate a shared epistemic narrative capable of speaking to and from the experiences, needs, wants and feelings of a 'voiceless' cohort of people. Indeed, drawing on Saurette and Gunster's account of what they call 'epistemological populism', we suggest that populism's distinctiveness might lie in its capacity to affirm and valorise the 'everyday' knowledge of 'ordinary citizens'.[53] In other words, the everyday experiences of individuals become elevated as the ground for valid knowledge as opposed to academic or scientific expertise.[54] Thus, knowledge is presented, on the one hand, as highly personal – each individual's experience is valid and telling - and, on the other, as a collective endeavour to the extent that it emerges from the *accumulation* of these individualized 'common sense truths'.

Armed with the common sense of the people, the next step in the development of a populist politics requires the acknowledgment of the deeply felt *grievances* and frustration of these ordinary citizens. After all, the scholars of both camps examined here concede that populism is a response to real or imagined power relations which are perceived to marginalize certain constituencies, e.g., Laclau's 'underdog'. It follows that any aspiring leader(s) will need to construct a political language that gives expression to what feminist philosopher Mirander Fricker calls 'epistemic injustice'. More concretely, in our view, Fricker's notion of 'hermeneutical injustice' – one of two types of epistemic injustice that she discusses - can help us to capture the disadvantage that some groups have when it comes to articulating their social experiences and rendering it intelligible to others.[55] This silencing effect, for Fricker, stems from the fact that members of marginalized communities are simply less able to participate in the practices that produce the prevailing social meanings of their community and, therefore, have less access to and understandings of these collective 'hermeneutical resources'. To put it another way, people in this group suffer from a 'situated hermeneutical inequality'.[56] The challenge then for anyone attempting to represent these neglected groups is to tap into these resources and construct a narrative that gathers together the experiences and grievances of individuals and weaves them into a story of collective oppression. Whether understood in these terms or in others, the process of developing, articulating and communicating effectively the 'subjugated knowledges' of subordinated groups is, in our view, crucial if we are to move towards an understanding of the origins and nature of populism as a *distinct* mode of politics.[57]

Both these proposed moves challenge the existing definitions of populism, treating it as an ontic force whose elaboration requires us to go beyond the extant literature in terms

of the concepts we deploy and the nature of the theorizing and empirical research we engage in. After all, taking the role of affect and epistemic injustice seriously pushes back against the privileging of strategic rationality, present in much of the Muddean literature, and introduces two embedded and embodied features of our political experience which are only hinted at in the Laclauian literature on populism and could be lucratively developed. To be clear, we are not saying that a consideration of the affective and epistemic dimensions of populism will necessarily lead us to see it as a distinct mode of radical politics. What we are saying is that permitting ourselves to drop the pursuit of a minimalist definition in favour of a more complex, inductive and sociologically sensitive approach may help us pin down the *specificity* of populism, if indeed there is any to be found.

2) Use and Abuse of the Term Populism

A second potentially lucrative route for populism scholars would be to reorient the focus of populism studies in such a way that its analytic value no longer hinges on demarcating populism as a distinct form of politics. We take our lead here from a recent, provocative intervention by Benjamin De Cleen, Jason Glynos and Aurelien Mondon, who call for, among other things, an inquiry into populism's role as *signifier* and not just as a concept.[58] To do so would require us to be more curious about how discourses *about* populism circulate within the media and academia and the effect they have on shaping the contours of contemporary public debate. Heeding their entreaty to 'turn our attention to how the term is used, by whom and why, and with what performative effects',[59] does not require us to give up on our efforts to demarcate 'actually-existing' forms of populist politics, but it does encourage us to take some critical distance from our subject matter and be willing to entertain the idea that we are proliferating a term that, at the moment, does far more work politically than it does analytically.

In our view, there are at least two ways in which populism as a signifier serves to act on and mould our contemporary political imagination. The first concerns the intentional and unintentional use of the term in both media and academic discourses to identify and publicly label certain forms of politics as potentially dangerous at best, and beyond the pale at worst.[60] So for example, in a short but informative critical analysis of political discourses in the Greek context, Stavrakakis *et al.* point out how populism - in this case read Syriza - is framed in terms of metaphors that cast it as an illness either of the body or of the mind, or as, variously, animalistic or monstrous.[61] Similarly, in Britain, Corbyn and the activism that has galvanized around him and his project, has also been deemed to be populist by many a commentator,[62] again, with the aim of designating his particular rendition of left politics as a threat to the 'soft' or 'centre' left of the Labour Party and moderate politics in the UK more generally. Perhaps unsurprisingly, however, the bulk of academic attention has been directed towards right wing forms of populism from Brexit in the UK to the election of Trump in the US and, in European context, from Orbán in Hungary to Salvini in Italy to Kurz

in Austria. As all these highly diverse cases are stripped of any context specificity and instead blended together into one populist pot, we are presented with a picture of contagion in which each case of populism ignites and fosters other eruptions across borders. With the spread of 'illiberalism' quickening its pace, any sign of populism, whether left or right, must be taken seriously and contained before it can take root.

In addition to marginalizing certain specific strands of radical politics, we also need to explore how the narrative about populism is being mobilized to sustain more generalized discourses about the nature of politics at this conjuncture. So for example, it is notable how the elevation of populism as the political scourge of the 21st century has been accompanied by renewed, fervent calls to set aside the apparently anachronistic left-right distinction in favour of alternative characterizations of political conflict e.g., the antagonism between 'open societies' and 'closed ones' as the *Economist* put it, or between the 'people from somewhere' vs the 'people from anywhere', as David Goodhart prefers to frame it,[63] or between 'globalization losers' vs its 'winners', as Tony Blair would have it. It would seem that populism, along with these new cleavages that allegedly spur it on, is threatening to trump what Steven Lukes has called "the grand dichotomy of the 20th century".[64]

As we can see, the 'populist hype', as Glynos and Mondon characterize it, cannot be understood simply as an 'innocent' outburst on the part of confused academics, but rather needs to be evaluated as a political logic which not only 'misrepresents what is going on' in the world, but also serves 'to marginalise meaningful debate about the way democracies tend to operate'.[65] As such this logic, and the anti-populist discourses it engenders and sustains, need to become a focal point of research for those of us who remain committed to rich, sociological research as a way of developing and testing our political concepts, on the one hand, and to the survival of the left-right distinction as a crucial political and normative marker for thinking and acting politically, on the other.[66] To give them their due, it is only through the efforts of those in the Laclauian camp, in general, and of Stavrakakis, in particular, that the politics of anti-populism has come under any scrutiny.[67] While much more work needs to be done, it is clear that the current 'populist hype', at least in part, represents a form of 'liberal angst' that has accompanied the recognition that the politics of the putative 'centre' ground is in crisis after its failure to undergo a meaningful ideological renewal in the post-recession era. The splatter gun characterization of any and all challenges to mainstream liberal politics as 'populist' (irrespective of whether those challenges come from the left, the far right or even, as with Macron, from the centre itself) is indicative of this insecurity. To pursue a shift in populism studies from populism-as-concept to populism-as-signifier thus has the potential to shed light on the broader ideological contours of contemporary politics.

Concluding Thoughts

We started this article by offering a general mapping of the current conceptual terrain within the field of populism studies and argued that, despite implicit and explicit claims that populism constitutes a distinct mode of politics worthy of study in its own right, existing definitions of the phenomenon do not adequately make the case for its *sui generis* nature. We went on to note that both approaches reviewed here share a curious tendency to operationalize populism in terms of the discursive utterances of elite politicians and, in this way, inadvertently end up blurring the boundaries between, and the contributions of, their respective conceptual approaches.

In response to what we see as a conceptual impasse, we have suggested that one could cautiously pursue either a project of conceptual renewal or one of reorientation, or indeed both. To this end, we suggested that there might be mileage in framing populism as a distinctive mode of affective and epistemic politics. However, we argue that considerably more empirical investigation remains to be done if the potential of these concepts to deliver a robust notion of populism is to be fulfilled. Following Yannis Stavrakakis and Benjamin De Cleen and others, a second route would be to shift our attention from populism-as-concept to populism-as-signifier, paving the way for a critical analysis of discourses *about* populism, and their relation to broader ideological formations.

Notes

[1] For a helpful summary and overview of how populism is framed – usually pejoratively – in mainstream media, see T. Bale, S. van Kessel, and P. Taggart, 'Thrown Around With Abandon? Popular Understandings of Populism as Conveyed by the Print Media: A UK Case Study', *Acta Politica,* 46(2) (2011), pp. 111-31. For a critical reflection on the sudden ubiquity of discourse about populism, see B. Cannon, 'Must We Talk about Populism? Interrogating Populism's Conceptual Utility in a Context of Crisis', *New Political Science* 40(3), pp. 477-496.

[2] B. Moffit and S. Tormey, 'Rethinking Populism: Politics, Mediatisation and Political Style'*, Political Studies* 62 (2014), pp. 381-397, at p. 382.

[3] See, for example, T.S. Pappas, and H. Kriesi, 'Populism in Europe During Crisis: An Introduction', in T. S. Pappas and H. Kriesi (eds.) *European Populism in the Shadow of the Great Recession* (Colchester: ECPR Press, 2015); L. March, 'From Vanguard of the Proletariat to Vox Populi: Left-wing Populism as a "Shadow" of Contemporary Socialism', *SAIS Review,* 27(1) (2007), pp. 63-67; R. Gerodimos, 'The Ideology of Far Left Populism in Greece: Blame, Victimhood and Revenge in the Discourse of Greek Anarchists', *Political Studies,* 63(3) (2015), pp. 608-25; S. Otjes and T. Louwerse, 'Populists in Parliament: Comparing Left-Wing and Right-Wing Populism in the Netherlands', *Political Studies,* 63(1), (2015), pp. 60-79; M.

Rooduijn and T. Pauwels, 'Measuring Populism: Comparing Two Methods of Content Analysis', *West European Politics,* 34(6) (2011), pp. 1272-83; M. Rooduijn and T. Akkerman, 'Flank Attacks: Populism and Left-Right Radicalism in Western Europe', *Party Politics* 23 (3) (2015), pp. 193-204; B. Stanley, 'The Thin Ideology of Populism', *Journal of Political Ideologies,* 13(1) (2008), pp. 95-100; S. van Kessel, *Populist Parties in Europe: Agents of Discontent?* (Basingstoke, Palgrave MacMillan, 2015).

[4] C. Mudde, 'The Populist Zeitgeist', *Government and Opposition,* 39(4) (2005), pp. 541-63, at p. 543.

[5] C. Mudde and C.R. Kaltwasser, 'Populism' in M. Freeden, L.T. Sargent and M. Stears (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 7

[6] *Ibid.* p. 15.

[7] C. Mudde and C.R. Kaltwasser, 'Exclusionary vs. Inclusionary Populism: Comparing Contemporary Europe and Latin America', *Government and Opposition,* 48(2) (2013), pp. 147-74, at p. 150.

[8] See, for example, Mudde and Kaltwasser, 'Exclusionary vs Inclusionary Populism', *ibid.*; J. Jagers and S. Walgrave, 'Populism as Political Communication Style: An Empirical Study of Political Parties' Discourse in Belgium', *European Journal of Political Research,* 46(3) (2007), pp. 319-45; C. Mudde, *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe,* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[9] C. Mudde, 'The Populist Zeitgeist', *op. cit.,* Ref. 4, p. 556.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 548.

[11] M. Rooduijn, 'The Nucleus of Populism: In Search of the Lowest Common Denominator', *Government and Opposition,* 49(4) (2014), pp. 572-98.

[12] M. Freeden, 'After the Brexit Referendum: Revisiting Populism as an Ideology', *Journal of Political Ideologies* 22(1) (2017), pp. 1-11, at p.3.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 10.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 3.

[15] One scholar who has made this argument convincingly in the context of British left politics and the propensity to label it populist is L. March, 'Left and Right Populism Compared: the British Case', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 19(2) (2017), pp. 282–303

[16] See, for example, Jagers and Walgrave, 'Populism as Political Communication Style', *op. cit.,* Ref. 8; Rooduijn and Pauwels, 'Measuring Populism', *op. cit.,* Ref. 3.

[17] H. Kriesi and T. Pappas, 'Populism in Europe During Crisis: An Introduction', *op. cit*., Ref. 3, p. 5.

[18] S. van Kessel, 'The Populist Cat-Dog: Applying the Concept of Populism to Contemporary European Party Systems', *Journal of Political Ideologies,* 19(1) (2014), 99-118.

[19] *ibid.*, p. 100.

[20] Jan-Werner Müller, *What is Populism?* (Penguin Random House, 2016), pp. 19-20.

[21] *ibid.*, Ch. 2.

[22] Y. Stavrakakis and A. Jäger, 'Accomplishments and limitations of the 'new' mainstream in contemporary populism studies', *European Journal of Social Theory*, Vol. 21 (4) (2017), pp. 547-565.

[23] T. Pappas, 'Carry on Sisyphus: Short Answers on Greek post-electoral politics', *Open Democracy*, https://www.opendemocracy.net/can-europe-make-it/takis-s-pappas/carry-on-sisyphus-short-answers-on-greece's-postelectoral-politic (2015), accessed 21/01/19.

[24] T. Pappas, 'Populist Democracies: Post-Authoritarian Greece and Post-Communist Hungary', *Government and Opposition* 49 (1) (2014), pp. 1-23.

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

[26] T. Pappas, *Populism and Crisis Politics in Greece* (London: Routledge, 2014), p. 40. See also his latest book *Populism and Liberal Democracy: A Comparative and Theoretical Analysis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

[27] B. Moffitt, *The Global Rise of Populism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016).

[28] C. Mudde, 'Populism: an Ideational Approach', in C. R. Kaltwasser, P. Taggart, P. O. Espejo, and P. Ostiguy (eds.) *The Oxford Hanbook of Populism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

[29] Moffitt bases his argument on 28 case studies of 'populist' leaders labelled and characterised as such by the extant literature on populism. In doing so, he starts his analysis from the prevailing conceptions of populist leadership and limits his empirical research to secondary sources. See Moffitt, The Global Rise of Populism, *op. cit*., Ref. 27, pp. 5-6.

[30] There is a budding literature within comparative political science which seeks to measure the attitudes of populist voters. See for instance Agnes Akkerman, Cas Mudde, and Andrej Zaslove, 'How Populist Are the People? Measuring Populist Attitudes in Voters', *Comparative Political Studies* 47:9 (2013), pp.1324-1353 and S. Van Hauwaert and S. van Kessel, 'Beyond Protest and Discontent: A Cross-National Analysis of the Effect of Populist Attitudes and Issue Positions on Populist Party Support', *European Journal of Political Research*, 57, (2018), pp. 68–92.

[31] In his piece in the Guardian Mudde explicitly suggests that both Syriza and Podemos, like all forms of populism, are marred by illiberalism. See C. Mudde, 'The Problem With Populism', *The Guardian* https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/feb/17/problem-populism-syriza-podemos-dark-side-europe (2015), accessed 21/01/19.

[32] E. Laclau and C. Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (London: Verso, 1985); E. Laclau and C. Mouffe, 'Post-Marxism without Apologies', *New Left Review* 166 (1987), pp. 79-106.

[33] F. Panizza (ed.) *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy* (London, Verso, 2005); D.R. Howarth, 'Ethos, Agonism and Populism: William Connolly and the Case for Radical Democracy', *British Journal of Politics & International Relations,* 10(2) (2008), pp. 171-93; C. Mouffe, *On the Political* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005); Y. Stavrakakis, 'Populism in Power: Syriza's Challenge to Europe', *Juncture,* 21(4) (2015), pp. 273-80; Y. Stavrakakis and G. Katsembekis, 'Left-wing Populism in the European Periphery', *Journal of Political Ideologies,* 19(2) (2014), pp. 119-42.

[34] E. Laclau, 'Populism: What's in a Name?' in F. Panizza (ed.) *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy* (London: Verso, 2005), pp. 32-49, p. 37.

[35] E. Laclau *On Populist Reason* (London, Verso, 2005).

[36] *Ibid.*, pp. 117-118.

[37] Laclau, 'Populism: What's in a Name?', *op. cit.,* Ref. 32, p. 37.

[38] E. Laclau, 'Why Constructing a People is the Main Task of Radical Politics', *Critical Inquiry* 32(4) (2006), pp. 646-80.

[39] Laclau, *On Populist Reason*, *op. cit.,* Ref. 33*,* p. 137.

[40] Laclau, 'Populism: What's in a Name?', *op. cit.,* Ref. 32, p. 38.

[41] B. Arditi, 'Populism as a Spectre of Democracy: A Response to Canovan', *Political Studies* 52(1) (2004), pp. 135-43, at p. 140.

[42] The ontic/ontological distinction was originally used by Heidegger but is frequently deployed by Laclau and his followers. For Heidegger, the ontological refers to the general question of 'being,' i.e. the formal/abstract characteristics of all social and political configurations. The ontic, by contrast, refers to specific entities, i.e. the localized and contextual aspects of a socio-political configuration. See M. Heidegger, *Being and Time,* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1973), pp. 28-35.

[43] Y. Stavrakakis, G. Katsambekis, N. Nikisianis, A. Kioupkiolis & T. Siomos, 'Extreme Right-wing Populism in Europe: Revisiting a Reified Association', *Critical Discourse Studies* 14(4) (2017), pp.420-439.

[44] Laclau, *On Populist Reason, op. cit.,* Ref. 33, p. 68.

[45] Y. Stavrakakis, 'Populism in Power' *op. cit.,* Ref. 31.

[46] To give one recent example, Roland Gerodimos 'adopts and applies' Cas Mudde's definition of populism, but then variously draws on Mudde, Laclau and Canovan in a synopsis of the various 'features' of populism, without any acknowledgement of the conceptual difficulties this might present. See R. Gerodimos, 'The Ideology of Far Left Populism in Greece', *op. cit.,* Ref. 3, p. 608.

[47] R. S. Jansen, 'Populist Mobilization: A New Theoretical Approach to Populism', *Sociological Theory,* 29(2) (2011), pp. 75-96.

[48] *Ibid.*, p. 82.

[49] *Ibid.,* p. 84.

[50] Y. Stavrakakis, 'Populism in Power', *op. cit.,* Ref. 31, p. 279.

[51] J. Protevi, *Political Affect: Connecting the Social and the Somatic* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009).

[52] J. Gunnarsson Payne, 'Affect, Communitas and Representation in Processes of Political Mobilization' (manuscript version), forthcoming in M. Devenney (ed.) *Thinking the Political: Ernesto Laclau and the Politics of Post-Marxism* (London: Routledge), p. 2.

[53] P. Saurette and S. Gunster, 'Ears Wide Shut: Epistemological Populism, Argutainment and Canadian Conservative Talk Radio', *Canadian Journal of Political Science-Revue Canadienne De Science Politique,* 44(1) (2011), pp. 195-218.

[54] *Ibid.,* p. 196.

[55] M. Fricker. *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 6.

[56] *Ibid.,* p.7.

[57] See J. Milliken, 'The Study of Discourse in International Relations: A Critique of Research and Methods', *European Journal of International Relations*, 5(2) (1999), pp. 225-54.

[58] B. De Cleen, J. Glynos and A. Mondon, 'Critical Research on Populism: Nine Rules of Engagement', *Organization* (advance online publication) (2018), p. 3.

[59] *ibid*.

[60] The tendency to cast demonstrably non-populist forms of politics as populist is critically analyzed, among others, by Bale *et al*, 'Thrown Around with Abandon', *op. cit.,* Ref. 1 and J. Dean and B. Maiguashca, 'Corbynism, Populism and the Re-shaping of Left Politics in Contemporary Britain' in G. Katsambekis and A. Kioupkiolis (eds.) *The Populist Radical Left in Europe* (London: Routledge, 2019). Indeed, a number of populism scholars active on social media have taken to using the hashtag #schmopulism to flag up particularly egregious misuses of the term in mainstream media.

[61] Y. Stavrakakis, G. Katsambekis, A. Kioupkiolis, N. Nikisiania and T. Simos, 'Populism, Anti-Populism and Crisis', *Contemporary Political Theory* 17(1) (2018), pp. 4-27, p.20..

[62] P. Dorey, 'Jeremy Corbyn confounds his critics: explaining the Labour Party's remarkable resurgence at the 2017 election', *British Politics* 12 (3) (2017), pp. 308-334.

[63] D. Goodhart, *The Road to Somewhere: The Populist Revolt and the Future of Politics* (London: C Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd, 2017).

[64] S. Lukes, 'Epilogue: The Grand Dichotomy of the Twentieth Century' in T. Ball and R. Bellamy (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Twentieth Century Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 602-626. See also Canon, 'Must we talk about Populism?', *op. cit.* Ref. 1, for a critical reflection on the displacement of the left/right distinction by narratives of the "rise of populism".

[65] J. Glynos and A. Mondon, 'The Political logic of the Populist Hype: The Case of right-wing populism's "meteoric rise" and its relations to the status quo', *Populismus Working Paper* No. 4 (2016), p. 3.

[66] For a feminist critique of populism both as an analytical concept and as a political signifier see Bice Maiguashca, 'Resisting the 'Populist Hype': A Feminist Critique of a Globalising Concept', *Review of International Studies* (forthcoming).

[67] Stavrakakis et al, 'Populism, Anti-Populism and Crisis', *op. cit.,* Ref. 59, p. 3.