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This collection of essays is the result of work on the project "Populism in Russia and in the World" implemented in 2017 by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in cooperation with the Expert Group "European Dialogue". The project was international and interdisciplinary, and the proposed book claims not so much to exhaustive coverage of the subject as to its delineation from different perspectives and the invitation of other researchers to a serious dialogue.

The book is intended for students, teachers, expert and scientific community, as well as all readers interested in political parties and movements.

The authors are responsible for the content of the articles.

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FOREWORD

How does one fight the growing distance between Russia and the European Union? How can we achieve mutual understanding even as our mutual mistrust grows? We believe this can be accomplished by encouraging collaboration among those involved in the sciences, culture, the economy and society. It should occur in such a way that people are motivated to talk not about each other, but with each other, and therefore the best range of questions in this case is one that will be of interest to all parties.

For the Moscow office of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, one of these dialogue partners is the European Dialogue Expert Group, which is a union of Russian scholars from different areas of academia who study processes in the European Union from different angles and maintain dialogues with their colleagues from European Union member-countries. A year ago, they contacted us offering a joint project on the study of the phenomenon of populism.

In the past several years, populists have improved their standing in all European Union countries. Debates about the reasons for populism, and how to fight it, continue. However, populism has become quite highly noticeable in the political life of Eastern European countries as well, and no less in Russia. That is why it will be of interest to discover, whether the roots and traits of populism in Eastern Europe and the European Union are similar, and whether the methods of fighting against it are universally applicable.

These and many other questions were discussed by experts from various countries during three workshops that took place in Moscow and Berlin. In order to make the results of these workshops available to the public, we supported the initiative of creating this publication. We present you with a compilation of articles that reveals the phenomenon of populism from many different points of view.

It is also worth mentioning beforehand that populism is not a new phenomenon, and it is unlikely that it will ever disappear entirely. This is the case simply because populism grows when issues remain unresolved. That is why the best way to fight populism is by resolving these issues.

I express my gratitude to all the authors who participated in this publication, and I hope the book achieves widespread readership, and it offers new food for thought for everyone who reads it.

Claudia Crawford
Director of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Russia
Moscow, November 2017

PREFACE

There has been an ongoing collaboration between the European Dialogue Expert Group (founded in 2016), and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation since the Group's founding. At that exact moment, at the peak of success for European populist parties and movements, they had the idea to conduct a joint research project using comparative-geographical and comparative-historical analyses of the populism phenomenon in modern politics. The Konrad Adenauer Foundation represented by the head of its Moscow office, Claudia Crawford, completely supported the concept. So, in December 2016, a high-level expert discussion was held for the project, gathering together key team members from the Russian side. Led by Professor of the Higher School of Economics, Nikolay Petrov, it included researchers such as Lev Gudkov (The Levada-Center), Boris Makarenko and Georgy Chizhov (Center for Political Technologies), Alexander Kynev and Andrey Medushevskiy (the Higher School of Economics), and Andrey Ryabov (Primakov National Research Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the Russian Academy of Sciences).

Further discussions were held for six months in the form of workshops; in March, at the workshop in the Konrad Adenauer Foundation's Moscow office, German participants Werner J. Patzelt and Karsten Grabow joined the discussion. In May 2017, in Berlin, the project's final conference took place. Here, in addition to the existing Russian-German group, Alexis Berelowitch, Magali Balent (France), Eugeniusz Smolar, Piotr Buras (Poland), Maxim Trudolyubov (Russia), Sabine Fischer (Germany) and a number of other specialists participated as well.

This publication, which would not have been possible without the support of the Moscow office of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and its head, Claudia Crawford, presents the findings of this project.

The European Dialogue Expert Group aims to organize joint Russian-European discussions and research about the most critical issues currently facing Europe as a whole, as well as those pertaining to its socio-political, economic and social spheres, of which Russia is certainly a part. The Konrad Adenauer Foundation is one of European Dialogue's most

important partners, and we hope this relationship will lead to new projects in 2018 and beyond.

Evgeny Gontmakher,
Professor, Doctor of Economics
Member of the Coordination Council,
European Dialogue Expert Group

Boris Makarenko, Nikolay Petrov

INTRODUCTION: POPULISM IN RUSSIA AND IN EUROPE

This monographic collection of works offered for the reader's perusal is a first attempt by a multinational and multidisciplinary team at discussing a vital and extremely complex issue. In a way, it resembles the parable of the blind men and the elephant, the only difference being that, in our case, the men are not blind; their eyesight is simply focused on separate parts of the elephant.

It would seem that everyone knows what populism is, but it turns out that it is not so simple to give it a clear definition, whether it be in the political, or scientific sense. Is a populist a demagogue? Indeed, the Greek word "δημαγωγία" (demagogía) means only "leading the people", which is the profession of any political leader for whom the skill of convincing with words, making people follow, and believe in him or her and his or her actions, is a natural and necessary professional skill.

Is populism the same thing as making unrealistic promises to people? Very few politicians, due to various reasons, manage to fully deliver what they promise before elections, and it is not easy to measure the coefficient of fulfilled promises. Is populism a way to make yourself look as if you are "close to the people"? It is a method certainly well-used by very different politicians in many different contexts. The Whig leader William Gladstone loved posing in front of a camera with a lumberjack's axe in his hands, showing that he understands the meaning of hard physical labor.

Populism, as shown in the examples offered by this collection's authors, can be "left-wing" or "right-wing", can merge with both nationalism and xenophobia, and can be found both in stable democracies and in non-democratic regimes. It can be used by both incumbent politicians and by the opposition, by both the "rich" and the "poor". Is there a "common denominator" for this phenomenon? If we single out the primary arguments from all the authors in this collection of works, then, perhaps, one can say that they have all uncovered some common features of this "elephant".

The first and the most important element of populism is anti-elitism: the opposition, often Manichaean, of "the people", "the masses" versus

"the elites". Populism appears in the form of a denunciator, a defender, and savior of the commoner from the evil elite, whether political or financial, local or global.

The second, deriving directly from the first, is the plebiscitic tendencies shown by populist politicians. They appeal directly to the whole of society, bypassing parties and institutions, with the aim of concluding a virtual social contract. Accordingly, there exists a risk that institutions (in a democratic society) will end up on the sidelines of politics or will become the opposition to the plebiscitic populist leader, and in less democratic regimes they will not receive proper development or will be limited in power. The past few months of this year alone have shown numerous examples of such phenomena in countries as varied as the U.S.A., Venezuela, Poland and Turkey.

The third common feature of populism is the issue of the responsibility held by those in power and how to control it. First of all, the plebiscite mandate does not imply control between elections, especially as institutional checks and balances are weakened. And the main form of control over any elected politician, namely the possibility of removal from power in the next election cycle, is far from effective in any political environment. And the change of power, as shown in this collection, does not always resolve the problem of responsibility. This is true for stable democracies where the seat of authority alternates among establishment forces, as well as, for example, for Ukraine (see Georgy Chizhov's piece in this collection), which is characterized by extreme chaos and volatility in its political parties.

However, perhaps the main feature that catches the eye of all observers is that specific populist style. Obviously, there are no clear criteria for measuring the "degree of populism" in public speeches or in some politician's actions (although attempts are sometimes made by watching how often "marker" words are used[1]). However, almost all authors in this collection pay attention to the description and analysis of this style, emphasizing the fact that a populist, first of all, seeks to influence emotion, rather than the rational beliefs of his or her audience, and knows how to find the right words and techniques to gain its trust. Obviously, it is true that being a "successful" populist requires a special type of talent.

These common features, apparent in so many different "populisms", compensate for the lack of a unified "template" for the study of populism, both of those currently in power, and of their opposition, as well

[1] Hawkins K., Dudley R., Wen Jie Tan. Made in US: Populism beyond Europe // Populism on the Rise: Democracies under Challenge? / ed. A. Martinelli. Milano: Edizioni Epoché, 2016. P. 113.

as those which operate in democracies, autocracies or in hybrid regimes, or even in "old" Europe, and in European countries that are in transition. Specifically, such analysis is possible only with the use of all the available tools of political science and sociology. Even so, the differences in various "vantage points" and approaches will inevitably be quite noticeable, and which can be surmised in the articles contained in this collection.

A discussion session that took place in Berlin, and included experts from Germany, Russia and many European countries made an impact on the study of the issue of populism, which, in recent years, has attracted more and more researchers. Below we will allow ourselves to discuss the reasons for such undivided attention to it. But first, we will attempt to summarize the results of our Berlin workshop and the reports presented there that formed the basis of the articles included in this collection.

The different authors' chapters in this book are united by a rather delicate conceptual framework. In fact, we described it above when we identified the common features and characteristics of populism as a phenomenon of politics and public life. Stricter conceptual restraints would have been unjustifiable: when the political phenomenon in question is in a "hot phase", events develop quickly and unpredictably, and it is especially important to make note of first impressions, and to present the widest possible range of assessments. Later on, using this as a basis, one can, and should, be able to make new generalizations.

With a certain degree of conventionality, all the articles here can be divided on the basis of two classifications: the first being the "geographic footprint" of the studied subject. This research project did not assume strict geographic limits, but it was understood that the object of attention would be, on the one hand, the "West", and on the other, the post-communist space. Interestingly enough, even based on this classification, "post-communist" Western, Central and Eastern Europe, in different contexts, was sometimes viewed as part of one united European territory with a specific populist model (see the work of Boris Makarenko). And sometimes it was viewed as a society in the process of transition from a communist regime, whose political culture and style of public sentiment reflect many features of the recent past. A significant portion of these works (Werner J. Patzelt, Boris Makarenko, Nikolay Petrov) possess a comparative nature, while others (Lev Gudkov, Alexander Kynev, Georgy Chizhov) discuss the nature of populism in certain countries, be it Russia or Ukraine. Two authors – Andrey Medushevskiy and Andrey Ryabov – combine these two approaches, comparing groups of countries and hence different types of "populist environments". Karsten Grabow compares the "populisms" of several countries in Western Europe, introducing the thought-provoking terms "inclusive" (mostly left-wing) and "exclusive", or right-wing, nationalistic populisms.

The second way of classifying the articles in this collection is by using a methodological approach and applied research instruments. The pieces by Boris Makarenko, Andrey Medushevskiy and Nikolay Petrov are based on analysis done in the tradition of the neo-institutional school of comparative political science, whose objective is to present a complex approach to a review of populism. The authors' positions are not identical, but are conceptually close to one another, while the differences are explained by the respective focuses of their research: the first of the three analyzes the general phenomenon of populism, the second, the similarities and differences between populism in the West and in Russia, and the third, the evolution of what is broadly understood to be Russian populism, but in the more general context of "different types" of populism.

Other authors use a more sociological approach to their studies of populism. And if Lev Gudkov's work is built primarily on quantitative sociology (the interpretation of a solid mass of data from all-Russian public opinion polls), then the authors Alexis Berelowitch, Alexander Kynev and, in part, Georgy Chizhov generally study stylistic populism, describing a certain set of events, certain populist parties, and politicians.

From this point of view, it is interesting to look at Andrey Ryabov's piece. In the first part, which is an analysis of Western European populism, he is close to other comparative political analysts, although he adds his accents, viewing populism as filler for the "vacuum of ideas" characteristic of traditional parties, especially on the left side of the political spectrum. However, when discussing the post-Soviet space, he argues that populism has not developed widely there. This might appear to directly contradict what other authors have written about populism citing cases in specific countries, primarily, Alexander Kynev and Georgy Chizhov, who describe populist politics in both Russia and Ukraine, respectively. However, in fact, this is the inevitable consequence of having so many interpretations of populism: Andrey Ryabov writes that, in Russia and other post-Soviet countries, there is no "grass-roots" populism that requires increased activity or collective action from the infringed-upon "under classes". And what other authors interpret as the populism of the irreplaceable elites remains out of the author's focus. The real picture of post-Soviet populism is, of course, broader and more diverse: for example, in his piece on Ukraine, Georgy Chizhov references the experience of other post-Soviet countries (Alexander Lukashenko in Belarus and Mikhail Saakashvili in Georgia), where these new leaders replaced their predecessors specifically because they were able to ride the populist wave, but after their victories, made every effort (also in a populist fashion, according to the terminology of a number of our authors) to make this power *de facto* irrevocable.

Obviously, this is not the only difference of opinion amongst the authors in this collection, and it hardly makes sense to judge which approach

is more legitimate. The populist wave continues, even if the near future proves that it is past its prime. Our objective has been to contribute to the research and discussion of modern populism, and to show its diversity and ambiguity. Thus, the existence of multiple approaches and opinions is of absolute benefit. We only hope that this collection will supplement the reader's knowledge about populism, about which there has been increased discussion in recent years, and usually with visible anxiety.

It is not simply that populist parties and politicians started getting larger shares of the votes during elections. The main issue, as the examples of diverse countries discussed by the collection's authors show, was that, in all cases, the rise of populism was a symptom, as one of the collection's authors, Lev Gudkov, states, of "*dysfunctions, or incapability of the state and political institutions*". Signs of this may be seen in the inability of the ruling elites to cope with the consequences of a protracted socio-economic crisis, the inability to give new life to the European integration process, and to develop an adequate replacement for the failed policy of multiculturalism, especially at a time when flows of migrants from Africa and the Middle East had targeted Europe. Outside the democratic West, in the post-Soviet territories, they had their own set of failures and imperfections which occurred in the process of constructing modern societies: corruption, slowdowns in socio-economic development, unacceptable social stratification, and, at times, a lack of alternatives, and the irrevocability of power.

All this means that the populations of these countries have quite legitimate and reasonable complaints about the political class, and, what's more, these complaints have a strong emotionally-charged character. All this creates fertile ground for populist sentiments, making anti-elite slogans seem attractive. Werner J. Patzelt analyzes this phenomenon in detail, seeing its root in the "representative gap", which is the loss by leading parties of the ability to take into account significant hankerings for protest. This can happen on the right, the left, and even on both flanks of the political system at the same time.

It should be added that the flipside of this "anti-elitism" is often noticeable both in the political elite and, in a broader sense, in many of its representatives. This is an irritation, or even contempt towards those who follow populists. "The basket of deplorables", the epithet tossed by Hillary Clinton to the "good half" of her populist opponent's voters is only the most obvious example, and it apparently cost her a considerable number of votes. In other words, the emotionally tinted claims of the elites and of unsatisfied citizens are of a mutual nature, which makes it possible to discuss serious crises in the system of representation of political interests which can cause negative consequences for both countries and societies. This point is highlighted by Boris Makarenko, Nikolay Petrov and Andrey Medushevskiy. Therefore, the rise of populism both in the West

and in post-Soviet countries is a phenomenon that has serious reasons and causes.

What should be considered as an apotheosis of the current populist wave in the West? The rise to power of the leftist populist SYRIZA in Greece? The success of Brexit, where first, a populist attack forced the respectable establishment party to offer an issue with far-reaching consequences for a plebiscite, and then, populist arguments led to a victorious vote for a decision that would be very difficult to fulfill? Or the victory of the obviously populist Donald Trump in the U.S.A., after which he entered into conflict with almost all institutions and political establishments, including his own party, which could not avoid nominating him as a presidential candidate? And we offer one more, paradoxical, version of populism's apotheosis: the presidential elections in France. Many commentators considered Marine Le Pen's populist loss to be the main result. But let's not forget that in the first round of the elections, the both obviously populist left and right presidential candidates, Le Pen and Jean-Luc Mélenchon, together received more than 40 % of the votes. The winner of the elections himself, Emmanuel Macron, can attribute his success largely to his successful image as "a new man", one different from the establishment that the French are so tired of, both of the left- and right-centrist varieties.

At the same time, Emmanuel Macron's victory can serve as a guideline in the search for the answer to the question of how to prevent the destructive consequences of a populist attack. Because it is obvious what is not the answer, and all the attempts of establishment parties to give in to the populist agenda turned out to be counterproductive: the Conservative Party of Great Britain is now forced to implement Brexit, and the Republican Party in the U.S.A. now must find ways to implement its agenda with a populist president. In some cases, populism itself is not able to deal with the burden of power – the popularity of several populist parties noticeably declined after they had joined government coalitions. An asymmetrical response such as the nomination of new individuals, the mastery of a style of public policy that corresponds to the demands of modern society, and the search for new approaches while maintaining principle positions, are all promising directions, as many participants of the Berlin seminar concluded. Besides Emmanuel Macron, leaders such as Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Austria's Foreign Affairs Minister Sebastian Kurz were named "new-style politicians".

In a way, the rise of populism can be interpreted as a "pain signal" indicating the depressed well-being of society, which requires serious efforts from the political class. In essence, the answer to this should be what Andrey Medushevskiy calls "responsible politics" in this collection of

works. Neither he nor the other authors have any illusions as to how difficult this task will be in real life: Andrey Ryabov writes about the crisis of "supply", i. e. ideas which relate to the trend lines in the future development of European politics, especially on its left flank. Many authors, such as Lev Gudkov, Alexander Kynev, Nikolay Petrov, and Boris Makarenko, agree on the fact that in undemocratic regimes, "power populism" has many prerequisites which could make it end up as a stable and a long-lasting phenomenon; and the latter author considers it likely that even in the case where an extremely unsuccessful development model is imposed by populism, it will most likely be replaced by another variation of "power populism", rather than democratization.

Both German authors in this collection, Karsten Grabow and Werner J. Patzelt, formulate a set of clear recommendations on how to fight against populism. They are worded differently, but are similar in their general logic: to maintain adherence to democratic values, "including those that are inconvenient and complex", formulate clear political propositions, improve communication channels with society, and never stop political education.

As of mid-2017, the "parade of populisms", on the one hand, seems to have passed its peak point. Both in the Netherlands and in France, populist parties faced relative failure at the ballot box, and did not get close to positions of power. There are reasons to predict a similar scenario for the forthcoming elections in Germany. Populist SYRIZA which leads the government coalition in Greece is following a rather constructive path aimed at getting the country out of its deep socio-economic crisis. In the U.S.A., the system of checks and balances and strong institutions have created serious limitations on the populist message of Donald Trump's administration. The new populism in Western Europe is declining, but not because democracy has found long-term solutions to the problems that caused it, but because it seems to have learned to fight the most obvious symptoms of populism. As Werner J. Patzelt reasonably points out, to avoid the fighting and polemics with populists is "political cowardice", since their agenda, no matter how meaningless and "indecent" it might appear, "is still actively discussed in beerhouses throughout the country as well as in its Internet chatrooms".

So, it is premature to speak about overcoming populism's inherent dangers. In France, as noted earlier, populist politics were supported by a significant part of society, and the result where Marine Le Pen ended up in the second round is outstanding for the National Front (FN). In Great Britain, in early elections, the Independence Party suffered a crushing defeat, gaining only 1.8 % of the vote, but only because its main party platform, the exit from the European Union, is now being realized by the

ruling Conservative Party. In Poland and Hungary, right-wing populist parties are firmly in power and continue aiming to weaken judiciary and civil institutions. A decline in populism is not visible in the post-Soviet space at all.

Our now completed pilot project on populism has not only provided interesting results located squarely at the intersection of political science, sociology and electoral studies, and the analysis of local and European experience, etc., but has also outlined points of growth. In finishing the review of this collection which we offer to the reader's attention, we emphasize once again that the phenomenon of populism, its origin, development, and transition phases, deserves careful study. And we invite researchers to participate in a serious dialogue. This can be a study of the issue both in breadth, including the consideration of current political developments, elections, etc., and in depth: with detailed case studies using a single methodological basis, an in-depth analysis of the evolution of politics and society, especially the younger generation under the influence of populism, and the study of the role of media and social networks in the transformation of the socio-political space. It is important to understand that populism is not just an anomaly; it is partly a new normal. It is also partly a type of growing pain. And, as in the case of any disease, it is important to analyze the disease itself, and its methods of treatment, and how the organism as a whole reacts as the illness progresses.

Werner J. Patzelt

POPULISM – AND HOW TO HANDLE IT

I. Why Dealing with "Populism"?

The word "populism" calls to mind phenomena of political conflict and exclusion. Members of the established political-media class often refer to people as "populists" who frustrate them due to their style of behavior, or because of their political positions. In addition, we usually hear of "populism from the right", but quite rarely of "populism from the left". This is an asymmetry, which should not go without explanation. Moreover, there are populist features within the political class itself, including undoubtedly democratic politicians, and occurring not just during election campaigns.

So the "populism issue" seems to be quite complex. Under such circumstances, an analytical, non-polemical concept of populism might be helpful. It should allow the covering of the many varieties of populism that we see around the globe, and it should help to capture those complex relationships between democracy and populism that we cannot fail to notice. For this purpose, five core elements of populism will be discussed. On each of them, concrete phenomena of populism fall somewhere within a spectrum ranging from "quite normal in a democracy" to "fully populistic"; and manifold combinations of the characteristics of populism, located on each of that five continua, are possible. Thus the large variety of the world-wide occurrences of populism can be adequately depicted by no more than five "variables", just using this "five-dimensional property space".

II. What Is Populism?

1. Odd Answers

Put metaphorically, populism is the "ugly brother" of a beautiful girl named "democracy". Both are unmistakably siblings from the same family. Even at the linguistic roots of "democracy" and "populism" we find

the same entity, namely "the people". In the first case, it is referred to by the Greek word "demos", in the second case by the Latin word "populus". In common parlance, we talk of democracy when people go to vote or demonstrate calmly for goals that we appreciate; but we claim to face populists when citizens gather in an angry mob, or when political leaders use "bad words" and "arguments out of proportion" to mobilize their fellow-citizens. In order to distinguish both cases, we sometimes differentiate "populism from the bottom" from "populism from the top". However, we cannot avoid recognizing that there are seamless transitions between "civilized" and "populist" behavior, and that they exist both on the part of the people and on the part of politicians. Therefore, most politics – at least in democracies – is neither "entirely free from populism" nor "purely populist". We even know that populist leaders, coming from below and reaching top positions, time and again become authoritarian demagogues; and that afterwards a formerly democratic polity may be transformed into an authoritarian regime. With this in mind, one is enticed to distinguish "good populism" found in democracies from "bad populism" of dictator-like leaders. This, however, is as much an over-simplistic use of "populism" as is the opposition of populism "from below" and "from above". Hence, we should try to coin a better concept.

2. Five Elements of Populism

a) Practices of Demagogic Simplification

The most easily noted element of populism is the use of very simplified depictions of reality, or of its intricate chains of causation, with demagogic, not pedagogical intentions. Of course, this is a usual practice even among doubtlessly democratic politicians, at least in election campaigns or in talk shows. What distinguishes them from populists proper is no more than the fact that their abilities of discourse may reliably extend beyond a compilation of phrases, or that they are able to switch tactically between the modes of discourse and polemics, depending on circumstances and on political purpose.

b) Selfish Political Entrepreneurship

Populism used to emerge around leaders. In Italian renaissance times, one might have called such leaders condottieri, and they usually gathered military people around themselves. In contemporary bourgeois times, they reappear as "political entrepreneurs". Such people seek and seize opportunities for their personal political advancement, only with other means than their renaissance counterparts. They recognize stirring or inflamma-

tory topics, win followers around these topics, and nurture the willingness of these followers to support them. Common success and better lives, with themselves leading "the people" towards a golden future, is their message. Of course, such a role is aspired by many democratic politicians as well, especially by those who feel, and display, natural charisma. In fact, some of them soon go down the path of ordinary populists. In better cases, however, such politicians differ from populists in that they honestly seek office to serve the common good, at least in addition to their own self-serving purposes. Particularly in presidential systems of government without a strong system of checks and balances, as is common in Latin America, the prominent position of the president lures power-seeking politicians to seek the role of a "líder máximo", and legitimacy in this role by the claim of serving the people.

c) Anti-Representative Confrontation of "Below" and "Above"

Most notably, populism is a political style revolving around the contrast of "us down here" and "them up there". Populists pretend a sharp conflict between "us, the people" and "them, the politicians", and it is exactly this confrontation which leads political "condottieri" to claim that precisely they represent "the people" against "the selfish political class". Sometimes such leaders continue to hold on to this assertion even once they are in a head-of-state position.

Undoubtedly, there is an inevitable distinction between "people" and "politicians" in all political regimes, including representative democracies. In these, however, the representatives do not simply "oppose" those they represent, although they occupy all political leadership positions. The reason is that the represented citizens elect all their politicians into office, or out of office; and in doing so, "the people" are more important than the politicians. Yet as long as elected politicians stay in office, they are in executive authority and their influence is far superior to those whom they represent. So even in properly functioning representative democracies, there is an unavoidable gap between those "above" and those "below".

In democracies, however, there is a chain of delegation between the people and their representatives, just as described in the "agency theory" of representation. According to this theory, the represented citizens are the political "principals", while the representatives are the "agents" of the people. As a result, the exercise of political authority is normatively considered as a service for clients. It is true that representatives do not always act according to such an imperative of conduct, and they may even appear arrogant to citizens. Yet it is equally true that those represented also quite often take on inappropriate behavior, in particular if they stop listening to

arguments, indulge in clamorous demonstrations and treat politicians like traitors. Then incorrect behavior on both sides, practiced both by those represented and by their representatives, may nurture each other. Under such circumstances, the third element of populism emerges, and even in a well-established democracy.

This practice of opposing "we, the people" and "they, the faithless politicians" is always a threat to representative democracy. It is true that sharp criticism of the political class as arrogant, ignorant, out-of-touch and selfish may be justified more often than not. However, even outraged citizens should not deny freely elected politicians their legitimacy to take even such decisions that one refuses, and criticism must never go as far as to call representatives "traitors" who "misuse" their free mandate when deviating from what one wants them to do. Such accusations touch the core of democratic representation, in particular the right of elected politicians to decide at their own discretion, while bearing the risk of being voted out of office as a consequence thereof.

Even greater dangers for political freedom emerge when populist leaders pretend to be nothing but "advocates of ordinary people" who should, for the people's best, move beyond "established politics" and its rules. Such claims usually go along with calls for plebiscites and, typically, with preferences for the wrong form of referenda. These are those where citizens are required to answer a yes/no-question submitted to them by the political class. Doing so, representatives can apparently escape from their duty to decide not only on well-considered matters, but on quite difficult and unclear political issues as well. Once introduced, such referenda can even be connected with a vote of confidence on top politicians, be this done implicitly or explicitly. Finally, both the wording and the timing of a referendum can be manipulated for this purpose. The result is called "plebiscitary Caesarism". It is an effective means to transform an institutionalized democracy into highly personal rule. This is done the easier the more such "top-down" referenda look "perfectly democratic", namely when an ostensibly humble leader seeks to align his decision-making with the "will of the people". Yet such a promised identity of intentions is in most cases entirely imaginary. Those who can initiate referenda top-down usually free themselves from being "agents" of the citizens and become their principals instead, thereby effectuating exactly the contrary of what naive populists are hoping for.

d) Assertion of a Clear and Uniform "Will of the People"

At the core of populism is the assertion that there is a clear and uniform "will of the people". Not only do those who shout, "We are the peo-

ple!" while seeking confrontation with the political elite claim to know this "true will" of the people. But so do those political condottieri as well who place themselves at the head of "ordinary people" while pretending to know the "will of the people". As demagogues in the literal sense of the term (i. e. as "leaders of the people") they may even succeed in making people believe that they know the inmost desires and motivations of their followers better than these themselves. As a result, such leaders pass as "democratically legitimized" beyond any doubt and may claim any right to exert even a personal rule. In the course of their rise to power, and solely depending on the politicized topics and traditions that are fashionable in such times, quite different ideological forms of populism can be cultivated and put into practice.

Nothing is more offbeat of pluralistic democracy than a belief in the existence of a homogenous, clear and unanimously expressible "will of the people". Instead, pluralism is based on the observation that there is usually a large variety of diverging interests, preferences, and values of quite distinct groups within a society, and it embraces the conviction that there is nothing wrong with such a situation. In addition, pluralistic democracy never claims that behind any decision majority might stand more than a temporary alliance of different social groups with otherwise competing interests. Populists, however, consider building such compromises as disadvantageous, and they usually fail to recognize that only the strict separation of "majority" from "truth" makes political freedom possible. For this reason, populists are always a threat to democracy.

e) Populism as a Warning Signal

In a representative democracy, the rise of populism is always an indicator for problems within its processes of responsiveness and government. The reason is that populism thrives in "gaps of representation", and that it draws much of its energy from wrong reactions of the established political class to its emergence. This becomes plausible after a look at how a perfect representative democracy would work.

Usually there is a distribution of political values and views, of interests and preferences across the population, say from "far left" to "far right" in a simple case, and across some more dimensions of political orientation in less simple cases. In a well-functioning representative democracy, this one-dimensional or multidimensional distribution of people's opinions is mirrored in a parliament, comprising either two "catch all-parties" or, more often, many parties that are linked to different parts of the population with competing policy views. By free, periodic elections, these parliamentary parties are repeatedly compelled to a re-synchronization of their

policy stances with the political preferences of their voters, since otherwise they will lose seats in parliament or even disappear from the political scene. Parties try to avoid both consequences for good reasons. Therefore, they usually try to stay in close touch with those voter groups that are important to them, and by practicing responsiveness with respect to the policy preferences of their supporters.

A parliament is, of course, not meant to be simply a mirror of what is thought and discussed in society. Members of parliament have the much more challenging duty to "refine" the "empirically detectable" policy wishes of citizens, that is, to transform them into those "hypothetical policy preferences" that people might have if they could devote as much time and wisdom to considering policy issues as their representatives can – and are expected to – do. Making use of this leeway while acting as responsible agents of their constituents, who are the parliamentarians' principals, is even the purpose of a representative's "free mandate". Yet it may happen that members of parliament, along with their parties, either misperceive or ignore the political preferences of many citizens, or that they feel to have good reasons for not following even such policy preferences that they know quite well. Representatives have every right to do so; but afterwards they have to bear the consequences.

One of the possible consequences is the emergence of a "representation gap". This means that a significant part of the population no longer feels represented by their elected politicians. If so, citizens are either inclined to give voice to their feelingly unrepresented policy wishes by ostentatious demonstrations, by gathering around new leaders, or by voting for new protest parties. Or they practice "exit" by reducing their political interests and by non-voting, thus possibly creating a public mood of political malaise. In this second case, citizens fall back to the role of mere subjects, and even underlings, of professional politicians. In the first case, however, populism rises.

After all, there are two causes for the emergence of such "gaps of representation". First, a long-standing policy may differ from actual preferences of citizens, either because these preferences have changed over time, or because the policy views of the political class have moved away from citizen's opinions. This may be due to the dynamics of ideology, or may have been caused by recruitment patterns for politicians that alienates them from ordinary citizens. Second, there may have been inadequate "policy explaining" on the part of the political class, i. e. insufficient communication on how the representatives perceive a given situation, the available policy options, the legal framework, the overarching normative concerns, and possible side-effects of implemented policy that should better be avoided. A narrowed spectrum of "acceptable political opinions", or

of "politically correct language", may strengthen the momentum of both factors.

Under such conditions, a significant portion of citizens will feel alienated from the majority of the political class, may feel abandoned by those very parties to whom they previously gave their trust, and oftentimes such people will be motivated to indulge in protest behavior. The result is populism with all four characteristics outlined above. There are claims that "they, the politicians" arrogantly ignore "the clear will" of many citizens, such that "we, the people" have to express our dissatisfaction bluntly and, hopefully, through the mouth of new political leaders with mass appeal. After the rise of such populist movements, and with the presence first of their political positions in public discourse, then of a populist party in parliament, the representation gap is closed. In no way must this be for the betterment of the political system and of the citizenry as a whole; more often than not the contrary will be the case. Yet, ironically, this usually occurs for no other reason than that the political class, at one point in time, started to deviate steadily from what many citizens actually thought and wanted, and that afterwards keeping up this deviation was not considered as a fault of the political class, but as an adequate reaction to "unruly and insubordinate" citizens.

Such was the case, to give an example, in Germany in 2015. Even in the years before, some issues that were important for a considerable part of the population had been treated as secondary or purely imaginary by the political class, such as the handling of the Euro crises and the endless arrival of self-entitled immigrants to Germany. Such concerns passed as irrational reactions to make-believe problems, based on phobic sentiments. Therefore, most media people, politicians and actors of civil society did not consider them as worthy of seriously concern. Since these issues, under contemporary conditions, were of particular relevance for right-wing Germans, in this kind of representation gap right-wing populism was inevitably to emerge. In addition, the yearlong powerful the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) had become unwilling to furthermore integrate right-wing persons into its centrist positions. As a result, the Alternative for Germany (AfD) could grow up as an influential right-wing populist party in that representation gap that had been opened by the Christian Democrats. Vice versa Germany met the rise of left-wing populism in the late 1970s, when Germany's nuclear-energy policy and military-security policy was no longer at pace with the arrival of a leftist generation on the political stage. At that time, the then powerful the Social Democratic Party (SPD) was unable to absorb political leftist protest, thus opening free space for the emergence and rise of the Green Party.

Easily we could add examples from other countries. Some of them might show that populism will also arise from purely imagined representation gaps. The reason is, that the famous "Thomas theorem" of reality construction applies here as well: "If humans define a situation as being given, and if they act out of this definition, then the consequences of these actions will be real, no matter how unreal the definition of the situation may have been". As a result, the circumstances of the rise of populism may be quite different across various countries, and concrete populist positions will vary largely. Yet there is always similarity, if not identity, of those political mechanisms that first create a gap of representation and then fill it with populism. Unfortunately, many observers and analysts obscure this fact if they are much more interested in the apparent ideological diversity of the large variety of populist movements around the world than in the causal structure underneath populism's way up to political relevance. Then, of course, they will fail to find reliable remedies against populism.

III. Three Anti-Populistic Strategies

The five elements of populism discussed above constitute a parsimonious theory covering and explaining both the diversity of populism and the seamless transition from normal political behavior to democracy-threatening movements. Based on this theory, we can outline effective measures against the emergence and proliferation of populism.

1. Avoid the Emergence of Representation Gaps!

Once understood that populism is a warning signal for shortcomings in the process of democratic representation, we can recognize populism as an only secondary problem and may take serious interest in the primary causes of that warning signal. This helps us discover representation gaps. Whenever found, we should figure out who has caused such a gap to what extent. If a policy has created a representation gap due to its lack of plausibility for the electorate, then one must either change this policy or engage in patient "political education" of so far unconvinced people. What should be done in any concrete case, depends on whether there are really good reasons for a policy that temporarily alienates a significant portion of citizens from their politicians. When Germany's rearmament was at stake in the 1950s, it proved to be sound to convince Germans of the need to join NATO; but when passively accepted immigration worried Germans in 2015, it might have been more adequate to change the implausible policy.

2. Improve the "Empirically Detectable Policy Preferences" of the People!

Engaging in the "teaching function" of political actors is particularly desirable when a representation gap has emerged due to popular opinion lagging behind political actions that seem to be required by concrete challenges. Then, four rules apply. First, one must carefully listen to the views, worries, fears, interests, and desires of citizens, even though people may formulate them in rude terms. Second, among the topics brought forward in populist discourses, one must distinguish issues that are rooted in reality from phantasmagoria, and rational arguments from phobic views. Third, and with respect to populist arguments, one must deal even with what may be merely imagined and phobic in rational ways. Never should one mirror the irrationality of an opponent by one's own irrational behavior. However, supplementary measures of repression can become necessary as soon as populists not only become ever more radical, but also start fighting against representative democracy as such. Currently, this is the main reaction to right-wing populism recommended in Germany. Yet a fourth element in the struggle against populist mood is required as well. This is to deal constructively with those parts of the populist protest that are based in reality and include rational arguments. In order to do so, politicians, media and civil society must try to find effective and reasonable solutions for the real problems that populists address, and the political class has to communicate convincingly its pursuit of such solutions to the public.

None of these rules, carefully followed, turns us into populists ourselves. Yet acting on them promises to make populism unnecessary. Exactly that is what representative democracy calls for. Political opinion and policy preferences of citizens must be broadly discussed in open discourses; these ideas should be fairly represented in parliamentary debates; and whatever people think, should thereby be transformed into that "hypothetical will of citizens" discussed above. Put differently, efforts of communicative political leadership are required.

This can certainly be tedious. It means actively listening to people, even if the arguments are well known. It demands correcting assertions times and again, even if this has been done on thousands of other occasions before with so many other people. And it calls for explaining positions that one considers to be correct, even though the opponent apparently dislikes listening. In addition, all of this must be demonstrated repeatedly, both in personal and in media-facilitated contacts between people and their representatives, since it will not create much trust in the political class if such behavior is only asserted, but cannot be observed in practice.

3. Engage in "Communicative Close Distance Combat" with Populists!

You never win a struggle by insulting the enemy in the midst of your friends. This, however, will happen if you avoid confrontation with your opponent. Then you start talking only about him, instead of engaging in discussions with him. Of course, fighting a political opponent must take place within the rules of fair play if you do not want to damage democracy. This is especially true for behavior in public places, in the media, and in parliament. But in a democracy based on competition and free elections, you simply must engage in real political battles, particularly in "close distance communicative combat" with your foe. Moreover, you have to do so with the firm resolution to win, and to be victorious as often as possible in front of a big audience, ideally on TV.

Of course, the goal is not to convince the opponent personally, although this might be a welcome side effect. Nor is the intention to "ennoble" the opponent and his positions by discussing fairly and in public, since such behavior is nothing more than adequate political practice in a pluralistic democracy. Quite the reverse is the case, since the decision to engage in such "close distance combat" simply draws consequences from the fact that it is disadvantageous to remain silent on topics around which populism has developed and continues to grow. We simply acknowledge that even such issues that we avoid carefully as "politically unacceptable" will spread in everyday talk or in the Internet, if citizens feel them to be important and even unwelcome within the political class. Therefore, an active approach to populist discourse is required, namely "communicative close distance combat". The other way round, it is only a passive approach if one draws "dividing lines" between "mere populists like them" and "sound, responsible people like us", since those at the other side of the dividing line will not disappear just because of the existence of such a line. They will simply remain unchallenged and undisturbed, and even may continue growing. Unfortunately, this wrong strategy has been widely recommended in Germany and has usually been exercised, so far apparently without any success and to the disadvantage of German representative democracy.

It is true that going into "close distance combat" with political opponents not only requires professional competence and rhetoric skills, but courage as well. Such courage may be lacking, and not only in the face of the foe. It is required in particular when the need arises to justify such an approach in front of political friends who strongly advise against entering into debates with populists. Then one has to stand the reproach that going to such debates would "make populists slogans even more popular", or has to dispel the suspicion of "being a friend of populists oneself", which even

might be proven by "applause from the wrong side". It may be hard to argue against such objections, in particular when they are due to intellectual lethargy and even political cowardice on the part of those who live in the filter bubble of political correctness, and who prefer comfortable ways of political thought and action. Yet political legitimacy, especially in a representative democracy, comes only through communication. Whoever breaks down such efforts of communication, therefore abandons the very work required for the maintenance of a liberal, representative democracy which is so susceptible to damaging interference. Such a risk we should never take, and under no circumstances.

IV. Some Final Reflections

Can a politician, or a citizen supportive of democracy, really reach every angry or protesting fellow citizen? Certainly not. Is it possible to convince every populist? All experience speaks against it. Is it enjoyable to argue about politics with obstinate, defiant, hardened, bored, jealous contemporaries? Usually not. Should we do it anyway? Definitely.

Will our democracy really suffer damage when we, as its defenders, argue with its brazen, short-sighted, and sometimes obnoxious opponents? Would it not hurt democracy much more if we leave its critics to themselves, or when we allow them a self-presentation as "victims of ruthless exclusion"? Is there anything gained for democracy if we dispense with addressing those who are sliding towards the fringes of the political spectrum, or even into radicalism? Would it not be better to clarify, while in disputes with such fellow citizens, the values, the procedures, and the guiding ideas of our political institutions? Or the boundaries of acceptable political desires, speeches, and actions? And why they lie exactly there? Besides: Would it not come close to deserting from the ranks of those who have to defend our democracy, if we only simulate fighting for democracy in undisturbed speeches in front of a consenting audience, but not face to face with populists, some of them in good faith, but some of them full of anger and of contempt for helpless democrats?

Those who are neither lazy nor politically faint-hearted, those who feel an inner obligation to fulfill their duties as proud citizens of a good polity, and those who value pluralistic democracy, can only come to the following conclusion: Yes, we have to talk to populists, and we must try to win back as many of them as possible. Then, however, we must not treat them as enemies. Most of them are not even radicals, let alone extremists, but are simply people who think differently from us and make unwelcome use of an important right that all of us share: the right to be politically wrong, and to give loud expression to even gross errors.

Boris Makarenko

POPULISM AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

I. Populism from an Institutional Point of View

The political definitions of populism, one way or another, are built around the dichotomous opposition of the elite class and the people. In everyday life, though, populism is understood as demagogic statements made by politicians and aimed at gaining or retaining the support of the masses. It is more correct, however, to define populism **as a *qualitative characteristic* of political doctrines, parties and movements, for which the opposition of the elite class and the masses is the key point of the agenda; it is also the *method and style* of mobilizing mass support aimed at supporting these forces and doctrines.**

The principal message of populism refers to the quality of the representation of interests in politics. However, at the same time, its main institutional feature is its disrespect for pluralism. With its appeal to the masses, it seeks to spread this narrative across the whole political arena, and to free it from all intermediary institutions and procedures[1]. Populism, by its very nature, has pronounced institutional contradictions. First, it is, by definition, "anti-elite", even though its proponents in the political arena are themselves part of the political elite. Second, by reducing the importance of the role of institutions, it threatens the wholeness of the entire political system, especially that part of it which ensures the responsibility of the government and the protection of minority interests.

Populism is often viewed as a symptom of "democracy's illnesses": corruption, management inefficiency, and ruined communication between government and society[2]. However, both the "demand" and "supply" of

[1] Urbinati N. Democracy Disfigured: Opinion, Truth and the People. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2014. P. 131–145.

[2] Populism on the Rise: Democracies under Challenge? / ed. A. Martinelli. Milano: Edizioni Epoché, 2016. P. 113.

appeal to the public which goes "over the heads" of the privileged classes can appear in other types of societies, including both authoritarian, as well as transitional ones. The only difference is that, in competitive political regimes, populism is a message indicating the desire to replace or change the elites, while in non-competitive ones, it is a negation of the elite as a political institution.

In countries where, in terms by Almond and Verba[3], the participatory political sub-culture is developed, voters are more demanding in terms of their influence on politics. However, if the civil culture is weak, populism (if established by those in power) "freezes" a subject-type political culture in society. This means that the relationship between the government and society develops in the form of a plebiscite. In such a situation, there is a possibility that a populist regime will establish itself for a long period, even in those countries with a tradition of handing over power via elections, but with no fully realized civil culture (Venezuela, Hungary, and Poland).

Until the second half of the 20th century, democracy was associated with the "redistributive" demands of the poor layers of society, and the fear of populism acted as a restricting factor preventing the expansion of voting rights[4]. The principle that "competition precedes inclusiveness" is one of the key conditions for the establishment of a polyarchy[5]. More often, populism actually appeared where this condition was not observed. And today, in those countries where political pluralism has developed "from the ground up", and the factors restricting active law are unacceptable, populism is almost inevitable. This has been proven both in the cases of Latin America and post-communist countries.

Populism's "political platform" can impart its accent onto various ideological trends – leftist, rightist, and nationalist. Some researchers characterize populism as a "thin ideology"[6] or identify in it only "basic" common traits, such as anti-establishmentism, authoritarianism, and nativism[7]. In a number of works[8], modern European populism is interpreted

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[3] Almond G., Verba S. The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965.

[4] Acemoğlu D., Robinson J. Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

[5] Dahl R. Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition. New Heaven: Yale University Press, 1971.

[6] Populism on the Rise. P. 15.

[7] Muddle C. Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

[8] Inglehart R. Modernization and Post-Modernization: Cultural, Economic and Political Change in 43 Societies. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997. P. 243–246;

as a manifestation of a new *transnational* cleavage based on the opposition of traditional and postmodernist-liberal values. Thus, populism does not have an integral doctrine: the opposition of society to "malicious" elites is a factor that consolidates broad public support in order to solve other social conflicts. The "anti-elite" message is what makes populism powerful: when the leading, "mainstream" parties are limited in their choices of socio-economic and political solutions, populism offers an attractive alternative agenda. However, that is also its weakness: in democracies, it is the need to deliver the results of the regime to society, and in non-democracies, the imminent ineffectiveness of the regime.

For most of the 20th century, socio-economic cleavage played the role of an "axis" in the familiar pattern of socio-political demarcation[9]. However, in contemporary conditions, it forsakes this role. The long-term (for a half-century) improvement in the standard of living and the creation of the social state have smoothed out social contradictions in Western societies. The termination of this growth, made worse by the socio-economic crisis of 2008–2009, exacerbated this demarcation. However, the channeling of this conflict was expressed via other "points of tension": first and foremost, "identity problems"[10], which have high "populist potential" – a logical possibility of a Manichaean opposition between "us" and "them", with the blame for the support of the latter being placed on the elites.

II. The Success of Populism: Valuation Criteria

The concept of populism's "successes" differs depending on the type of political regime in which it occurs. For non-democratic regimes, it means victory in elections and consolidation of power for a long period of time. It is more difficult to determine the success of populism in democracies. Historically, most populist movements have been short-lived; they influenced a country's politics and the behavior of the main parties, but then, usually disappeared quickly.

In the modern world, the success of populism as a way of coming into power is relatively rare, and in these cases, populists experience strong "mutations to accommodate power", which sometimes result in the rap-

Inglehart R., Norris P. Trump, Brexit and the Rise of Populism: Economic Have-Nots and Cultural Backlash. August 2016. URL: https://research.hks.harvard.edu/publications/workingpapers/Index.aspx

[9] Lijphart A. Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries. New Heaven: Yale University Press, 1999. P. 78–89.

[10] Krastev I. The Unraveling of the Post-1989 Order // Journal of Democracy. 2016. Vol. 27. No. 4. P. 11.

id disenchantment of the electorate. However, in transitional regimes, populist parties can grow to reach the size of ruling, or even dominant, parties (like the Law and Justice [PiS] party in Poland and the Fidesz party in Hungary). In those countries where democracy is not fully consolidated, the main "antidote" to populism, namely, holding politicians accountable, may not work. Donald Trump's victory in the U.S. elections is a special case: the President, who won with a clearly populist agenda, has set his course with an "executive team" that hails from the traditional elite class, and is reliant on the "mainstream" Republican Party.

Since the 1960s, and through 2016, the political influence of populist parties has grown significantly, having doubled in votes cast (from 5.1 % to 13.2 %), and trebled by number of seats in parliaments (from 3.8 % to 12.8 %)[11]. From the point of view of a broader criterion (the ability of populism to influence a country's political course), there are not many successful examples, but those that have succeeded are quite resonant. One example is Brexit, as well as the constitutional reforms in Poland and Hungary that significantly weakened the systems of checks and balances, thereby strengthening the power of the majority.

The format and scale of populism's success with the electorate depends on the electoral system itself. On the one hand, proportional systems guarantee populist parties representation in parliaments in case they overcome a moderate cut-off barrier of 3–5 %. On the other hand, with a proportional system, it is more difficult to polarize the agenda of the election campaign and achieve a majority. However, Hungary (which has a mixed system) and Poland (a proportional system) are remarkable exceptions to this rule. The majority election system cuts off radical extremes: that is why in France and in Great Britain, populists did not acquire significant representation in parliaments, even though they had a high level of electoral support; this also explains why a new populist party did not appear in the U.S. However, thanks to the bipolar and adversarial nature of politics that is borne out of the majority one-round election system, populist parties won two astonishing victories in 2016 (Brexit and Trump). In France, the two-round election system gives the National Front (FN) solid electoral support in the first rounds of any voting, but in the second round, the so-called phenomenon of "republican mobilization" is automatically activated, involving an anti-authoritarian coalition of all of the country's systemic political forces. In 2002 and 2017, this phenom-

[11] Inglehart R., Norris P. Trump, Brexit and the Rise of Populism.

enon worked against the National Front candidates in the presidential election.

III. "The Institutional Cartography" of Populism: Regimes and Elites

1. Regimes with Limited or No Pluralism

Authoritarian, and, especially, totalitarian regimes do not meet a key condition of populism: the institutionalized division of the elite and the "masses". Nevertheless, populism is quite common in such societies. Its main features and peculiarities are:

– (often) "revolutionary legitimacy": the elite presents itself as having come "from the people", having overthrown the old (aristocratic, colonial, or corrupt) elite;

– the need for "permanent"[12] or "charismatic"[13] legitimization: constant state-sponsored propaganda, where the overriding theme is the "unity of the government and the people";

– the "flipside" of such legitimacy is the need for an "enemy", real or imagined, from which the ruling regime defends the people: constructs such as this can be found in many variations of corporatist regimes, which view society as one body, where its "brain" is the elite, and the "parts of the body" are represented by society at all levels; everyone who does not fall into line is treated as an external infection that poisons the body (the allusion Mussolini was credited with creating, and that has been co-opted by the creators of the concept of "sovereign democracy" in Russia in recent years)[14];

– a personalist character: a charismatic leader who builds a plebiscite-type relationship with the people, excluding elites from the process; the society's role is limited to *acclamation*, and the one-time approval of a leader who has de facto full carte blanche, allowing him to create and follow any political course.

What differentiates populism in non-democratic regimes is that it is not aimed at changing relations between elites and society. Moreover, its objective is not to replace the forces in power, but the opposite; it aims to preserve their power and assure mass support for the government.

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[12] Gel'man V. Cracks in the Wall: Challenges for Electoral Authoritarianism in Russia // Problems of Post-Communism. 2013. No. 2. P. 3–10.

[13] Baunov A. Going to the People – and Back Again: The Changing Shape of the Russian Regime. M.: Carnegie Moscow Center, 2016. URL: http://carnegie.ru/2017/01/16/going-to-people-and-back-again-changing-shape-of-russian-regime-pub-67691

[14] http://www.edinros.ru/news.html?id=111148

2. Regimes with the Developed Political Pluralism

In democracies, there is an inescapable element of populism present in the platforms of all participants in the electoral process as they strive to win over voters. This can be called the "natural minimum level of populism" of democratic politics. Here, the opposition claims more elements of populism, as their opposition status implies that those in power can be accused of "elitism", while the opposition will "stand up for the people".

Before the appearance of "New Parties" (according to Gunther–Diamond typology[15]), populism was mostly an option for those mass movements that were either based on agricultural workers, or the urban lower-middle class (for example, the Populist Party at the end of the 19th century in the U.S.A, and Huey Long's "Share Our Wealth" movement). It was also an option for communist parties, which have in recent decades forsaken their role as the "counter-elite". Until recently, modern "new left" and "new right" parties have remained on the periphery of their respective party systems, constituting minorities in parliaments, and rarely participating in governmental coalitions. Following the logic of G. Sartori's party systems' typology[16], they almost never have possessed "coalition potential", though, somewhat more often, they have claimed to have "blackmail potential".

The contemporary stage of populism's development begins following the crisis of 2008–2009, the consequences of which were considered by many Western societies as a threat not only to quality of life, but also to identity, lifestyle and security. As a result, factors such as disillusionment with the worsening financial situation and with living conditions have appeared, which is a classic example of relative deprivation[17]. Populists are followed by the population strata that experience the most difficulty in adapting to new challenges – the "second-to-last fifth of postmodern society, who [by income level] represents a stratum which is rather secure but objectively can still lose something" [18].

The concrete configuration of the "triggers" of the "populist agenda" possessed significant differences in various European countries and in the

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[15] Gunther R., Diamond L. Species of Political Parties // Party Politics. 2003. Vol. 9. No. 2. P. 167–199.

[16] Sartori G. Parties and Party Systems. Vol. 1: A Framework for Analysis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976.

[17] Gurr T. Why Men Rebel. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970.

[18] Minkenberg M. The Renewal of the Radical Right: Between Modernity and Anti-Modernity // Government and Opposition. 2000. Vol. 35. No. 2. P. 187.

U.S.A. It is possible to highlight three distinct models of modern Western populism:

a) "Old-European": strong anti-migrant sentiment and Euroscepticism. The main trend here is the rise of the "new right"; the principal ideological message has anti-liberal and "anti-cosmopolitan" overtones. Countries: Great Britain, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Scandinavian countries, and France, with its own special considerations.

b) "Post-Communist": once the agenda hailing the movement away from "post-communist heritage"[19] was finally exhausted, there was an increase in skepticism about the country's further development and membership in the EU. In addition, the poor quality of local democracy created a situation where it is possible to change the government itself, but not the country's political trajectory. Constant crises led the left-of-center forces to see a decrease in their power, and, as is typical in such situations, gave victories to populists on the right.

c) "Mediterranean": the main "shock" is the rapid growth of unemployment, the contraction of the social safety net, and a decrease in quality of life. In all cases, it caused the rise of leftist populism (SYRIZA in Greece, Podemos in Spain) or populism of the "catch-all" variety (the Five Star Movement in Italy), with a sharp increase in Eurosceptic sentiment caused by the fact that it was the EU itself setting the harsh austerity requirements.

3. "Transitional" Types of Regimes

Variations of the "democratic" and "non-democratic" types of populism can be observed in transitional or hybrid regimes. Even in cases of limited competition, the "populist game" played by those in power is limited by the presence of other political forces in the country, and therefore should be more sophisticated.

"Milder" political regimes also encounter real opposition (i. e. opposition not controlled by the government). Similar parties in hybrid regimes are borne from "alternative elites", and therefore, fit the definition of populist parties, as they aim to supplant the established elite.

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[19] Krastev I. The Unraveling of the Post-1989 Order. P. 13.

Table 1. Populism: different regimes, different elites

Type of political elite	Competitiveness level of political regime		
	No competition	**Limited competition**	**Full competition**
Monolithic non-changeable elite	**"Dictatorial Populism"** claims to express the whole nation's interests	**Dictatorial Populism** vs. **Populism of the "permitted opposition"**	**Impossible**
Competing mainstream elites	**Impossible**	**Impossible**	Natural level of minimum populism
Alternative elites: aim at becoming the new mainstream	**Impossible by definition**	Marginal. Populism is an important element of the alternative agenda	Populism is the main political weapon
Counter-elites: aim at radical regime change	If it exists, it is illegal	Marginal or does not exist	Marginal or does not exist

IV. Perspectives and Forecasts

The current populist wave is based on objective factors and phenomena in Western politics, such as the complication of the system of socio-political cleavages, the slowdown in economic growth and reduced quality of life in Western societies, and the increased scale of migration. In effect, it is a crisis of the system of political representation, and the increased disagreement between the absolute domination of the "establishment" and the diversification and fragmentation of what the public requires from its politicians.

Over recent decades, Western democracies have experienced an increase in liberalism. The rapidly growing urban middle class demanded liberal standards in politics, culture and morality. This meant there would be a convergence between the traditional "left" and "right". While these processes were on the rise, the contradiction as described remained hidden, but the situation changed when the "establishment" proved its inability to handle the consequences of the socio-economic crisis. Liberalism, both economic and political, thus became the main target of criticism in the current situation.

A somewhat conventional comparison here would be that of the current crisis of party systems to the interwar period, when, in most European countries, the party systems underwent a significant period of re-invention, as Social Democrats, Communists and Fascists appeared on the political scene. While, in this case, such shifts took place as a response to the crisis of classical modernization (i. e. the transition to a modern industrial society), the current rise of populism is a response to the "postmodern

crisis": the "Thermidor" that appeared because of the accumulated costs and the disillusionment of the "losers".

It would be a mistake to consider the rise of populism only as a negative phenomenon. It partially resolves the contradiction described above, giving significant segments of the population political representation and the ability to influence the political agenda. This way, populists perform the functions that are typical in parties according to all classical theories.

The minuses of populism are also obvious. It places the power of the majority at the maximum possible level, while ignoring other functions of democracy (the functioning of checks and balances, the rule of law, tolerance) and aims to "replace equality with unity"[20]. If plebiscite-type democracy in Western politics increases because of the populist wave, then these regimes become less liberal, creating an imbalance in the entire institutional system.

The electoral successes of the populists can be attributed rather to the triumph of *political will*, and the desire to remove the mainstream elite from power. At the same time, populism does not prove that it is able to satisfy the *long-term interests* of voters because its economic and social programs have not yet been tested in practice.

It would be wrong to automatically predict the quick failure of populists' economic platforms and the subsequent loss of their popularity among voters. According to the Chilean political scientist Andrés Velasco, the experience of Latin American rulers shows that the implementation of populist economic policy in the long-run does in fact cause serious crises and recessions, but the short-term effect may, on the contrary, be positive[21].

When evaluating the prospects of a "populist wave", one should not go to extremes. The rise of populism will not "go away by itself", but, at the same time, the prophesy of a "victorious march" followed by catastrophic consequences is based rather on the mainstream and liberal elites' fear of populism's victories in 2016 than on a rational analysis of the situation. In 2017, key electoral events include the recent elections in France and the Netherlands, and the upcoming elections in Germany. These will not give populist parties symbolic wins on the scale of Brexit or Donald Trump's victory (though their respective electoral tallies were quite high). In those countries where populists are in the government (Greece, Sweden, Finland), or where the government acts in accordance with an imposed agenda (Brexit, U.S.A.), it will still be necessary to see how voters express

[20] Urbinati N. Democracy Disfigured. P. 152.

[21] https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/economic-populism-temporary-success-by-andres-velasco-2017-02

themselves in subsequent elections. The emerging economic recovery in European Union countries and the migration issue having "passed its peak" does not eliminate the demand for populism, but it can put an end to its expansion. In the U.S.A., during the first months of Donald Trump's presidency, institutional checks and balances clearly strengthened, thereby restraining the populist tone of his pre-election promises.

However, significant factors will also help increase the "viability" of populism. First, it will not be possible to overcome the real social and economic prerequisites for the rise of populism in the short term. Second, as many observers note, even an economic recovery is unlikely to quickly "extinguish" populist party voters' proclivity for protest.

As for populism in "underdemocratic" regimes, its fate depends on the types of politics specific to various countries. The threats to the stability of such regimes are twofold: on the one hand, under such regimes, a split of elites is possible. On the other, in this case, it is more likely to lead to an overthrow of power in the top echelons, and the formation of a similar populist model, but with a different leader and an updated set of "messages" (which occurred, for example, in Egypt). A qualitative shift is hypothetically possible if the "alternative" (most likely, also populist) political forces would succeed in establishing themselves as significant players on the political arena, capable of getting involved in the process of democratization (which occurred in Tunisia).

Andrey Ryabov

THE REASONS FOR THE RISE OF POPULISM IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND ITS ABSENCE IN THE POST-SOVIET SPACE

I. The Criteria for Populism

Populism as a socio-political phenomenon has an extremely broad interpretation in literature. In this article, the author focuses attention on populist parties, leaders and movements that exert genuine influence on the internal political processes in their countries. In other words, populism here will be viewed through the prism of an actor's point of view, while at the same time only those "players" who participate in forming policy in a given country remain in the field of vision. In order to understand the essence of populism with this approach, two of its specific characteristics would appear to be the most important: first, the actions of populist leaders and parties which are positioned against the current establishment, and against the powerful elites; and second, when in power, at the level of practical politics, populists try to actualize those simplified beliefs and stereotypes as they exist in people's minds.

The rise of populism as a phenomenon occurs in conditions where the political system, and, primarily, institutions of representative and executive power, traditional political parties included, lose the ability to solve problems that critically infringe on the interests of a wide swath of the population. Populism appears as an attempt to offer a response to a demand that "rises up" from the discontent originating from below.

The recent interest in populism among academic experts and political observers is connected primarily with the fact that the influence of populists has shown a rapid increase in that part of the world where it was least expected, specifically in the most developed countries in Europe as well as in the U.S.A. The post-Soviet space stands in contrast to this phenomenon. In these countries, regardless of the weakness of political institutions and their crisis of public trust, and regardless of economic stagnation and the social gap between the poor and the rich, populism is not a factor in in-

ternal politics. This article attempts to find out why, with the superficial similarity of the economic and social reasons underlying it, populism is on the rise in one part of the planet and is absent in another.

II. The Crisis of the Modern Capitalist Model, the Lack of Future-Oriented Projects and Populism's "Gaps"

As for modern developed countries, it is important to note that there is a widely held belief that the rise of populism in these countries is caused only by the inability of some social groups, their number is steadily growing, to adapt to the conditions of globalization, informatization, and the new cultural balance in Western countries caused by mass migrations. In my opinion, the reasons for this phenomenon go much deeper.

The main reason for the rise of populism in developed countries is the crisis of the current socio-liberal capitalism system, which developed in the third quarter of the 20th century, and which won its historic competition with Soviet socialism.

This model differed from others in its high employment of the population, a reliable social safety net, effective mechanisms to ensure human rights and freedoms, and by means of representative democracy. This was the "Golden Age" of the middle-class, which represented the majority of the population in developed countries. Capitalism of that time was remarkable in offering a comfortable standard of living, and giving society a sense of stability and predictability[1].

However, from the 2000s onward, the socio-liberal model has faced new challenges which have led to the gradual erosion that has developed into the current crisis. Under the influence of the "fourth industrial revolution", the level of unemployment increased significantly, primarily affecting those in unskilled and labor-intensive jobs, as well as those in non-creative professions. "The fact that higher education had become more available to the masses created a situation where graduates often could not find jobs meeting their expectations in terms of qualification and remuneration"[2]. The rise in unemployment was especially significant in Southern European countries (Greece, Spain, Italy and Portugal).

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[1] Fishman L. Pochemu postfordizm? Retsenziya na knigu: Postfordizm: kontseptsii, instituty, praktiki [Why Post-Fordism? Review of the book: Post-Fordism: Concepts, Institutions, Practices] / ed. M. S. Il'chenko, V. S. Mart'yanov. Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2015. 279 p. // Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnie otnosheniya [The World Economy and International Relations]. 2016. No. 9. P. 125.

[2] Vol'chik V. V., Posukhova O. Yu. Prekariat i professional'naya zanyatost' v kontekste institutsional'nykh izmeneniy [The Precariat and Professional Employment in the Context of Institutional Changes] // Terra Economicus. 2016. Vol. 14. No. 2. P. 163.

Incidentally, and obviously not by accident, the last several years have seen populist movements in three Southern European countries to gain significant influence. In Italy, it has been the Five Star Movement (5 Stelle), and, in Spain, Podemos (We Can!) which have both become powerful parliamentary forces. In Greece, SYRIZA came to power in 2015 and it has led the government since.

In the context of the technological and social changes seen in developed countries, the need to take part-time and temporary jobs has become more widespread. As a result, a new social class has emerged – the precariat, consisting of workers who are employed temporarily or part-time, but whose jobs are of a permanent and usually stable nature[3]. Typical traits of the precariat are "limited" social status[4], weak social security, a lack of many social guarantees, and professional disqualification. Because of this, the precariat is limited in its ability to access and make use of modern civilization's many benefits. And it is no accident that this class does not see much of a future for itself in the current social and political system, and this is a distinctive feature of this class's psychology. This creates objective prerequisites for the development of populist movements.

Another important symptom of the crisis of socio-liberal capitalism in the second half of the 20th century has been the gradual disappearance and decrease in numbers of the middle-class. Attempts by governments to slow this process and to narrow the gap in incomes between the rich and the rest of the population using traditional socio-democratic political methods have been unsuccessful. This, in particular, was confirmed by the presidency of François Hollande in France. The same is true for Barack Obama's presidency in the U.S.A., which actively employed an arsenal of socio-democratic means to resolve social problems. However, social inequality in the U.S.A. increased during his presidency.

The growth of social inequality, together with the "blockage" of channels of vertical mobility, has led to a feeling of unfairness in certain layers within the existing social order. This has objectively undermined its legitimacy.

One of this crisis' important manifestations in the political sphere has been the over-strengthening process of separation of the ruling elites from society, and their increasing isolation and clannish character. This process

[3] Toshchenko Zh. T. Prekariat – noviy sotsial'niy kharakter [The Precariat – a New Social Character] // Sotsiologicheskiye issledovaniya [Sociological Researches]. 2015. No. 6. P. 3–13.

[4] Standing G. Prekariat – noviy opasniy klass [The Precariat – the New Dangerous Class] / trans. N. Usova. Moscow: Fond razvitiya i podderzhki iskusstva "AIRIS" [Fund for the Development and Support of Art "IRIS"], 2014. P. 23.

is accompanied by growing corruption within political circles, and the increasing influence of shadow (i.e., non-elected) structures on politics (PR managers, political consultants, media technology specialists, and groups responsible for connecting politicians with big business). The power of the elites and their autonomy from society is constantly strengthened by the modern media – from national TV channels to web-based mass media, which allow for the targeted manipulation of public opinion. All these changes, if occurring in conditions where democratic institutions are functioning normally, and there is a regular handover of power, ultimately lead to a reduction in its responsibility to society. This new reality, which is increasingly divergent from normative democratic models, is called post-democracy[5]. Effective counteraction to these tendencies, which lead to the erosion of democratic systems, has yet to be proposed.

The model of socio-liberal capitalism has been unable to absorb the alien cultural pressure coming from the numerous diasporas of Muslim migrants. The concepts of "multiculturalism" or a "cultural sparring match" have failed. As a result, a segment of the population in developed countries has begun persistently rejecting migrants as an element foreign to Western societies. This circumstance has also contributed significantly to the formation of a socio-political environment favorable to the growth of the influence of populist movements.

The "gaps" between these new problems and the lack of effective solutions proposed by the political systems of developed countries that would have helped to solve these problems have resulted in a new breeding ground for the emergence and development of populist movements, both right and left. It can be summarized using the following criteria: increasing social tension and higher level of societal conflict between the upper and lower classes; the loss of trust in existing political parties and elites; the loss of faith in the future among significant social groups; a feeling of vulnerability and insecurity caused by the aggressive behavior of some "alien" cultures. As for globalization, marketization, informatization, and migrations, these phenomena substantially aggravated the crisis of socio-liberal capitalism in the second half of the 20th century, but by no means are its primary cause.

Trying to fill in these "gaps", populism attempts to compensate either by offering unrealistic visions of the future that cannot be fulfilled for various reasons, or by offering ready-made recipes from the past that may have worked well earlier, but end up being useless as a solution to modern

[5] Crouch C. Post-Democracy / trans. from English. Moscow: HSE Publishing House, 2010.

problems. At the same time, it is important to note that populism becomes a reality only in the case of a high degree of civil activity, which is the most important precondition for the growth of its influence.

The emergence of conditions favorable to the rise of populist movements in developed countries cannot be considered as a unique case in history. It was unexpected that populism once again could develop within the framework of a social model, which, it was believed, had no place for a strengthening populist influence, both with its efficient institutions, and rationalized mass consciousness. Yet a crisis of this model has led to the rise of populism. However, it is important to note that not every crisis in the development of Western civilization has resulted in a powerful rise of populist movements. The crisis of "organized", "monopolistic" world capitalism in the first third of the 20th century had a systematic and deep-seated character. However, with the exception of the U.S.A. (Huey Long and his right-populist movement, Share Our Wealth), there was no other significant increase in populism elsewhere in the world. It is true that, back then, the "demand" for new ideas and forward-looking projects corresponded with high "supply" on the political market. These included both projects which were complete alternatives to capitalism (Soviet Socialism, Anarcho-Syndicalism in Spain), as well as attempts to "socialize" capitalism (socio-democratic models in Europe, the "New Deal" of Franklin D. Roosevelt in the U.S.A.). Unfortunately, misanthropic projects (National Socialism, Italian Fascism) also became part of the political market at that time, as did openly reactionary corporatist models (António de Oliveira Salazar's Portugal). Back then, there was no room for populism.

Now there is demand for changes and for reform of the existing order but, unlike the first third of the 20th century, supply on the political market, in the form of realistic alternative projects for the future, does not exist (not counting various unproven or utopian social theories). The emerging gap between high demand and zero supply is being filled by populist movements.

Contrary to popular belief, modern populist movements, in fact, not only conflict with the interests of the establishment, but at the same time help it to create among the population an illusion that there is an alternative (although it is clear to the ruling elites that populists do not offer any alternatives). However, the illusion of an alternative offers the opportunity to preserve socio-political stability and defend society from an increase in the level of conflict.

However, there is no reason to assume that turning to the political decisions and instruments from the arsenal of past eras will give impetus for development in Western societies or help them modernize based on

the requirements of the 21st century. It is more than likely that the drift to the populist right which is now occurring in the U.S.A., Great Britain, and perhaps soon in other Western European countries, will fail. This will obviously increase the demand for new left-leaning (but not left-populist!) projects in the future. These will have to become the alternative not only to right-wing populism, but also to the socio-liberal capitalism of the second half of the 20th century, as it exists today. For now, their contours and structural peculiarities are not even visible. More or less accurately, it can be assumed that these projects will take into account the achievements and socio-political consequences of the energy, digital and biological technology revolutions. Most likely, such consequences (primarily in the energy sector) would weaken the centralization functions of the state. Power will shift increasingly downward to the level of communities and local self-government.

Perhaps, the level of material well-being achieved will allow developed countries to use public funds to support significant groups of the population who cannot find their place in the new economy. The increased length of human life under conditions of robotic automation will increase free time and create prerequisites for the formation of a labor market that is much more flexible and comfortable for workers. Moreover, without a doubt, a new left wing project would make sure of the ideas of freedom and human rights occupy a central place, and increased attention will once again be paid to civil rights.

III. Post-Soviet Reality: Why No Interest in Populism?

With an ongoing full-scale revival of populism underway in Western Europe and the U.S.A., it may seem surprising that there are no prominent populist movements or figures in the political life of the countries in the post-Soviet space. The use of populist rhetoric or other methods of association with the masses by the leaders of some countries in this part of the world can be discounted. It's possible that populism has left a visible trace only in Belarus, to a certain extent in Georgia (during the presidency of Mikhail Saakashvili), and in Ukraine where the actions of some parliamentary parties and political unions have had a certain influence on the country's politics (Yulia Timoshenko's Block, the Svoboda [Freedom] party, etc.).

Although populist parties appear quite often in other ex-Soviet countries, they do not have serious political influence there. Such parties are either quickly regenerate, like, for example, Vladimir Zhirinovsky's Liberal-Democratic Party in Russia, or end up in the political margins (The People's "Anti-Mafia" Movement in Moldova). However, leaders

in the majority of the region's countries each have their own, monarchic style. They prefer to stand above society, and often identify themselves with the state itself, its traditions and foundations. In those countries that have moved in the direction of democratization and Euro-integration, the political leaders, on the contrary, passionately try to demonstrate that, while being democratic in their political convictions, they are ready to act only within the framework of a strictly rational understanding of goals and objective possibilities. And this only by the rules dictated by democratic procedures. In both cases, the leaders of ex-Soviet countries obviously do not aim to be populists. A question arises: with such significant social inequality, complete corruption in the political sphere, a mass distrust to politicians from the establishment, and the widespread absence of independent justice, why didn't a clear demand for populism form in post-Soviet societies?

The answer seems to be quite simple. Populism, as a political movement, is in demand only in those cases where the population is highly aroused emotionally. Its development is possible only under conditions of social and political activism by the masses, and their readiness for rapid political mobilization. However, for almost two decades, political life in the majority of these countries has been characterized by exactly the opposite: a chronic passiveness among the population due to its inability to believe that something could change for the better. In the mass consciousness, a different attitude holds sway: "All changes are for the worse". There has not been a place for populism in systems where this is the case.

At the same time, in the post-Soviet space, in addition to the authoritarian development trend that is inseparable from the political immobility of the population and its social passivity, there exists another pluralistic development tendency, which is also often considered as similar to a democratic one. This trend is characterized by periodic bursts of huge political activity. In countries like Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, and Kyrgyzstan, internal political changes have repeatedly led to a revolutionary change in power with the active participation of the masses. However, the new governments that came to power as a result of "color revolutions" were, in most cases, quick to disappoint society, and largely began copying the policies of their predecessors. Understanding the reasons for this phenomenon should be part of any special research devoted to the study of the difficulties of democratic transformations in the post-Soviet space. In this context, it is important to emphasize another point: even while having exceeded expectations during the revolutionary change of power and with the active participation of the masses in the political life of those countries that adhered to the guidelines of pluralistic development, these countries

still did not end up with any truly influential populist movements. One of the reasons for this is that, as in the post-Soviet countries with authoritarian regimes, in those countries which tend toward pluralistic development, all political, economic, informational and administrative resources are concentrated in the hands of ruling elites who control the power of money and the force of the state. Meanwhile, the establishment is not interested in long political games with the different strata of the population, and they are strictly limited by the frameworks of certain political campaigns. The second reason is that even in countries with relatively active populations (by post-Soviet standards), this activity usually does not have a permanent or goal-oriented character.

After the revolutionary removal of their corrupt regimes, the masses very quickly returned home and delegated to their new rulers the right to totally decide their fates. Even the active segments of the population did not demonstrate the skills needed to utilize social instruments to control power. This is due to the fact that, during the 70-year rule of Soviet socialism, the mass strata of society were generally unable to amass any experience of solidarity arising from civil actions. That is why it was so easy for the elites to rid themselves of any dependency on those revolutionary strata of society that had facilitated their rise to power.

A separate question can be asked about the reason for populism's "success story" in Belarus. One belief holds that it became possible only thanks to the unique conditions of the first years of the changeover to market conditions. In my opinion, at the end of the 1980s, the prospects for a rise of populist movements existed in many republics of the Soviet Union. The social base for them could have consisted of those social groups which were traditional within the Soviet system, but were afraid that, as a result of democratic reforms, they would lose their social status and material well-being. However, the same groups had also lost faith in the ability of the Communist Party to keep order in the country and maintain the Soviet social regime. Generally speaking, these strata wanted to preserve the Soviet system, but they also wanted to get rid of its most annoying and archaic features: the overwhelming bureaucracy, the state's desire to regulate the private life of its citizens, and other numerous prohibitions and restrictions. They would have liked to have given Soviet socialism a new impulse for development, and bring state institutions closer to the interests of ordinary citizens. In their view, this could have been done by a new energetic leader, one "close to the people", who could control the unlawful actions of officials, and constrain them to fear authority. Theoretically, Boris Yeltsin could have taken this role in Russia if he had decided to connect his life not with the democratic movement, but

instead with the desire to preserve the old system and modernize it in accordance with the wishes of conservatively oriented groups of people who went into action along with the whole country during the Gorbachev reforms.

Belarus, always considered as one of the most successful republics socially and economically, was cautious about the course of Mikhail Gorbachev's democratic reforms and met the collapse of the USSR without enthusiasm. In Belarus, there was no strong demand for the creation of an independent national state, and, for a long time, there were illusions about the possibility of restoring a new Union State based on the former USSR[6]. In this context, the appearance of a strong and outstanding populist leader, Alexander Lukashenko, who advocated for the preservation of the state economy and chose a union with Russia, fully met the hopes of the majority of the population. However, judging by post-Soviet history so far, it would seem that the recreation of populism on the same scale seems to be impossible not only in Belarus, but also in the other countries of the former USSR. Society has become more rational, passive and no longer harbors any illusions regarding the preservation of even a "piece" of its former Soviet self.

In Georgia, some of the decisions made by president Mikhail Saakashvili, especially those connected with the development of certain territories and personnel appointments, have also been influenced by populism. On top of that, the president enjoyed a populist approach to communicating with the masses. However, this rise of incomplete and unformed populism turned out to be short-lived as well. After the "Georgian Dream" coalition came to power in Georgia in 2012, it exited the political stage.

IV. Conclusion

The rise of populism in developed Western countries has occurred in conditions of a *developmental crisis*, marking the transfer from the socio-liberal capitalism of the second half of the 20th century to another social model that will fit the reality of the new century. The power of populism at present is not in the nature of its ideas, which are reduced to simple solutions based on past experience from a time when

[6] For more information, see: Koktysh K. E. Transformatsiya politicheskikh rezhimov v Respublike Belarus', 1990–1991 [The Transformation of the Political Regimes in the Republic of Belarus, 1990–1991]. Moscow: Moskovskiy obschestvenniy nauchniy fond [Moscow Public Scientific Fund], 2000. P. 80, 82. (Nauchniye doklady 108 [Scientific Reports 108]).

these ideas were an effective tool for transforming reality, but due mostly to the lack of serious future-centric projects in the political market.

On the territory of the former Soviet Union, where a different type of crisis exists, namely stagnation and decay in the region's various countries, conditions for the development of populism do not exist. Here, elites are autonomous from society and do not require massive political mobilization, and the social strata are passive, at best demonstrating only an occasional high level of political participation.

Andrey Medushevskiy

POPULISM IN THE WEST AND IN RUSSIA: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE OF SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

Populism has developed as a contemporary social phenomenon both in the West and in Russia. The comparison of both Western and Russian forms of populism has significance, as it allows for the clarification of the general and specific traits of populism, including its ideological and political peculiarities, and for the study of potentially effective counteractive measures against it.

I. What Is Populism and What Are the General Conditions for Its Development?

The author's study is based on the premise that populism is not an ideology, but a system of socio-psychological attitudes that assume a specific reaction by society and its elites to rapid and worrisome social changes, how this reaction develops psychologically, and how to overcome it (method, style, and technology)[1]. It is a form of negative (protest) social mobilization resulting from a crisis of exaggerated public expectations at a time when conventional social identity is eroding. The social preconditions for the growth of populist sentiments are associated with the general processes of globalization, informatization and the conflict of cultural stereotypes.

Based on this understanding, *the main elements of the populist phenomenon* should include:

1) the identity crisis in society, or a significant part of it: the situation where cognitive dissonance indicates that society has lost its convention-

[1] All participants in this project were in agreement with this thesis. It is presented in the articles of L. Gudkov, B. Makarenko, N. Petrov et al., despite the differences in their interpretation of the content of the populist phenomenon in Europe and Russia, and the possibility of giving it a specific definition.

al reference points for social behavior and is deeply frustrated with the current order of things;

2) the ideological amorphism of populism which can integrate the positions of differing traditional ideologies, from the left and right, into its agenda, and which creates hybrid ideological constructions and alters their content on a semantic level quite freely (populism does not have "ideologists" in the traditional sense – protest leaders take on this role);

3) the appearance of some myth (i. e. the appearance of a quasi-ideological construction or set of beliefs that are accepted on faith instead of being proven scientifically) that is able to accumulate the energy of social protest versus the establishment (alternative communication methods are of principled importance for its dissemination);

4) the spontaneity of the massive populist phenomenon and the limited ability of traditional elites to fight against it using the rules of the existing system;

5) the escalation of social expectations based on the immediate implementation of populist slogans ("exaggerated", that is, generally unfulfillable, expectations);

6) generally expressed signs of negative social mobilization based on populist slogans (protest voting, acts of civil disobedience, ostracism or, on the contrary, the social support of populist leaders vs. those from "the system");

7) the generally destructive tendency of the populist movement – to destroy the dominant values and principles of the legal system (or its elements), and, as a rule, to be prepared to use illegal and even anti-legal means in the process ("the pressure of the masses on institutions");

8) the egalitarian (i. e. anti-elite) tendencies of the movement (including the fact that acting elites, or certain groups therein, can use them in their own interests);

9) a lack of responsibility, in a social or historical context, for its own actions, including an inability to view its consequences in a mid-, and especially long-term, perspective (an exceedingly short-lived projected time horizon);

10) populism and the political regimes based on it are generally fragile creations: when populists come into power, it implies that all or part of their utopian program will be put aside as their charisma becomes normalized, i. e. when the myth meets political reality.

II. A Right Turn: Conservative Values in the Service of Modern Western Populism

The turn to the right is a visible trend in the modern political development in both the West and Russia[2]. The nature of populism reveals how its various expressions are connected, both with general societal tendencies and with the situational specifics of different regions: it is based on the assumption that the will of the people is always right, and that those who understand the "true" will of the people will win. Several rightist populist parties and their leaders have rapidly risen on this wave: Eurosceptics in Great Britain and the Netherlands, the National Front in France, Alternative for Germany in Germany, the Five Star Movement and the League of the North in Italy, for example. A special situation exists in Eastern European countries, where conservative impulses have appeared because of difficulties within the EU, while the typical sentiments of the post-Soviet electorate have accumulated as well. It is noteworthy that this is occurring in countries where, during the period of decommunization, civil society possessed a high level of self-organization, having survived "velvet" revolutions and the "counter-revolutions" that followed (Fidesz in Hungary, and the Law and Justice (PiS) in Poland – whose coming to power signaled radical constitutional counter-reforms). The Baltic countries and Ukraine witnessed a similar trend with the growth of ethno-nationalism and rightist radicalism. In these cases, they compared "natives" to "non-natives," "citizens" to "non-citizens", the official language to the non-official one, and all as attempts to present nationalism as a policy of "cultural identity" in parallel with the rewriting of history and the indoctrination of so-called "historical memory" and an "image of the enemy".

In direct contrast, in Southern (Mediterranean) Europe, populism possesses a "leftist" (and more "ideological") taint. However, in essence, it exploits infantilism and the irresponsibility of the masses (SYRIZA in Greece, Podemos in Spain and others). We can discuss a number of differences between leftist and rightist populism: left-populist trends have a clearer ideological orientation, and can be considered as an example of a fairly successful anti-system movement that opposes globalization, capitalism, financial oligarchy and, in general, the neoliberal mainstream, and which utilizes the experience of respective movements in Latin America in its strategy. Notwithstanding criticism of integration with Europe and

[2] Liberal'niye tsennosti i konservativniy trend v evropeyskoy politike i obshchestve [Liberal Values and the Conservative Trend in European Politics and Society]. Moscow, 2015.

of decisions made in the EU (by Brussels), they, however, do not call for eliminating the EU or for their own countries' exits from the EU. Their protest is more of a way to pressure institutions with the aim of restructuring them to take a different ideological approach, and with the goal of receiving economic autonomy. With all their seemingly external differences, all European populists employ similar methods: demands to restore "sovereignty" (lost as a result of absorption by globalist structures and certain countries, the U.S.A. and Germany specifically), "respect for the country and its people", criticism of the existing elites, who supposedly surrendered the country to "transnational capital", and the exploitation of the population's genuine feeling that the national elites do not protect the "people" as they face new challenges.

In Russia, the populist trend has turned out to be even more visible, defining the appearance of a heretofore-unprecedented "symphony of power, elite groups, and the population in a new 'neo-conservative consensus' based on the long-term interests of those already in power, the support of elite and bureaucratic groups, the effective use of mobilization propaganda, protectionist actions for the middle-classes, and also on predominant mass sentiments"[3].

The methodology for conflict resolution offered by these populists is a nationalistic mobilization against "Euro-mobilization" and its associated limitations, responsibilities and costs, as well against real challenges – identity blurring (cultural, national, religious); "a deficit of democracy" which is quite natural in a more centralized system; the migration crisis (cultural incompatibility, the need to pay for migrants, loss of available jobs, criminality, and the impression that the opinion of smaller nationalities is ignored).

III. Undefeated Soviet Legitimacy and the Specifics of Contemporary Russian Populism

At the heart of the development of populist projects in post-Soviet Russia lies the unrestricted legacy of Soviet legitimacy. First, it is said that the basic values of Russian culture have essentially remained unchanged. In post-Soviet society, the conflict between the law and justice is solved from the position of an egalitarian interpretation of social fairness, which rejects the ideas of liberal democracy, a State ruled by laws, and individual freedom as a priority. Second, there persists an overrid-

[3] Mel'vil' A. Yu. Konservativniy consensus v Rossii? Osnovniye komponenty, factory ustoichivosti, potentsial erozii [Conservative Consensus in Russia? Main Components, Stability Factors, Erosion Potential] // Politiya [Polity]. 2017. P. 29–45.

ing influence of Soviet legal stereotypes on the interpretation of the principles of freedom, justice and equality, as well as of social and political rights. Third, the problem of succession has yet to be completely resolved: after becoming the successor to the USSR, Russia took on the burden of post-Soviet reorganization (unlike Western countries that moved on from their respective colonial heritages). In these conditions, there is a risk that the democratic civil consolidation of society will be substituted with a new imperial identity and a subsequent development of associated politics based on that power. Fourth, it has been acknowledged that the issue of the artificialness of the Soviet model of federalism (built based on national-territorial lines) was not solved in its post-Soviet construction. Inability to solve this problem establishes an identity problem (the idea of building a new civil nation), limits the scale of democratic changes, and encourages a move toward authoritarianism. Fifth, it has been proven that, in the sphere of economic regulation, there exists a gap between the legal (written) constitution and the actual constitution (considering law enforcement practices and the condition of the economic system). Sixth, it should be emphasized that the transformation of the Soviet judicial system is still incomplete, and it is still based on the principle of rigid centralism, which, in the end, assures the system's manageability. Seventh, it should be noted that there are dangerous signs that the Russian system's own division of powers is moving in the direction of being transformed into a personality-driven regime[4].

It is worth mentioning the fundamentally different results of the post-communist transition periods in Russia and in most Eastern European countries, where in the latter, the principles of a law-based state became the basis for building a modern political system[5]. The incompleteness of the modernization of Russian society is a stated fact: its objective is still to "modernize the country through reforms based on the universal values of humanism, rights and the dignity of the human being, trust, collaboration and the solidarity of the people", and disputes exist over the concept of reforms, their priorities, and the information agenda[6]. In general, a low level of trust in political institutions is notable, as is the general cultural continuity of, and personnel who constitute the modern Russian elite is

[4] Konstitutsionniye printsipy i puti ikh realizatsii: rossiyskiy kontekst. Analiticheskiy doklad [Constitutional Principles and Paths to Their Realization / Achievement: Russian Context. Analytical Report]. Moscow, 2014.

[5] See materials on international discussion: Put' v Evropu [The Road to Europe]. Moscow, 2008.

[6] Predlozheniya III Obshcherossiyskogo grazhdanskogo foruma 21–22 noyabrya 2015 g. [Proposals of the 3rd All-Russian Civil Forum, November 21–22, 2015]. Moscow, 2015. P. 1.

related to its Soviet counterpart. The conclusion can be made that "the Soviet love for imitation possesses a strong inertia which continues to hold back the establishment of a law-based state in Russia"[7].

This largely determines the specifics of the style of Russian populism – its general restoration impulse, the parameters of its conservative-romantic philosophy, and its opinion about cultural, social and political changes[8]. Key elements of this program are critics of Western liberal democracy, the justification of Russia's own "special path", and the rejection of the "imposed" Constitution of 1993. Based on these beliefs, the idea of Restoration (return to the institutions of "Soviet parliamentarism") has been born. "Soviet parliamentarism" is a quasi-democratic system that hides the one-party dictatorship. Alternatively, Restoration can mean the return to the pre-Soviet power model that appeals to the principle of unity or, in its extreme form, the recreation of the imperial power model. This trend includes a negative attitude to the program of liberal constitutional changes[9]. It defines the dynamics and specifics of the interaction between different flows of populism and political power in the post-Soviet period.

Russian populism is very skilled at using the "Soviet myth" in order to reach its goals. This is proven by: a) attempts to revitalize it on the state level; b) the fact that populists of all ideological flows use it (including, by the way, the almost-liberals); c) the connection of this myth with a view of the future (projects focused on social changes and, first of all, on political reforms).

IV. The Principal Traits and Specifics of the Russian Version of Populism in Comparative Perspective

We can summarize the differences between Russian and the Western populisms.

1. Populisms in Europe and in Russia differ in the goals that they wish to achieve, and in the challenges faced by their societies. For Western Europe, it is a crisis of national identity in the context of globalization (primarily, addressing the issue of migration from African countries). For Russia, it is solving the problems of post-Soviet reorganization: building relations with the countries of the post-Soviet region, who themselves are

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[7] Akhiezer A., Klyamkin I., Yakovenko I. Istoriya Rossii: konets ili novoye nachalo? [History of Russia: The End or a New Beginning?]. Moscow, 2013. P. 428.

[8] Medushevsky A. Conservative Political Romanticism in Post-Soviet Russia // Power and Legitimacy – Challenges from Russia. London; New York, 2012. P. 169–187.

[9] Medushevskii A. Problems of Modernizing the Constitutional Order: Is It Necessary to Revise Russia's Basic Law? // Russian Politics and Law. 2014. Vol. 52. No. 2. P. 44–59.

in a torturous search for national identity (and who often see the automatic opposition of themselves vs. Russia as a solution, thus provoking a naive rewriting of history).

2. A key object of criticism in the West is European integration, and the solution populists consider valid is their countries' exit from the EU. In Russia, it is the criticism of destructive tendencies which caused the collapse of the USSR (and earlier – the Russian Empire), and nostalgia for what was once a strong and united country. The solution is the integration of post-Soviet countries into a space of Russian influence (The Eurasian Union project and the "Russian World" concept act as a means to this end). In this way, the key slogan of Western populists is "More Decentralization", while Russia's populists promote "More Unification and Centralization".

3. Western populism is based on an ideological postmodernist conglomeration, specifically, uniting the ideas of conservative nationalism with the ideas of anti-globalism and the anarchist protests against capitalism, Atlanticism, transnational monopolies and the depersonalization of the individual by European bureaucracy. Although Russian populism pays homage to these ideas (mainly in order to be able to criticize the one-polar world and American domination), its ideological base is much more traditional. It is based on the conservative-romantic ideas of European populism of the 1920s and 1930s (associated with discussions about Weimar Germany), clericalism ("the spiritual revival of the nation"), the respective stereotypes of Russian post-Revolutionary emigrants (Eurasianism), and the general ideology of identity and a special path (emotionally colored by a one-sided definition of "patriotism") but typical, however, for many developing countries in different parts of the world.

4. The difference between the Western and the Russian versions of populism is a result of the differences in the political regimes. Western populist movements that are forced to act in an environment of representative democracy use its mechanism of actions – they appeal to the masses aiming at getting their votes during elections. Russian populists that operate in an environment of more traditional society and a system of limited pluralism associate their rise to power with the politics of the state and with the figure of its leader – the President, the guarantor of the Constitution who defines the overall direction of the internal and external policy of the country. A typical trait of Russian populism in a European comparative perspective is its close connection with the institutions of the imitation democracy. Unlike functioning Western democracies, Russian populism is not represented by independent parties; they are all integrated into one vertical of power (if their popularity increases,

they start to be viewed as destabilizing and go through a process of "voluntarily dissolution"). It can be said that the "people's" populist ideas are in fact delegated at the initiative of those in power.

5. That is why, in Russia, populist impulses that come from the bottom (from society) feed the populism of those in power, and provide them with room to maneuver (with a choice between more or less rigid versions). However, at the same time, they are limited by it so as to avoid losing control of the situation (the suppression of extreme rightist and leftist movements of an extremist nature that question preserving stability, such as with regard to inter-faith and inter-ethnic consensus, social stability and that of those who would use these positions to argue for the legitimacy of the existing regime). Positioning itself as "centrist", the political regime evolves to the right, substituting constitutional legitimacy with populist, and gradually includes in its official rhetoric the arguments of its conservative-populist opponents.

6. This is the reason the input of these two types of populism, Western and Russian, differ in terms of how they enter into the ideology of a country and into the dynamics of its political development. Populism is more dangerous in democratic political regimes, where the masses influence the decision-making process directly through elections, and it is less expressed in regimes with limited pluralism, where the authorities are able to neutralize and correct extreme displays of populism.

7. If, in democracies, the life of populism is limited (at least in terms of remaining in a static form) by one or several electoral cycles, in regimes of limited pluralism, it is more stable because the responsibility to the voters is blurred between the parties and the regime (within the public movements and organizations that are controlled by the state). It is notable that Narodniy Front (The People's Front) was created as an alternative to traditional parties, including the ruling Edinaya Rossiya (United Russia) party.

8. The functions of Western and Russian populisms are different – the former is a form of accumulated protest against imperfect institutions in order to enter into power, and the latter mobilizes support to acting regime, and is an instrument of its legitimation. Schematically, in the West, populism is an instrument used to come to power (a change of elites), and, in Russia, it is an instrument used for preservation (retention of power by the current elite). In this context, populist regimes in Eastern Europe act as a type of transitional option, because the respective parties have already come into power by democratic means, but aim to strengthen their dominance in society, including by placing limitations on existing democratic procedures.

9. The attitudes of respective political elites toward this phenomenon are also different: it is perceived as a real threat to their hegemony (in Western democracies), while, in Russia, it is viewed as an instrument that generally serves to strengthen the regime.

10. If, in the West, populism is a side effect of democracy (faced with the difficulties of globalization), in Russia, it is a bastion for the defense of traditional authoritarianism, and a full-scale basis for the ideology of the restoration of the political regime.

V. The Prospects for Overcoming Populism

It is obvious that, to overcome populism, it is important to define what anti-populism is. It can be defined as "responsible politics". It is politics that is based not on emotions but on knowledge, not on changing collective sentiment, but on professional scientific forecasting; it is policies that protect not only the short-term, but the long-term interests of society as well. Using this logic, the following suggestions are worth considering.

1. To rethink the impression that it is possible to defeat populism using its own methods. The vicious circle of populism in this interpretation is like an inescapable "loop": in order to maintain their positions, modern democracies have to use populism (to win the masses), but, by using it, they then become hostages to their own (unfulfillable) promises. The refusal to fulfill these promises then causes louder protests which take on increasingly radicalized forms. At the same time, the traditional elites have to incorporate representatives of the counter-elites within their structures, leading to what amounts to a marginalization process. This process does not necessarily end with the complete victory of populism; it may end with a partial victory (which implies the erosion of political institutions), offering variations on proffered solutions and a functional diversity of populist initiatives. In any case, degradation of the "political class" and of the leadership is the result.

2. Western democracies face the need to turn their "faces into the wind", i. e. to stop ignoring the real problems which divide society (from information alienation and loss of identity to migration problems and the political participation of marginalized social strata). The solution is not to keep these problems hidden, or attempt to overcome them verbally, but to readjust the liberal paradigm so that it takes these new challenges into account.

3. It would be a promising development to justify proposals which oppose populism, along the lines of "intelligent democracy": a system of barriers and filters that allow for the avoidance of populism, and which guarantees that responsible politicians will come to power, i. e. parties

and leaders who take responsibility for their promises to voters by means of their reputations and political authority.

4. The cognitive reorganization of the liberal-democratic paradigm assumes a departure from the dramatic opposition of ideological clichés that appeared during the Cold War period, and before that – during the Empire period. Instead, it means movement to a professional, pragmatic and rather precise construction of concepts that, on the one hand, are easily understood by the masses, and on the other hand, are able to oppose any impulses leading to reactionary restoration. This means giving convincing answers to tough questions (identity, migration, financial dependency, borders, visa regimes, etc.) that are able to protect the liberal tendency in the competition among parties.

5. A meaningful dialogue between those in power and society on critical problems is important: holding opinion polls (consultative local referendums?) with clearly stated analytical goals before these goals go before a final vote (parliamentary or presidential elections). Such an approach allows for the improvement of the electorate's awareness, and shows the real costs of decisions and their possible consequences before the final verdict. In addition, on the other hand, it demonstrates the mistakes of certain types of populism that have come into power in some countries or regions (as a rule, a victory for populists usually reveals their overall unprofessionalism and short-term planning windows, which become so, for the most part, due to the mechanical nature of their reactions to critical current challenges).

6. It is critical to review the thesis about the uniqueness of Russia's development. It is a traditional, ideologized formula about the fatal historical choice Russia faces in choosing between West and East, that is then narrowed down to schemes of some sort of unchanging "civilization matrix" rut, a special "Russian system" that supposedly is defined by its inability to avoid going back to authoritarian tendencies. From this point of view, it makes sense to critically review Soviet legitimacy as a whole in the context of its influence on public consciousness and institutions. In reality, today we are talking about the definition of Russia's place in the globalization space, the information space, and about integration processes implying not the rejection of, per se, but the pragmatic use of the cultural and technological achievements of other countries. These are then directed at strategies and technologies of change that are able to transform the political and legal system of Russia toward sustainable democratic development.

7. The practical steps and the direction Russia should take can be supported by the following measures: 1) clearly stated goals for reforms (and their cost) which apply to the predominant reform project offered by the

elite: it is critical to develop its platform with professional-level expertise (which is possible, even in a closed regime, usually in order to avoid populism), however, with a subsequent public-wide discussion of the final product in order to make society understand it and buy-in; 2) signing an agreement (contract) on the inviolability of compliance with its underlying principles in the long run (with a potential formal or informal fixation of the terms of this contract between the parties and societal groups); 3) putting policies and procedures of public control and mediation in place for the process of conflict-solving (which will inevitably occur due to varying societal interests and the need of the actors in the political process to "achieve consensus"); 4) the creation of institutions that will be autonomous from state power, and which will monitor the realization of the predominant reform project (expert assessments of the effectiveness of reforms during their realization process should be aimed at highlighting problem situations, and not be used to legitimatize those in power); 5) a provision for the succession of the elite who initiated these reforms, i.e. the creation of clear channels for its basis, and a shift towards meritocracy and predictability in the procedures for changes in leadership.

8. Overcoming the cognitive reduction that has often led to the substitution of fundamental transformational goals with declarations or the means for their implementation presupposes the creation of a mechanism for innovative reforms. The principal element of this mechanism would be the automatic programming of the elite to commit to the consistent and long-term implementation of the main objectives of the predominant project of democratic reforms. It would pave the way for neutralizing populism and for conducting politics responsibly.

Karsten Grabow

RIGHT-WING AND NATIONAL POPULISM IN WESTERN EUROPE

I. Introduction

Right-wing and national populist peak candidates in Austria, France, and the Netherlands have achieved spectacular results in recent elections, despite the disappointment of falling short on their hopes of being elected into the highest state and government offices. The impressive results reflect two candidates reaching the runoff with 46.2 in Austria and 34 percent in France, respectively, or increasing their opposition against the previous parliamentary elections, like Geert Wilders' Freedom Party in the Netherlands. This was also achieved by the Danish People's Party, the Swedish Democrats, and the United Kingdom Independence Party. In spite of slight losses, The Finns (Perus) are a relevant political force in their country and as a junior partner even part of the government coalition. Finally, in Switzerland, the People's Party has been the most successful party in the country for years and is represented in the federal government by two of its members (see Table 1).

Table 1. Election results of right and national populist parties in Western Europe

Country	Party	Last National Election Results (by percent)		Position in Government System
		Parliamentary Elections*	Presidential Elections*	
AT	FPÖ	20.5 (+3)	46.2 (+31)	O
BE	VB	3.7 (–4.1)	–	O
CH	SVP	29.4 (+2.8)	–	MG
DE	AfD	4.7 (+4.7)	3.4 (+3.4)	NPO
DK	DF	21.1 (+8.8)	–	O
F	FN	13.6 (+9.3)	34 (+16.2)	O
FI	"Perus"	17.6 (–1.4)	9.4 (+6.0)	J
IT	LN	4.1 (–4.2)	Not registered	O

Country	Party	Last National Election Results (by percent)		Position in Government System
		Parliamentary Elections*	Presidential Elections*	
NL	PVV	13 (+2.9)	–	O
NO	FRP	16.3 (–6.6)	–	J
SE	SD	12.9 (+7.2)	–	O
UK	UKIP	12.6 (+9.5)	–	O

Legend: O: Opposition; MG: Member of the Government; NPO: Non-Parliamentary Opposition; J: Junior partner of a coalition government.

Notes: * In parenthesis, change from previous election.

Last Update: May 9, 2017.

Sources: Own compilation based on: Nordsieck W. Parties and Elections in Europe. URL: http://www.parties-and-elections.eu/ (09.05.2017); Bundespräsidentenwahl 2017. Die Ergebnisse im Detail // Der Spiegel. 2017. 12. Februar. URL: http://www.spiegel.de/politik/deutschland/bundespraesidentenwahl-2017-die-ergebnisse-im-detail-a-1133869.html (20.04.2017); Wahl in Frankreich // Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. 2017. 9. Mai. URL: http://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/wahl-in-frankreich/grafischer-ueberblick-wahl-in-frankreich-14981268.html (09.05.2017).

Populists do not even have to win – they can indirectly influence politics in their countries and in the EU. Whether the subject at hand is refugee and asylum policy, the safeguarding of national borders and EU external borders, internal European financial policy, or the relationship of the member states to the EU, several governments have changed their positions on these topics under pressure from the right-wing and national populists[1].

Before I discuss ways to oppose populism, I would like to offer a definition which looks at similarities and differences between left and right-wing populism as well as a delimitation against political extremism. I illustrate the characteristic features of the right-wing and national populist parties by using four examples of the most successful parties in this "family" which operate in countries that are (still) members of the EU: the Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs (FPÖ), the Front National (FN), the Dutch Partij voor de Vrijheid (PVV) and the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP).

[1] Cf.: Grabow K., Lange N. u. a. Spiel über Bande. Wie populistische EU-Gegner nationale Politik beeinflussen. Berlin: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2015. (Analysen und Argumente 168/2015).

II. Populists and Populism: Definitions[2]

Populism is a "dazzling concept"[3], which has been used for many years in science, journalism, and politics. Frequently, the necessary delimitation to extremism is not made with due diligence; the use of the adjectives "left" and "right" appears arbitrary, which, however, is primarily due to the positions of the populists themselves. Occasionally, there is even talk of "anti-populism" or "positive populism". This is misleading.

What we can state for sure, first, is that populism is a term used by others. Hardly anyone who is called a "populist" in politics, the media, or science would refer to himself as such. The term is pejorative, among other things, because populists often borrow racial or "ethnic-nationalist" propaganda. Another reason for the negative connotation of the word lies in its premature use in political debates. If a claim is made that does not suit the opponent, it is quickly labeled as populist.

Political science has set up a series of indicators on the basis of which populism can be clearly identified as such, can be classified by common categories such as left-wing or right-wing populism, and can be delineated against political extremism[4]. This not only creates order, but also shows the democracy-endangering potential of populism. This is probably the most important reason why no one would call themselves a populist. However, as desirable it may appear that politics is made in the name of the people, in representation of their interests, or rooted in public sentiment, the way in which populists approach, mobilize, occupy subjects, and attract attention, and offer "solutions" does not meet either basic democratic requirements or fits the degree of difficulty posed by the presented problems.

Together, both variants of populism, the left and the right, are staged with anti-elitist emotions as an advocate of the "common man" who is supposedly neglected by the established political forces. Cas Mudde described this type of policy as "bar room politics" or as a communication style that addresses people's "gut feelings"[5].

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[2] Parts of this section are based on: Grabow K. Das Volk, des Volkes, dem Volk. Merkmale und Trends zum Begriff des Populismus // Die Politische Meinung. 2016. Jg. 61. Nr. 539. S. 23–27.

[3] Pfahl-Traughber A. Populismus – was ist das überhaupt? Definition über eine inhaltliche und stilistische Dimension. URL: https://hpd.de/artikel/populismus-ueberhaupt-14116 (19.04.2017).

[4] Betz H.-G. Exclusionary Populism in Austria, Italy and Switzerland // International Journal. 2001. Vol. 53. No. 3. P. 393–420.

[5] Mudde C. The Populist Zeitgeist // Government and Opposition. 2004. Vol. 39. No. 4. P. 542.

Left-wing populists like La France insoumise or the Spanish Podemos movement are scandalizing "social inequality", either poverty or wealth, and a policy that aims at balanced public finances. They accuse either the European Union or national governments of being an extended arm of the international capital and lament the Brussels (or Berlin) "austerity mandate". "Austerity policy" and "neo-liberalism" are the battle cries of left-populists who demand a radical redistribution of property and assets, the unconditional supply of as many people as possible through state services, public control of key areas of the economy, and comprehensive co-determination to resolve the grievances they claim. Karin Priester called this kind of populism "inclusive", because by means of extensive welfare state services, it strives to allow as many people as possible to participate in a social life and wealth, regardless of their origin and position of employment and without demanding service in return[6].

Right-wing populists, on the other hand, are "exclusive". They stage themselves as advocates for the common man but only for the locals. Right-wing populists dream of a culturally, religiously, nationally, and socially homogenous "heartland" of upright citizens[7], which they depict as "externally" threatened and betrayed "from above". The image of a stereotypical enemy, or enemy-figure, offered by right-wing populists comes in two forms. In one form, it is portrayed as the national and European elite while in its alternate form, is the foreigners, refugees, or asylum seekers, mainly from Islamic countries. In this view, they would culturally "overrun" the heartland and challenge the local acquis while the political and cultural elites would passively watch this threat due to the misunderstood consideration of the public opinion, and therefore betray "the people".

This exclusive reference of right-wing populists to their own people contains two democracy-endangering components. On the one hand, the right-wing populists claim that only they alone would be the legitimate advocate of the local people. Other views and opinions are not accepted by them, not even in their own parties. Thus, they violate one of the fundamental democratic principles, mainly the freedom of opinion. Whoever is of a different opinion is not simply regarded as being of a dissenting opinion or is considered as a "normal" political opponent. As populists claim that they alone will speak in the name of the people, they believe everyone who disagrees with them becomes the opponent of the people

[6] Priester K. Wesensmerkmale des Populismus // Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte. 2012. Nr. 5–6. S. 3–9.

[7] See: Taggart P. Populism. Buckingham; Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2000. P. 95.

or the "betrayer of the people"[8]. Their language and underlying thinking shows strong anti-democratic tendencies.

At the same time, right-wing populists refer exclusively to their own nation, whose political, cultural, and religious sovereignty is allegedly threatened or already entirely lost and which they want to restore. Calls for "France first", "Austria for us Austrians", and "Protect our borders" were in the vocabulary of right-wing populists well before Donald Trump's "America first". Because of this national or nationalist point of view, which is always associated with vilification against other peoples, nations, or the European Union, European right-wing populists have also been rightly called "right-wing and national populists"[9]. However, in some countries they are more likely to fall into a right-wing, racist, ethnic-nationalist camp (Austria, Netherlands, Sweden), in others a more nationalist camp (Great Britain, Finland, Poland) or they switch between both (as in the case of France and Germany).

The interplay of nationalism and ethnic exclusivity shows the democracy-threatening potential of Europe's right-wing populists. Nevertheless, it is wrong to call them "extremists". Extremism is defined as a struggle, not least forcible, for an anti-democratic society in which all democratic fundamental rights, principles, and institutions are abolished. Under extremism, an authoritarian or totalitarian one-party system or a nonpartisan leadership system should be established which is based on a fundamentalist view of religion, an ethnical-racial ideology, or an infallible, supposedly scientifically supported worldview. Therefore, fundamental Islamist movements and networks like Al-Qaeda and neo-fascist parties like the Hungarian Jobbik party and finally the world's last relevant communist parties such as the Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela and the North Korean Labour Party can be called "extremist", but not the ones we are talking about here.

Although Marine Le Pen overemphasizes the French language, culture, and nationality, although she discredits the European Union as an occupying power, promises the people simple solutions that would lead to rapid improvement ("get out of the euro", "dissolution of the EU", "France first") and immediately identifies the EU, Germany, and global capitalism as guilty for all possible deplorable state of affairs on the one end and Muslim immigrants on the other, she is not "extreme" in the de-

[8] Müller J.-W. Was heißt: Populismus an der Macht? // Osteuropa. 2016. Jg. 66. H. 1–2. S. 5–17.

[9] Grabow K., Hartleb F. Mapping Present-day Right-wing Populists // Exposing the Demagogues. Right-wing and National Populist Parties in Europe / ed. K. Grabow, F. Hartleb. Brussels: Centre for European Studies, 2013. P. 19.

scribed sense. Marine Le Pen and her National Front are virtually the prototypes of a right-wing and nationalist-populist party.

This also applies to the Dutch PVV and the FPÖ. Both fight the EU with harsh slogans, calling it an "undemocratic monster"[10] or "Brussels nomenclature", which "wants to whip a centralized unified Europe over the heads of the people"[11]. Both demand the withdrawal of their countries from the Union or at least from the Eurozone and both see the EU as a gateway for uncontrolled immigration and demand immediate immigration stops and border closures. Geert Wilders and the FPÖ both want a strict re-nationalization of the economy, social policy, and other social sectors and, like Marine Le Pen, the preference of the local population for the use of public services ("Austria and the Netherlands first"[12]). The adjective "right" properly describes both, however, through their blatant vilification of Islam and Muslims, which they brand as a danger to the public order and prosperity of the locals. "Patriotism instead of Moroccan thieves" was a well-known motto of the FPÖ. Geert Wilders, who repeatedly called Islam as an ideology which was "more dangerous than National Socialism"[13], denigrated Moroccans in place of Muslims living in the Netherlands as "scum"[14].

The UKIP, on the other hand, has also worked with constructed enemy-figures by inciting fears in the English population. These include an excess of immigration, loss of prosperity or the loss of British sovereignty, and the UKIP raised almost every imaginable resentment against the EU (too expensive, too determining, too ineffective, etc.). The party has staged itself as an advocate of the "common man" and sketched a picture of Britain's strength that only limited had to do with reality[15]. What

[10] Geert Wilders 2013, quoted after: Grabow K., Hartleb F. Europa? Nein Danke. Studie zum Aufstieg rechts- und nationalpopulistischer Parteien in Europa. Berlin; Sankt Augustin: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, 2013. S. 7.

[11] Quoted after: Vilimsky: EU will noch mehr Macht zentralisieren. URL: http://www.fpoe.eu/vilimsky-eu-will-noch-mehr-macht-zentralisieren/ (03.05.2017).

[12] Cf.: Österreich zuerst. Parteiprogramm der Freiheitlichen Partei Österreichs (FPÖ). Beschlossen vom Bundesparteitag der Freiheitlichen Partei Österreichs am 18. Juni 2011 in Graz; Steppat T. Niederlande-Wahlen: Wilders dreht wieder auf. URL: http://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/ausland/niederlande-wahlen-wilders-dreht-wieder-auf-14915014.html (25.04.2017).

[13] Geert Wilders bezeichnet Marokkaner als «Abschaum» // Die Welt. 2017. 18. Februar. URL: https://www.welt.de/politik/ausland/article162193921/Geert-Wilders-bezeichnet-Marokkaner-als-Abschaum.html (24.04.2017).

[14] Ibid.

[15] Banducci S., Stevens D. Myth versus Fact: Are We Living in a Post-Factual Democracy? // EU Referendum Analysis 2016: Media, Voters and the Campaign / ed. D. Jackson, E. Thorsen, D. Wring. Poole: Bournemouth University: The Centre for the Study of Journalism, Culture and Community, 2016. P. 22.

is more, it has offered a very simple solution for a complicated problem ("out") but it did not use any ethnic-racial propaganda which would generally offend members of other ethnic groups or religions. To this extent, UKIP is a nationalist, but not a right-wing populist party.

In sum, it can be said that populism is a political movement that claims it alone would understand and represent the interests of the people. It is also a mobilization strategy that addresses latent problems or simply invents problems for its purpose which cause or amplify people's anxiety or discomfort regarding certain social developments. Populists stage themselves as advocates of the righteous common man forgotten by the established politics. They stimulate and mobilize on the basis of feelings, offering both easy-to-understand enemy-figures as well as offering simple solutions to given or alleged problems. Populists act like entrepreneurs, with the difference being that they do not deal with goods or services but with dissatisfaction, worries, and fears that spread in society in the face of civil wars in the periphery of Europe, surges of refugees and their causes, or Islamic terror.

Populists are neither willing nor able to solve these problems. A strategy paper from the Alternative for Germany (AfD) from the beginning of 2017 made it clear what populists are going for, namely breaking taboos, attention, and "effects by provocation"[16]. It is possible to conclude that they are problem-seekers, not problem-solvers and, as political entrepreneurs, traders of future fears.

III. Are There Effective Counter-Strategies?

In the last few years, the democratic forces in Western European countries have repeatedly attempted to push back right-wing and national populists. Most of them were ineffective, as they were only able to hold right-wing and national populist parties at bay for a short time, if at all[17].

After the experiences of 2016 in Austria, in spring 2017 in the Netherlands, and recently in France, a combination of three reaction strategies has proved to be effective. Although it was not possible to prevent an increase in voters for right-wing and national populists everywhere, it was strong enough to deny them access to the highest state

[16] Leif T., Gensing P. Provokation statt Problemlösung. URL: https://www.tagesschau.de/inland/afd-strategiepapier-101.html (20.04.2017).

[17] For details, see: Grabow K. Was tun gegen Rechtspopulisten? Europäische Erfahrungen. Berlin: Konrad-Adebauer-Stiftung, 2016. (Analysen und Argumente 203/2016).

and governmental offices. On the one hand, this combination consists of the attitude of the democratic forces towards their own values and positions, including the uncomfortable and complicated, in a world marked by international interdependencies, crises, and uncertainty. The victorious candidates Alexander van der Bellen in Austria, Mark Rutte in the Netherlands, and Emmanuel Macron in France voiced their commitment to the European Union and they abstained to gain support at the expense of minorities. On the other hand, there was a concrete policy offer which convinced the majority of citizens that the destiny of the country is better placed in the hands of the democrats than with populists. To this comes political management that solves real problems. Conviction includes also worldliness and optimism, what stands in sharp contrast to the gloomy future and threat-scenarios which the right-wing and national populists so gladly evoke. Yet this is not shared by the majority of the Western European population.

IV. Outlook

It seems that Western Europe's right-wing and national populists have crossed their zenith. The majority of Western Europeans do not want to see them have governmental responsibility. Geert Wilders has been at fault since the disappointing parliamentary election of March 15, 2017, which left him stained with the image that when it comes down to the wire, he is unable to win. Then again, the UKIP has achieved its "historic mission" with their win of the Brexit referendum. The party staggered since June 2016 without a winning theme in British politics and it seems uncertain if it will recover.

Marine Le Pen is also finally afflicted with the stigma of being a loser. Her performance in the last presidential election was indeed remarkable, but she did not reach the highest state office for the second time in a row. It is not certain if she will try again in 2022. In the case that she retreats and does not run again, the National Front has a well-developed and professionally working party organization, motivated members and supporters, as well as experienced young talents. With these factors, it cannot be ruled out that the party will become even stronger over the next few years.

This also goes for the FPÖ. It has ambitious head candidates and a powerful party organization. Still, the continuing refugee movements towards Europe, the numerous content and strategic weaknesses of the EU, and the last but not least tired political opponents provide the FPÖ with a series of mobilizing topics. So far, the Austrians have been able to brace a majority against the FPÖ. However, that will not necessarily stay that

way. Here too the established democratic parties and institutions that the FPÖ despises must deliver what the Austrians expect: safety, job opportunities, increasing or at least continuing prosperity, and prospects for the further development of the republic and, to a someone weaker degree, but by no means unimportant, the European Union.

For all democratic and EU-advocating forces, not only in Western Europe, there remains a lot to be done if they want to prevent the further rise or re-emergence of the right-wing and nationalist parties and help the European Union to gain new standing and improved effectiveness.

Alexis Berelowitch

THREE POPULISTS – PUTIN, BERLUSCONI, SARKOZY

I. Introductory Notes

It was noted by Pierre-André Taguieff in his article about populism published in the *Encyclopaedia Universalis*, that the word "populism", at least since the 1990s, had an extremely negative meaning and, to a certain extent, became a victim of its own popularity.

Authors trying to define "populism" are forced to combine the ideas behind Russian populism, populist writers (those, whose main characters are "simple people" from the masses), movements and regimes in Latin America, and modern protest movements (Le Pen in France and Beppe Grillo in Italy). As a result, any attempts at creating stereotypes, more often than not, end up being unconvincing, and having limited heuristic value. Some analytics stress that the negative use of the term "populist" is aimed at making modern liberal politics not only mainstream, but also the only suitable option.

This problem, however, can be solved in a different way: instead of defining what populism is and then attempting to create an ideal model of what a populist leader should be, one could seek out common traits in those leaders who are considered populists. It partly resembles the approach that Hannah Arendt used when creating her concept of totalitarianism, which she based on the analysis of two regimes – Hitler's and, to a lesser degree, Stalin's. Without attempting to copy the great German philosopher, I will analyze those traits of Vladimir Putin and his regime that make him similar to other populist leaders. To make it easier, I will limit my analysis to politicians who have previously been in power – Sarkozy in France and Berlusconi in Italy.

On the surface, these three politicians do not have much in common, excluding the fact that they all studied law. However, it is doubtful that this significantly influenced any of them. Here we have a KGB officer who has achieved mind-boggling heights in his career by bypassing the ballot box; a successful entrepreneur (Berlusconi is one of the richest men in

Italy), or "tycoon", as he calls himself, the head of a media empire, who came late to politics (he founded his party "Forza Italia" and became Prime Minister in 1994 at the age of 58). And finally, Nicolas Sarkozy who, at the age of 28, became the Mayor of Neuilly, a rich suburb of Paris, and who, he himself admits, thought constantly about becoming President of the Republic[1].

Of course, the conditions in which these three were active could not help but influence their manner of behavior, actions, gestures, discourse, and, in general, their political culture. Putin's authoritarian regime is quite different from the parliamentary democracy in Italy or the presidential democracy in France. A country's past is also quite important to consider, as it does much to influence politicians' way of thinking, as well as the populations with which they are in contact. Thus, while Putin can successfully appeal to Russia's imperial past and its status as a great power, Sarkozy's attempts to do this failed, and Berlusconi never even tried to take this path, thus leaving the Roman eagles in peace. Another example is the need for an enemy. Take, for example, Putin, who, in the search for a necessary enemy, called out the West and its servants inside the country, labelling them as "foreign agents"; Sarkozy, although in a vague sort of way, gave this role to immigrants; Berlusconi attacked the bureaucrats in Brussels, and the communists (despite the fact they had disappeared in Italy). What we see is the same scheme used by all three, but within differing contexts: an enemy is attacking the very foundations of the country, and the leader, acting as a guarantor of the resistance, portrays himself as willing to be the first person in the line of defense against that enemy.

The differences in the political regimes also introduce additional difficulty. The authoritarian non-democratic nature of the political regime in Russia makes it possible to have a bigger than ever gap between the rhetoric of politicians and their actions. For example, Sarkozy and Berlusconi quite often attacked judges (Sarkozy accused judges' actions as being aimed personally against him, and Berlusconi called them communists, etc.). Putin, on the other hand, very clearly emphasizes the independency of the judicial system, acting like a real democrat who cares about the separation of power. Nevertheless, the problem is that in Russia, no investigator or prosecutor would ever dare to open a case personally related to Putin. Moreover, it is no secret that the "telephone law" still operates in Russia, just as it did during the height of Soviet times. Among the three politicians analyzed here, no one doubts the power of the legislative branch (even if Sarkozy and Berlusconi tried to get around it by issuing decrees).

[1] On November 20th, 2003, journalist Alain Duhamel asked Nicolas Sarkozy: "Do you think about the Presidential elections, [...] while shaving in the morning?" "And not only while shaving", – said Sarkozy.

However, it has quite a different meaning if we compare France and Italy to Russia. Sarkozy and Berlusconi knew that attacking the Constitution would be political suicide for them, while Putin has never had a reason to worry about having a fully obedient Duma. Putin does, however, calm down the rhetoric when the Duma finds it necessary to be more royalist than the king himself. In essence, with all three politicians we see a tendency towards authoritarianism, with two of them being forced to fight against the institutions that limit their power, and the third operating in an existing authoritarian system, limited only by having to give the impression that he respects the rules of democracy.

* * *

Let us look at a preliminary list of traits that are said to be typical for populist leaders, and see if our three leaders possess them:

	Putin	Sarkozy	Berlusconi
Use of the term "people"	yes	yes	yes
Own direct communication channel to the people	yes	yes	yes
Opposition of the elites	yes	yes	yes
I am the people's man (I am like you)	yes	yes	yes
Providential, I am the savior of the country	yes	partly	yes
Protection of the people from the elites	yes	yes	no
Protection of the country and people from enemies	yes	yes	yes
Lack of respect towards institutions	no (in words)	partly	partly
Increased attention to public opinion (to polls)	yes (during the first years)	yes	yes
Personal exclusivity among other politicians	yes	yes	yes
Political incorrectness. Speaks up about his own as well as the people's desires	yes	yes	yes
Nationalism	yes	yes	yes
Use of private life and biography	partly	yes	yes
Virility and machismo	yes	partly	yes
Athleticism	yes	partly	no
Demagogic promises	no	partly	yes
Authoritarianism	yes	yes	partly
Belief in the traditional values of the people	yes	partly	partly
"Get lost", and replace all the old and rotten elites*	yes (during the first years)	no	no

* Neither of the three used this to come to power, nor did they use it while in power, which makes them different from the typical perceived image of a populist.

However, it has become a common saying among today's populists, such as Beppe Grillo in Italy (the slogan of his movement Five Star is "Vattene", which means "Get lost"), Saviani in Italy, Navalny in Russia and *almost all* the candidates who ran for President in the recent elections in France, especially Le Pen, Mélenchon and Macron, who all constantly used it.

Obviously, the table above is quite schematic and the content debatable.

By definition, a political leader is a part of the political elite of a country. This becomes a problem for a populist leader, as he or she needs to appear as a country's potential leader (and even as a providential individual, one who "saves the people"), but at the same time he needs to be a man of the people, or at least a man who is on the same page as the masses. To achieve this, it is not enough just to act, because those will simply be the actions of a ruler. Rather, it is necessary to create one's image as a "man of the people". The main goal of this comparative analysis will be to discover how this image is cultivated.

II. Biography

Putin has built his image as an "ordinary Soviet man" in the most careful way possible: his father worked in a factory that produced cars for the Metro, his parents survived the Leningrad blockade, he used to be a "neighborhood bully" who was saved by sports, etc.[2] For the other two politicians, it was much more difficult to do this sort of thing. With that said, Berlusconi does call himself a self-made man who became successful on his own using his outstanding traits. For Italians, he has become the prime example of a small enterpreneur from Northern Italy who made his dream come true.

III. Language

All three were and are able to impress intellectuals with their manner of speech, being far from being politically correct, and unlike the normal language usually used by politicians. There were two expressions that have now been associated with them forever: Putin's "to waste [somebody] on the shitter" and Sarkozy's "get lost, asshole", which he said to a demonstrator. Berlusconi also was never shy about using street slang when expressing himself. The use of this type of language (whether con-

[2] Ot pervogo litsa: Razgovory s Vladimirom Putinym [From the First-Person Perspective: Talks with Vladimir Putin]. M., 2000.

trolled or not – here opinions differ) has an utterly clear meaning: I am not like other politicians, I speak like the average person, and I speak honestly and openly. It should be noted, though, that if Putin's expression "to waste [somebody] on the shitter" strengthened his popularity, Sarkozy's language has had the opposite effect – his "image" was compromised because the French demand that their President not speak using such language, and the newspapers appealed to the shadows of his great predecessors, two masters of literature language, de Gaulle and Mitterrand.

IV. Culture

Even given the fact that, from time to time, Putin loves quoting Russian classics (for example, Tyutchev's famous poem "Russia cannot be understood with the mind", but having eloquently changed the line "In Russia one can only believe" to "In Russia one should only believe"), or even giving Russian Literature lessons, as occurred during the recent "Direct Line" broadcast in June 2017, he has highlighted several times the fact that he himself is part of popular culture (look at his musical performances). Moreover, it could be also said that his way of showing his knowledge of the classics belongs to the middle-cultural level (not high, not low), which is a trait of Soviet culture (according to the definition given to it by Boris Dubin). It is exactly the same with Berlusconi, the patron of Channel 5 and other channels which opened their doors to programs aimed at the basest tastes of the public. He himself used to sing on river boats, and loves singing in public up to this day. Sarkozy did not show that much love for singing, however, he also tried many times to show his affinity for the tastes of "simple people". For example, he was the first one to take a photo with his new girlfriend and her son from her first marriage during their visit (a private one, but with photographers present) to Disneyland in the suburbs of Paris.

V. Body (Sports, Sex, Masculinity)

Showing off one's body was not practiced by politicians either in France, Soviet Russia or in post-war Italy. To different extents and by various methods, our three characters play with images of their bodies (physical, not political, the difference of which was established by E. Kantorowicz[3]). It is most obvious in Putin's case, who, from the very beginning, can attribute it to an athletic bearing diametrically opposed

[3] Kantorowicz E. The King's Two Bodies. Princeton, 1957.

to the image of his predecessor – a sick and elderly alcoholic. One only need recall the photos that went viral all over the Internet where Putin is pictured bare chested on his horse, Putin fishing, Putin diving in a search of ancient amphorae, Putin leading a flying flock of Siberian Cranes, etc. By doing this, Putin was not only proving that he is "one of the guys", but also that he is a "real man", including in the sexual context. That is true, even if he, unlike Berlusconi, does not boast about his sexual victories, he gives hints that "it's all good", and quite often he makes "male" jokes (for example, about the Israeli President), which, alongside his other virtues, are politically incorrect and, hence, can be seductive to a certain part of the population. Our other two protagonists show their bodies much less: Berlusconi tells stories about his sexual victories, and Sarkozy practices jogging in shorts. An important difference should be noted here. The fact that Sarkozy jogs on the streets of Paris (or New York) and allows it to be filmed is mostly aimed at the desacralization of the function of the President of the Republic. And Berlusconi, by showing off the traits of character that supposedly belong to a "real Italian", is supposed to show that Berlusconi, in a way, is personifying Italy itself in its most perfect iteration. Putin's exhibition of his own body is aimed at achieving a different goal (at least during his first two terms) – in particular, making him look like a hero (007, Superman?).

VI. Authenticity, Identity and Protection from Enemies

So, all three appear as truly Russian, Italian, or French, and are proud of it. They are real examples of "local folks", or, in Sarkozy's case (he is the son of an immigrant), totally French, and shares the values and tastes of his people; all three were prone to constantly showing how deeply they love their Motherland. For example, Berlusconi took part in a TV video demonstrating the beauty of Italy – a "magic country"; Sarkozy, during the Presidential elections in 2007, in a touching speech, borrowed from Maurice Barrès' style, described France as a unique country[4] which is blessed by God.

As for Putin, he often talks about Russia's uniqueness and greatness. Wherein, if Berlusconi sees Italy, first of all, as a country where people know how to live well, where skillful and entrepreneurial people create their beauty and wealth, and if, for Sarkozy, France is a country of universal values, which at one point in time had to voice and defend these values, but is also a country of Catholicism, for Putin, as I see it, Russia is,

[4] http://discours.vie-publique.fr/notices/073001514.html

first and foremost, a nation that managed to overcome its enemies and, in doing so, saved humanity.

However, all three of them identify a difference, stated more or less clearly, between the authentic people and the country's population. It is clearly noticeable in the constant statement of identity. Thus, in 2007, Sarkozy created the Ministry of Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Development based on Solidarity. One need not be a great language expert to decipher the significance of these words' juxtaposition. There is immigration – viewed as a potential threat which can destroy national identity (a topic close to Le Pen's National Front), and only integration can minimize this threat. It should be clarified that this initiative was actively criticized, especially by historians, and, in the end, this Ministry was dismantled in 2010.

The roots of this identity can be found deep in a country's history (Putin and Sarkozy refer to history much more often than Berlusconi, who does so rarely) and to its traditions. All three possess a purely nationalistic way of reasoning, where the country, from the very beginning, has all the characteristics that define its identity and make it unique (an essentialist and extremely ahistorical point of view inherent to all nationalist discourses); and the goal of today's generation is to preserve this heritage untouched, to protect it from harmful external influences, and to affirm the foundation on which the country rests. I point out again that this vision is not fully developed; however, it serves as a basis for a great deal of discourse, though more often in the cases of Putin and Sarkozy, than Berlusconi. Confirmation of national identity is most often accomplished by the confirmation of Christian values. Not long ago, in January 2017, on Orthodox Christmas eve, Vladimir Putin congratulated all those who were celebrating it with the following words: "Christmas Day brightens our lives with special joy, awakens our kindest emotions, and brings us closer to our spiritual roots and traditions. This is a time for both good will and deeds, taking sincere care of those close to you, and those who need help and support. The Russian Orthodox Church and other Christian confessions play a large and truly unique role in the revival of higher moral values, and in preserving our extremely rich historical and cultural heritage. They do much to harmonize international and inter-religious dialogue, ensuring civil peace and harmony in our country. I wish health, success, and well-being to all Orthodox Christians and to all the citizens of Russia who celebrate Christmas"[5].

[5] http://www.1tv.ru/news/2017-01-07/317417-vladimir_putin_russkaya_pravoslavnaya_tserkov_i_drugie_hristianskie_konfessii_igrayut_ogromnuyu_rol_v_zhizni_obschestva

As for Nicolas Sarkozy, in his speech given on December 20, 2007, at the basilica di San Giovanni in Laterano in Rome, he emphasized France's extraordinary connection to the Catholic Church[6]. Berlusconi, in dramatic fashion, acted as a "defender" of family and Christian values, advocating against taking a woman who was already in a coma for many years off artificial life-support.

It is assumed that populist leaders are always in direct contact with the people. The leaders act as their first defenders. Of course, they protect the people from the external enemy, and in this, they do not differ from other political leaders. They are specific in the importance that they ascribe, or appear to ascribe, to the internal enemy, who is usually connected in some way to the external enemy. As mentioned earlier, Putin, from the very beginning, promised he would protect the Russian people from terrorists (who are armed and provoked from the outside), then from the enemies coming from the West, and their agents inside the country. Berlusconi first exposed "communists", then the bureaucrats from Brussels. From Sarkozy's speeches about immigration, it is possible to discern, even though never stated directly, that it is a source of danger. At least for the first two leaders, it is obvious that an enemy and its exposure are necessary to create those real people who support them, with whom they have a symbiotic relationship, and with whom they must naturally be in contact. However, I think Putin *differs* from the two other leaders and is more comparable to populist leaders like Donald Trump or Hugo Chavez (or to Marine Le Pen in France, or Beppe Grillo in Italy, if we look at the populist opposition). It is all about protecting the "real folks", or the simple people, from the "elites", or the "oligarchs". The best example of this is the situation where Putin was protecting the inhabitants of Pikalyovo who were in a conflict with Oleg Deripaska, and the famous phrase: "Give me my pen back!" However, there are also other examples: publicly criticizing negligent governors who do not take care of the people living in their regions, as well as the promises given by Putin during his "Direct Line" television broadcasts, where he takes up one cause or another, or protects someone who wrote a complaint about the actions of bureaucrats.

This can be considered to be in the tradition of the "good Russian Tsar" and bad boyars, or good Stalin and bad local administrators, however, I tend to see in it more of a classical populist process: a charismatic leader, together with the people, in opposition to the elite.

[6] http://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2007/12/21/discours-du-president-de-la-republique-dans-la-salle-de-la-signature-du-palais-du-latran_992170_823448.html

VII. People and I. Telepopulism

For our three protagonists, television serves as the means of direct communication with the people. Only Berlusconi, and to a much lesser extent Sarkozy, also used crowded rallies as a channel of communication with people; but even in this case, a rally could only achieve its real purpose with the help of TV. It is television, on a much larger scale than social networks that will be used by the next generation, that occupies an important position, and all three leaders are professionals at it. Berlusconi – is the very definition of "professional", given he owns the Fininvest media holding, while Sarkozy planned his speeches in such a way, so that they were always the first item on the evening TV news. Television, unlike social networks, creates a direct connection not between me and the ruler, but between us and the ruler; and that is necessary for the ruler because it serves as one of his sources of legitimacy (even if elections play the key role – at least for Sarkozy and Berlusconi). Television allows for the impression of unity with the people, especially in Putin's case, while Berlusconi and Sarkozy have often used talk shows. With the help of the "Direct Line", a visible image is created of the commonality of all Russians, how Putin solves these people's problems and difficulties when it is just to do so, or throws the requests away if they are unfounded. Thus, in June 2017, during a "Direct Line" broadcast, Putin took two women under his wing: one the victim of a flood, and the other one, of a fire.

The overall picture here is quite easy to discern. The unfortunate and defenseless victims of nature and bureaucrats turn to their last defender, and not in vain. Of course, the President is aware of the nature of the natural disasters, and he (the state) has taken all the necessary measures. Local authorities are to be blamed and they (and first of all, a particular governor) will have to explain their actions to the President ("we will solve this for sure") and to the court ("I will definitely ask the prosecutor's office to deal with this"). However, the word of the state (Putin) cannot be violated ("these were our promises... and we will do it").

In all this, it is possible to see that populism is now equipped with all the right modern technical capabilities, but I, like anyone who studied long ago in a French school, see a different picture from a 2nd year text book: Louis IX (Saint Louis, King of France from 1226–1270) is sitting under an oak tree in the Bois de Vincennes, and anyone who wants to can come and tell him his or her complaint and get a just solution. Therefore, the question remains open: what traits are dominant here? Those of a populist, or a monarch?

All three leaders feel a constant need for popularity as a source of legitimacy, which explains their obsession with opinion polls about their popularity (this will be a good time to remember the attacks that the Levada-Center was subject to; however, it also makes sense to remember the "opinion polls case", in which one of Sarkozy's former advisors participated, and thanks to whom we learnt that the Élysée Palace was annually spending millions of Euros on polls); at the same time, it explains the difficulty they face when admitting to failure. It is clear why, and it relates only to the two Western leaders. Sarkozy was sure he could have been re-elected, while Berlusconi regularly declares that he will become the country's leader again. As for Putin, notwithstanding some fluctuations in public opinion about him at the beginning of his rule (his failure regarding the sinking of the submarine and his phrase, that "it sunk"), he is so popular that it seems there is nothing yet which can affect it.

This relationship, this "connection with the people" – is not pure fantasy, and will never be. A populist and popular leader either feels the same way as the majority of the population and naturally expresses what they want to hear, or, even when not sharing the people's feelings, understands what they specifically want to hear. Like a "simple Soviet person", Putin understood that Russians want order, want to see Russia as a great power, and do not want the Soviet era to be denigrated, as it takes away meaning from a piece of their history. And Putin found a way to express it: "Whoever does not regret the fall of the USSR does not have a heart" ("And anyone who wants to recreate it in the same form does not have a brain", he added). The history of Russia is both unified and heroic.

As for Berlusconi, he can, for example, say in a more casual manner not that he will fight tax evasion but that those who pay all taxes are fools and simpletons, thus expressing the attitude of the majority of Italians that the state is a thief that they have every right to try to deceive. Or, one can quote Sarkozy, who, in 2005, as Minister of Internal Affairs, referring to the youth from the suburbs of Paris, stated he would get rid of the scum with the help of a Kärcher machine. Ten years later he returned to this episode in a 2016 interview for France-2: "When I said 'scum', it shocked only a narrow circle of Parisians; the French were not shocked. What's the transgression here? I am proud I said it the way I did". Here we find all the ingredients of populist discourse: the people ("the French" represents the people in a non-differentiated way, as different from society), elites that act in opposition to the people (a small Parisian world that does not understand the people), and a populist leader who understands what people feel and articulates their thoughts.

In this way, the populist leader understands "the people" and says out loud what "people" think, but cannot or do not dare to voice. By doing so, he legitimizes the thoughts, feelings and opinions that people did not dare to say out loud before, regardless of whether it was fear of, or hatred toward immigrants, or something more banal, like evading taxes. The leader makes himself stronger by saying what "the people" want to hear, and "the people" are satisfied that a high ranking state authority shares their opinion instead of expressing its morally opposed viewpoint. However, with the exception of Putin, this combination of mutual strengthening and satisfaction ends up being somewhat ephemeral.

It is necessary for a populist-type leader to combine two aspects of his or her political persona: he or she should be a human being, the same as others, and a providential person. The only one who has managed to fully realize this oxymoron is Vladimir Putin. Thanks to the fact he was appointed Prime Minister somewhat against his will, and then, almost immediately, without a real campaign, was elected President of Russia, it created a situation where he could present himself not as a politician reaching for power, but as a simple man who was put at the head of Russia by God (?) or by faith (?). And when he ended up as leader of the country, he fulfilled his duty by working, in his words, "like a slave"; this expression erases politics entirely, and leaves only work, hard, but necessary work, done for Russia. And because he does his job well, honestly and openly (watch the "Direct Line"!) the people cannot do anything but acknowledge it, and all those around him and the mass media can do is constantly emphasize to the people that Putin is actually the savior of Russia.

From this standpoint, it is possible to notice Putin's evolution, and how, with time, especially during his third term, he has been increasingly dressed in the garb of a providential person, while "I am like everyone" has moved to the background. "Putinka" is seen increasingly rarely, and his athletic achievements, and unexpected gestures happen with less frequency, while the image of the "nation's father" becomes stronger.

If we return to the table, we see quite a large number of coincidences that will prove the initial hypothesis – that Putin belongs in the same category of political leaders and that all three can be characterized as populists. However, it is necessary to make an important note. Many of the traits that are listed in the table, even if they belong primarily to populist politicians, are often seen in all politicians. For example, the use of one's family (such as in the U.S. Presidential elections), attention paid to opinion polls, demagogic promises during the election campaign (in general, quite often the expression "we fell for it" is used to mark demagogues),

etc. As I have said before, when the participants in the French election campaign were called populists, it was possible because they all had one or another trait of behavior that is usually considered to belong to populists. That is why, possibly, one should call someone a populist only in cases where there is a combination of these traits, and moreover, that they are vividly expressed.

But let's not forget that, in the end, we are not rushing to define a type of a politician that exists in nature. We are simply putting a label on him, with the hope we are not doing so too arbitrarily. A label, on the one hand, allows us to delegitimize a particular politician, and on the other hand, allows us to calm ourselves intellectually: "Well, since he is a populist, that makes everything clear".

In conclusion, we would like to emphasize that here we are not attempting to analyze the real politics of the three politicians. Of course, some of the measures taken by them could be classified as populist, especially in Berlusconi's case (who, for example, cancelled a real-estate tax that was hated by many Italians). However, with the partial exception of Berlusconi, we are not dealing with truly populist politics, like, for example, in the case of Hugo Chavez (here I am not placing any pejorative meaning on the term "populist"). Most likely, the opposite is true. Putin even warned those elected by the people against using populist politics. And looking at how he has run the economy, he can be criticized for many things, but he is quite far from being a populist. Hence, it can be said that, in this case, we are not discussing populist politics, but, in fact, the masterful disguise that makes politics that are in fact not populist, or are populist only to a small extent, look populist.

Lev Gudkov

POPULISM AND ITS PLACE IN RUSSIAN SOCIETY: ROOTS, PECULIARITIES, PERSPECTIVES

Populism is a combination of different types of ideological phenomena, such as public sentiment among the masses and political movements, that from time to time pop-up among the modern history of mass society. In terms of style, populism has a lot in common among different countries, but it is very different in terms of its genesis. The social and political forms of expression casts doubt as to whether we are dealing with the same sort of phenomenon or if it is actually made up of different ideas and events united by a single analogy. Even in former socialist countries like Poland, Hungary, Ukraine, Russia, and Georgia, we see so many different forms of populism that it makes one think if it is even possible to generalize.

The common trait of a populist movement is that a demagogue appeals to the masses, hoping they treat him as a type of king, as long as the demagogue, headman or leader *directly* expresses "*the people's will*", desires, and fears. The demagogue's position in society is justified by the fact that the existing political, or more specific, institutional system (establishment, political elites, parties, economic organization, etc.) does not really reflect the genuine interests of the "people". This means that all control is monopolized by the same parties, or influenced by major corporations, and that the government represents and defends the interests of only certain sectors of the population (big business, government of the capitals, etc.).

In its usual "dormant" state, the populist ideas represent the subcultures of the marginal social strata, appealing to earlier historical phases of "society's" development. They use those cultural aspects that are not well-known among the masses. For example, they may refer to the ideologies of the time when the nation state was forming and when the "unification of the people" took place, or they may use moments of collective "greatness" and triumph. Populism bases itself on a "self-evident" social consensus that appears to no longer require any special efforts aimed at proving its importance. For example, most slogans contain aspects that were not formed recently but rather long ago and are, therefore, very familiar and clear to the masses and thus very convincing. Their function

is to mobilize supporters, or to save the weakening collective identity, rather than to find practical solutions for current pressing topics. All the while, the masses fail to recognize and understand the primitiveness and ineffectiveness of these actions.

Populism is a reaction to the exposed *dysfunctions, or incapability of the state and political institutions*. Such types of crises traditionally show the limits of major ideologies or the dying faith people have in the system. Institutional dysfunction, whether real or imaginary, is considered by the people to be a very serious defect of the political system. It shows an institution that has lost its ability to respond adequately to real threats (external or internal, economic, environmental, social or military). Under certain conditions, populism turns into an active phase. Such activeness, while spreading quickly, captures the minds of not only depressed or frustrated social groups, but also of the wider population stratum who have begun to realize the instability of their situation or see no future prospects[1]. There can be very different reasons for it occurring, such as the decline in middle-class incomes, or end of the prosperity era, which happened in the U.S.A. in the 2000s, or massive impoverishment, which occurred in Russia from 1992–1994 due to the changes in the institutional structure, as well as from 2008–2009, which led to massive protests, first at the end of 2010 and then again in 2011–2012. Another reasons are the dangers of separatism, or the loss of the ethno-national identity of specific regions, which took place in Italy, Spain, Belgium, and the United Kingdom. It is important to understand that populists appeal to "large groups", whether it be the majority or the entire country (Alternative for Germany, the National Front in France, "Make America Great Again", "Revival of Russia as a Great Power", etc.). They tend to use global threats or challenges to create a negative opinion for the uninformed and malleable social masses. Populists do not view threats like mass poverty and immigration as separate problems, but rather as a collective problem that leads to the ultimate destruction of society. For example, with immigration they may view foreigners as taking over society, taking jobs away from the locals, or trying to undermine the traditional values and lifestyle of the "local" population. This fear and uncertainty about their future increases the resentment and social envy of the "majority" towards immigrants. The use of compassion by populists, most often imaginary, forms

[1] Populism can lead to social changes caused by respective ideologies: in some cases, it helps to establish authoritarian or totalitarian regimes (as it did, at the beginning of the 20th century, in Italy, Russia, Germany, and in the CEE countries). In other cases, it facilitates the exit from a totalitarian state (as occurred in the late 1980s in the former socialist countries of Europe and in the USSR).

the basis to connect with the offended, oppressed, and poor, and to create a type of solidarity with them. That is why conflicts of such kind acquire a meaning of ethical confrontation with the populist leaders demanding solidarity with or support of their party. It has a peremptory nature in its attempt to protect the collective whole, especially towards national security, prosperity, protection of society's basic values, spiritual traditions, and guarantees for the "people's" future.

Such a course deflects the real fault from specific individuals and institutions and thus voids the generally accepted methods of identifying and solving pressing issues and the needed political procedures of establishing and achieving goals. In its place, the ideology of direct needed action is introduced. The population is offered clear and convincing images of reality with imaginary ways of solving the problems, which, while causing false hopes and illusions, places the individual in a world of national phobias, historical myths and utopias, as well as into a world of a problem-free existence. All this causes excitement among the masses, which is the perfect condition for further mass mobilization.

It is not completely factual, although it is widely believed, that Russian populism is a very recent phenomenon. It is mostly propagated as such due to the association with Russian nationalist speeches, the onset of protests in 2011–2012, and opposition figures like Alexey Navalny and other less well-known politicians (Evgeniy Roizman, Sergey Udaltsov, Vyacheslav Maltsev), who use non-traditional forms of direct contact with the public. In fact, it is possible to name several phases of modern Russian populism. The first phase came when Yeltsin, while Secretary of the Moscow City Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, publicly fought against party privilege. Yeltsin confronted Gorbachev and the Politburo as well as the Soviet nomenclature. Later, he, with the young reformers, promised the masses an era of quick national prosperity once their proposed reforms of vouchers, privatization and other programs had been implemented and the Soviet power structure dismantled. The second phase was marked by the anti-reform and imperial demagogy in 1993 against Yeltsin by Zhirinovsky and the Communists. The third phase of populism came about with Putin's "sovereign democracy", "conservative modernization", and restoration of the Great Power rhetoric, as well as with the appearance of "spiritual bonds". This lasted until the beginning of the system's current crisis. Finally, the latest phase, or the attempted fall of Putinism, is being led by such figures as Alexey Navalny.

The reasons for the mass discontent have been quite grounded: the manipulation of the Constitution to transfer major power from the president to the prime minister, the switching of roles between Putin and Medvedev, the vote rigging of the 2011 elections, the abuse of power by high-ranking

officials, and so on and so on. Navalny's slogan: "United Russia – the party of crooks and thieves" has been supported by 40–45 % of the population, which is actually more than the support for United Russia considered as Putin's party. Navalny became well-known among the general public and even though he did not win, he saw some success when he ran for Mayor of Moscow because of his published exposes about corruption in the highest echelons of the Russian government. The topic of corruption would not be so inflammatory if it were just about the expression of mass dissatisfaction. However, it has been combined with the fact that the masses believe the government has not fulfilled its *"paternalistic"* obligations, which is viewed by the masses as a violation of the principles of historical social justice – something on what Soviet socialism was based and made legitimate and to a large extent today's authoritarianism is based on. Between 53 % and 80 % of Russians consider that the state is *obligated* to provide "*a normal* standard of living to all citizens"[2], while only 4–8 % of Russian citizens express liberal views. Liberals believe dependence on the state is the root cause of the lack of individual and social freedoms. Even though 53–80 % of citizens believe the state is obligated to provide for them, the majority of citizens, 75–78 % of respondents, understand that the state will never fulfill this obligation[3]. However, these same people are certain that the majority of them have no way of influencing the federal government let alone lower levels of government[4].

The gap between expected state care and the reality is so vast that it undermines the belief in the ability of the government to act, as well as the legitimacy of those in power. In the public's eye, the main reason for the "delay" of the promised mass prosperity is that selfish thieves are in power. The fact that people are "forced" to rely on themselves is viewed as a sign of the state's "deterioration". Only 20 %, and not more, hope for state support and these are the poorest groups, single-household pensioners, large families and the disabled. The majority, between 65 % and 70 %, rely solely on themselves.

The phenomenon of the politically marginalized Alexey Navalny is a symbol that the current political system[5], an imaginary multi-party

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[2] Obshchestvennoe Mnenie 2016 [Public Opinion 2016]: Annual report. Moscow: Levada Center, 2017. P. 22, Table 2.13.

[3] Ibid. Table 2.12.

[4] Ibid. P. 53, Tables 4.13 and 4.12. Over the last 10 years, on average 60 % of Russians think that those in power are only interested in securing its power; twice-smaller the amount disagree with them – 28 %: Ibid. Table 4.14.

[5] Parties of the "System" are: United Russia, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, and A Just Russia. These are parties that are allowed by the Kremlin administration to participate in elections, i. e. those given access

system built by Putin, is becoming ineffective. The banning of the old "democratic" parties, cancellation of governors' elections, the banning of regional parties, media censorship, and repressions against civil society took away all the representative seats from a significant portion of voters, which in turn has led to a massive drop in interest in politics and consequently has caused a lack of participation in elections. In 2003 – 52 % were not interested in their upcoming elections, in 2011 – 40 %, and in 2016 – 57 %. Throughout the 2000s, three quarters of all Russians were convinced that the elections would have no positive impact on their situation. Between 53 % and 63 % were not even able to name a party in the State Duma that accurately expresses the interests of such people as the respondents. This means that the Russian parliament is unable to serve the real interests of society (in January 1993, 68 % had such an opinion; in November 2007 – 55 %; in March 2016 – 60 %). The elections of 2003, 2007, 2011 and 2016 were viewed by a significant part of the population as dishonest and "dirty" with mass voter fraud. Only 21–28 % of the population (in 2003) and 37–38 % (in November 2011 and February 2016) considered the respective elections honest and open. As a result, voter turnout has been steadily decreasing up until present day: from 43–47 % in 1995–1996 to 20–23% in 2016[6]. Polls over the last 5 years show that 93 % of Russians have no idea of what deputies actually do and why they are even needed[7]. The suppression of non-state public organizations and parties, those organizations and parties that are not part of the Kremlin system, sterilizes every aspect of the public's lives including all political views and beliefs. Since 2009, every second adult Russian citizen has stated that they have "no political views" or ideological preferences[8]. On the other side, it is possible to highlight the following types who adhere to a kind of political and ideological preference:

a) supporters of state paternalism: people with "socialist beliefs" who think that "the state should provide all necessary social protection to the population": 28–34 % of the population believe in this;

to federal media. Also part of the "System" are approved opposition parties like Yabloko, Parnas and others.

[6] Obshchestvennoe Mnenie 2016. P. 109–113, 117–121. Throughout 2006–2016 the majority of respondents (on average – 51 %) believed that there was no real choice during the elections, that what was provided was only an imaginary choice between the political parties, whereas on average 34 % of respondents disagreed with this position, insisting that the elections were fair and open: Ibid. P. 122. That is why, in 2000–2016, a minority (5–6 %) of Russians believed that elections have the power to force the government to do what the masses wanted: Ibid. P. 120, Table 11.14.

[7] Ibid. P. 102, Table 9.4.3.

[8] Ibid. P. 111, Table 10.7.

b) communists: 12–18 % of the population follow this system;

c) "Russian patriots": 9–13% of all people follow the ideology of the so-called "Russian patriot";

d) supporters of the "firm hand" regime: 14–18 % of the population, and

e) liberals: a modest 7–9 % consider themselves liberals.

In other words, in many ways these people are populists. The political and ideological identifications in and of themselves are not exclusive, they mix and mingle with one another, forming quite an amorphous and ever-changing conglomerate of residual views. People clearly understand that the Russian elections under Putin have turned into rituals of acclamation for those who are already in power, or for those who will be appointed to positions by the presidential administration. This, together with a bleak future due to the lack of public discussions, public goal setting and open criticism of politicians, have increased the understanding among the masses that "nothing can be done" and that "it will always be this way", a little better, a little worse, and that "life is difficult but bearable".

The reason for the recent uptick in populism is that the system is becoming more authoritarian under Putin's regime. In the last quarter century, the number of people being alienated from politics has almost doubled, from 44 % to 80 %. Russians worry the most about price increases, instability or decline in their income, the threat of losing their job, decline in social payments and state spending on social needs. However, they do not worry about actual political problems. Only a minority, 3–15 % of respondents, are interested in such questions as infighting among various political cliques and parties, participation in elections, personal responsibility for what happens in the country, the consequences of Russia's foreign policy, arbitrary rule, lawlessness of the state administration, conflicts with neighboring countries, the situation in the Caucasus, the state of civil society, the restrictions on human rights, and so on.

As a result, ideas about social and political life, which are centered around primitive traditionalist views and a single personality, are spread around. If the population's income decreases, if roads are built too slowly, poorly, and expensively, if there is no money for health care, etc., then for the average citizen it means that someone among the powerful elite appropriates, steals, and plunders state money that was originally intended "for the people". Therefore, it is not surprising that between 75 % and 85 % of those polled in different years by the Levada Center believe that state authorities are completely or mostly corrupt, and that those in power only care about serving their own interests. Approximately one third of the respondents believe that the scale of political decay has increased as com-

pared to what occurred in the 1990s or even during the Soviet era. Today, people no longer feel that they can actively take part in politics or political discussions and people have thus moved to simply discussing corruption and abuse of power of the government. This has caused extremely few opportunities to fight the current regime[9]. From 48 % (in 2006) to 40 % (in 2016) of respondents were confident that the current regime, while using the "fight against extremism" as an excuse, would try to ban any criticism of the authorities; from 58 % to 41 %, during the same period of time, believed that this will be used as an excuse to prevent unwanted politicians from participating in elections. Therefore, only those parties that express support of "power structures", "oligarchs", or federal and regional bureaucracies, i. e. those forces that Putin relies on and whose interests he expresses in his policy, are allowed to be active in the public view[10].

Since people are unable to actively voice their opinion an archaic request for a "firm hand", which will bring order to the country and ensure social order, has taken hold. This is vastly different than what took place in 1989 during Gorbachev's perestroika period. At that time 44 % of Russians considered the concentration of power in one hand unacceptable because they feared a return to a totalitarian system. However, immediately after the reforms began there was a rapid increase of conservatives and populists among the masses. The amount of people who started wanting a dictatorial leader increased from 41 % to 69 % between 1989 and 1996. After Putin's regime became well established this number rose to 73–74 %. The fewest amount of people who have opposed the ideology of a "firm hand", 15 %, occurred during the annexation of Crimea and the patriotic mobilization.

The deeper reasons for the rise of Russian populism are associated with the *end of the "transit ideology"*. This is the loss of hope that the country can evolve and have a "better future", which then ignites those types of belief that were typical during the Soviet era. By destroying the weak legal and market institutions that were founded under Yeltsin the current regime has been able to use populist demagoguery to discredit the very idea of democracy and human rights as something being forced upon them or as something alien to the Russian spirit and national traditions.

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[9] Exactly this understanding forms the basis of the repressive laws adopted in 2012–2016, limiting the rights of citizens to peacefully demonstrate, their freedom of speech, as well as limits placed on NGOs, and others. At the same time, more and more often the government views the exposing of corrupt politicians and high-ranking officials as attempts by the opposition to destabilize the political system and start a "color revolution".

[10] Obshchestvennoe Mnenie 2016. P. 92, Tables 9.2.10 and 9.2.11.

This is leading to opinions being formed that liberals, oppositionists, and human rights activists are all bankrupt politicians, irresponsible chatterboxes, opportunists, national traitors and foreign agents. However, while spreading negative opinions about the "liberals", technocrats unintentionally strengthen the impression among the masses that all politicians, including their own, are cynics and opportunists. This happens because of their reliance on Western media to spread information that all Western public figures and politicians as well as Russian opposition are "funded" by the West. This ends up undermining both the trust in themselves as well as the foundation and *faith in decency, altruism* and human solidarity. Instead, the ideas of conspiracy have taken over the masses' minds. That is why when looking at the trust indicators of the political parties against other institutions they stand at the very bottom at 17th out of 18 places. The only institution less trustworthy are trade unions[11]. This means that social discontent and tension as well as hidden conflicts cannot be fully publicized. They are forced to be kept out of the public's eye. This has not stopped public opinion strongly believing that all politicians are thieves and scoundrels. This disappearance of ideas and lack of discussion, along with the refusal to participate in public and political life, have become the factors that are strengthening populism.

The appearance and success of such figures as Alexey Navalny could be considered as predetermined due to the crisis of the existing political and ideological systems, along with the repression and the suppression of different political forms and public organizations. Under these conditions, an independent politician has only one option: to expose the corruption of those in power. The initial set of Navalny's slogans was actually no different from the usual populist clichés: xenophobia, protection from migrants, the danger of the Russian nation disappearing, and the illegal privatization of the 1990s. However, over time his rhetoric changed to include legal and social reforms. This makes him a different kind of politician, a very real and dangerous opponent to Putin. By using the most common views Navalny has been able to organize disgruntled marginal groups, such as different types of nationalists, liberals, regional politicians, deceived investors, environmentalists, oppressed residents of certain districts, and pensioners that are being discriminated by the Russian authorities. For the majority of people, the positive aspects of his program are still unclear, because he is cut off from any access to media, and therefore, is forced to use unusual means of communicating his goals directly to the people.

[11] See: Obshchestvennoe Mnenie 2016. P. 84, Table 9.1.1.

These means are usually social networks, personal communication with people, and public events, such as rallies and demonstrations. However, these ways of communicating do not reach the masses across Russia and, therefore, they limit his ability to present his plans. With this said, he has still been able to offset this lack of a concrete plan due to his criticizing corrupt officials, as well as by revealing the *injustice* of the current social order established under Putin.

On the other hand, the Russian authorities' populism has a different structure. The most important elements are:

a) addressing the public on behalf of the *simple majority of the population*, which portrays the ideology of *a unified people*: a society without the necessary institutions, culture, language, history, and so on. An example is the mystical "Millennial Russia's" rhetoric, which says that Russians are united by "spiritual bonds" between morals and politics, population and power, with the Russian state being the common denominator;

b) *Empire*, or a special "Russian civilization of Great Power", which stamps its rights and interests on controlled territories, as well as demonstrates military power in order to create a collective pride or feeling of exclusivity and superiority;

c) *state paternalism,* which represents the mythological caring and trustworthy state, even though reality shows it forces its citizens to obey. It forces onto the people that the interests and problems of the state are priority and that individual needs are not important, which makes the citizens hostages to the regime while still having to share its triumphs and crimes;

d) *"equality for all"* is in fact only for the authorities. They take away the rights from the masses and deprive people of their dignity by constantly stating the insignificance of each human being's individuality. The inability for private people and groups to express their interests is achieved through sterilization of public representation, including through the strong use of censorship. This makes society look primitive: everything is simple, one-dimensional, and "nationalistic". This is achieved by defaming and discrediting any points of view, opinions, and interests, except of course the ones coming from those in power. Anything else is slammed as being alien or hostile towards the good of the whole. Such ideology, the monotonous totality of the population, comes from the late Soviet socialist period. The propagated idea of a homogenous society and the removal of certain conflictive groups become accepted by the people because it fits within the demagogy of state patriotism, which is the need for stability and personal loyalty to Putin. The latter is important because it "unifies the population with the power", hence what we see today with the popular belief: "Putin is Russia".

In this way, solidarity under an authoritarian regime can only be reached through the creation of a negative identity. In addition, the existence of different "enemies" makes the introduction of positive programs, both by the authorities and by the opposition, useless because the programs in fact are not required in order to set rational goals, or justify the amount of expected resources needed. There also is no need to create institutional strategies to solve problems or account for any foreseeable consequences, whether positive or negative or both.

Nikolay Petrov

THE EVOLUTION OF POPULISM IN RUSSIAN POLITICS

Populism is an essential feature of public politics. It can be the outward-looking shell of politics and play quite a positive role, or it can become the actual substance of politics, and have quite a negative effect. If "Negative P" stands in opposition to responsible politics, then "Positive P" opposes the ignorance of public opinion.

In most cases, populism can be understood as a system of actions employed by politicians to preserve or enter power, which takes advantage of societal phobias and discontent with the elites, and then promises to easily resolve those issues which citizens consider to be the most pressing. At some point, these promises either need to be acted upon, which is difficult, or the attention of the citizenry needs to be distracted by a whole new set of promises.

A leader or those wielding political power cannot be absolutely populist, and there will always be elements of responsible politics. The question is, in what proportion. The promotion of any policy in a political market requires a small degree of populism, which is used to "sell" the policy to citizens. It requires a certain amount of resources, and if that amount is significant, there is a risk that nothing will remain to use toward realizing certain large-scale objectives. This is where the phenomenon of populism, this time not as a shell, but as actual policy substance, makes its appearance.

Without claiming this to be an exhaustive analysis of the problem, we will make some observations regarding the role of populism in Russian politics.

I. Russia – A Country of Developed Populism

Since the 1980s, first the USSR, and then Russia, demonstrated a wide palette of differing types and forms of populism, and the two systems can serve as a testing ground to study its various strains. It is the anti-elite populism of Boris Yeltsin, who rose to power on a wave, fighting their privi-

leged status. Then, there is the retro-populism of the KPRF (Communist Party of the Russian Federation) and its leader, Gennady Zyuganov, with its tales of a wonderful communist past. There is the deliberate political technological populism of Vladimir Zhirinovsky aimed at fomenting chaos. Then, you have the populism of small achievements (from muskrats to apartment utilities) of Sergey Mironov and Spravedlivaya Rossiya (A Just Russia). Naturally, and of primary importance, there is the populism of power, which panders to the masses. The latter is not so terrible in isolation, but only becomes so when it is combined with the *absence* of a division of power, and in general, *no* strong representative or judicial powers, and *no* independent mass media. This particular combination of factors appeared by the end of the Putin's first presidential term, when populism became a tool of retaining power rather than an instrument of achieving it.

The lack of public political competition and the taboo on criticizing the leader, combined with the insufficient political maturity and level of civil education, enhance this negative effect. The powerlessness and irresponsibility of the opposition provoke it to use populism to compete with the party in power. In this way, populism creates a general framework for the disintegration of both society and politics.

Vladimir Putin is a great example of a populist politician. Putin's professionally proffered populism was apparent from his very first days in power. Specifically, he borrowed topics from other politicians and forces that were attractive to the citizenry, whether they be communist symbols, nostalgia for the USSR and the victory in the Great Patriotic War (topics favored by the communists), the church and Sevastopol (borrowed from Yuri Luzhkov), the fight against corruption (Alexey Navalny), or anti-Westernism (from Vladimir Zhirinovsky)[1].

II. Anti-Negative Populism

During the presidential elections of 1996, Boris Yeltsin frequently traveled the country doling out promises: to build a bridge, an airport, etc. Later, after winning the elections, Yeltsin honestly admitted that there was no money to fulfill the promises he made – "Sorry, citizens of Russia". This type of positive populism is actually quite costly, and if a

[1] See the detailed table of what Vladimir Putin "borrowed" from such political actors as Gennady Zyuganov, Vladimir Zhirinovsky, Alexander Lebed', Yuri Luzhkov, Evgeniy Primakov, Anatoly Sobchak, Grigoriy Yavlinskiy: http://uchebnik.biz/book/255-sredstva-massovoj-informacii-postsovetskoj-rossii/26-shtandartenfyurer-shtirlic-nash-prezident.html

politician stays in power for a long time, it creates heightened expectations, making each new populist wave much more costly. Putin's know-how is in the concept of anti-negative populism. This is the populism of power which is limited in its means. The idea behind it is that first, negative public expectations are created, and then, when thanks to the good will of those in power they do not come to pass, they receive credit for them not happening.

The first classic example of anti-negative populism is the victory of the Edinstvo (Unity) party over the Otetchestvo – Vsya Rossiya (Our Motherland is All Russia / OVR) block in 1999. Then, with phobias resulting from recent apartment block explosions in the background, carefully developed programs aimed at pulling the economy out of its crisis, etc., ended up being unnecessary. The security considerations proposed by those returning to power outweighed them in importance.

Another example is the price increase on vodka in 2011, when the Finance Ministry proposed to double prices, and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, after allowing the discussion about vodka pricing to heat up, asked that "simple and linear suggestions not be made". In the end, prices were increased, but "only" by 20 %[2]. Moreover, the minimum price for vodka was increased by 30 %, but only in early July 2012, after the presidential elections.

With growing financial prosperity in the latter half of the 2000s, the need for those in power to use anti-negative populism declined, and the government increasingly practiced positive populism. This, for example, can be seen in Vladimir Putin's decrees in May 2012 on salary increases for public sector workers. The total sum promised by President Putin prior to elections in 2012 amounted to 2.5 % of GDP[3].

Now, however, when power is increasingly limited in its means, anti-negative populism takes another turn. It is seen in the one-off payments of 5,000 rubles to pensioners in the beginning of 2017 (right before the election, instead of pensions indexed to the rate of inflation as guaranteed by law), and pardons for some accidental victims of repressive laws. It is also visible in Vladimir Putin's public disagreement with the increase in the pension age as was suggested by the government, etc.

[2] See: http://www.opoccuu.com/vodka-zena.htm

[3] See: https://republic.ru/posts/83622

III. Populism on the March: 2000–2017

Among the main milestones of modern Russian populism, the following events are of note:

2000 – the arrival of newly-minted populist leader, Vladimir Putin, on a wave of a popular demand for security (because terrorists from the Caucasus were blowing up residential buildings), and the exploitation of his image as the antithesis of Boris Yeltsin: young, athletic, not a drinker, and decisive.

2003–2004 – the "victorious" end to the second Chechen war thanks to so-called "Chechenization", i. e. the signing of a separate agreement with a more influential Chechen clan which turned it from a Russian-Chechen war into a Chechen-Chechen one; demonstrative public pressure on the elite before the elections (oligarchs, "werewolves", the old guard), the large-scale announcement of, and rapid abandonment of painful unpopular reforms.

2005–2007 – the promotion of priority national projects as a populist "cushion" put in place for Operation "Successor" to replace Vladimir Putin with Dmitry Medvedev as president. Immediately after the presidential elections of 2008 – "a small victorious war" in Georgia.

2012–2014 – the May Decrees of May 2012; the Sochi Olympic Games with the triumph of Russian athletics; the annexation of Crimea. With the exhaustion of the model that promoted popularity due to the growth of public well-being, there were regular demonstrations of punishment aimed at corrupt officials among the ranks of governors and ministers along the lines of the populist "good tsar – bad boyars" technique of power retention.

The sharp rise of populism started in 2014, growing hand-in-hand with the advent of a type of personality-focused regime. This takeoff of Vladimir Putin's popularity and the associated formation of a leader-centric system has had two main consequences: 1) Putin has become a hostage of his ultra-high popularity (his rating requires protection from any damage, and must be continuously "fed" so that it does not drop); 2) the role of the elites, both corporate (including the those related to national security) and regional, have been objectively reduced, and the Kremlin has ceased its ceremonious relationship with them. The new legitimacy is the legitimacy of the leader, and not one who got there via elections. It flows from the top down and categorically does not accept any other autonomous legitimacy, especially an electoral one. From this follows the cancellation of mayoral elections, and where that is impossible, a game by which the legitimacy of those who are left is reduced. After 2014, power

no longer has a need for elections to maintain legitimacy, as they simply cause unneeded problems.

IV. Substitutes in the Service of Populism

On the one hand, the emasculation and substitutionalization of institutions, and on the other hand, their replacement with substitute versions, are typical of the Russian political system, which is largely both personality-based and populist. The replacement of weakened institutions with substitute versions, which are functional analogies of institutions which, as a rule, do not have any legitimacy by themselves, and that no longer take any direct actions, is typical[4]. This point is particularly important, both because their actions are under the control of the leader, who gets points for their use, and also because it provides the strict and constant control needed to step on the gas or the brakes, at any time as needed.

"Substitution – institution" is a kind of dualism; two poles. They are rarely seen separately from each other and are usually merged in some proportion (hybridity on the level of the individual institution), that then change over time. That is why the derivative indicating whether a process of substitutionalization or institutionalization is going on is also important to understand.

Unlike the creation of substitutes with a relatively clear date of creation, the substitutionalization of institutions can happen gradually, without visible and obvious gradations. However, there are exceptions. For example, the new scheme created to form the Federation Council in 2000 represented a significant weakening of its institutional component, and a strengthening of its substitutional one. And one announcement in 2004 regarding the transition to a system of appointments for governors significantly weakened the institution of governors in general (and federalism along with it), as well as the power of the specific regional leader. In 2012, the introduction of municipal filters for the now officially "restored" direct gubernatorial elections immediately transformed them from an institution into a substitution.

Since 2000, Russian political development does not provide any examples where substitutes actually turned into institutions, though there

[4] For more information on substitutes, see: Petrov N. Politicheskaya mekhanika rossiyskoy vlasti: substituty protiv institutov [Political Mechanism of Russian Power: Substitutes vs. Institutions] // Vestnik obshchestvennogo mneniya [Public Opinion Bulletin]. 2009. No. 4. P. 5–23. URL: http://www.levada.ru/sites/default/files/vom_2009.4_102.pdf

are some examples of a strengthening of the institutional element that are worth mentioning. Thus, the development of Putin's regime can be described not simply in the terms of institutional weakening, but as the replacement of institutions by substitutes, and the substitutionalization and emasculation of the remaining institutions.

Many of the substitutes, having multiplied in number since Vladimir Putin came to power, have become milestones and, in a way, a basis for the strengthening of populism. Here are the most important of them.

1999 (1/1)[5] – The Center for Strategic Developments (CSD), developed as a headquarters for the creation of new strategies (it would be forgotten for many years until 2016, when it was reformed to develop Strategy-2024 under the management of Alexey Kudrin) and the Security Council used as a strategic government;

2000 (2/2) – The State Council and its Presidium, with working groups developing "fateful" projects; plenipotentiaries in federal regions and a diversified system of councils associated with them;

2001 (3/4) – The Civil Forum, and the Direct Line with Vladimir Putin; the launch of web brigades aimed at discrediting opinions and texts that are undesirable for those in power via the Internet (in 2014 they will become known as "troll factories");

2002 (1/2) – the deployment of a network of chief federal inspectors' (GFI/CFI) offices to receive the public;

2003 (1/1) – the launch of the Georating project by the Public Opinion Fund: large-scale closed opinion polls in the regions of the Russian Federation;

2004 (3/4) – The Institute of Social Project Planning (InOP) as a center of development for political projects, PR, and the government's operator of grants; the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation; the Valdai Discussion Club;

2005 (6/6) – Public Councils of government departments; the United Russia party's political clubs; the "Nashi" (Ours) youth movements and others; the "Seliger" All-Russia Youth Forum; the announcement of national priority projects – "investments into people": 1) health, 2) education, 3) housing, 4) agriculture (culture and demography are added a little later); the development and public introduction of strategies for social-economic regional development;

2006 (1/4) – "Politzavod" (Political Factory) – youth primaries – with a 20 % quota for young people on United Russia's lists at all levels;

[5] The fraction's numerator shows the number of substitutes associated with populism; the denominator shows the total number of substitutes that appeared in the respective year.

2007 (1/6) – the creation of INSOR (The Institute for Modern Development) for the preparation of proposals and creation of documents on the most important trends in state politics;

2008 (1/7) – public receptions for United Russia's leader, Vladimir Putin;

2009 (1/4) – Vladimir Putin's "anti-oligarch" show in Pikalyovo and the governmental working groups on Pikalyovo and the Baikal Pulp and Paper Mill;

2010 (2/3) – United Russia's inter-regional conferences in the federal regions; public discussion of government bills;

2011 (5/9) – the founding of the ONF (All-Russia People's Front) – an above-party structure supporting the leader; ISEPI (The Fund for the Institute of Social-Economic Investigations) which develops a "People's Program" for the ONF; the Agency of Strategic Initiatives on the promotion of new projects; "Big/Open Government"; United Russia rating "primaries";

2012 (3/17) – the May Decrees of the President with orders that the government improve the well-being of citizens; municipal filters for regional governorial elections; electronic voting as a means of manipulation (the creation of the Human Rights Council);

2013 (4/10) – "The People's Front – for Russia" with 10 expert public research centers; the ROI (Russian Public Initiative) Internet portal; the Fund for the Development of Internet Initiatives; the creation of a powerful propaganda machine in the form of the Russia Today international information agency;

2014 (4/12) – the rapid expansion of the pro-Kremlin FoRGO (Fund for the Development of Civil Society): branches in Russia's regions, the launch of the governors' efficiency rating; Public Councils associated with the Ministries and Departments that are formed using OP (the Public Chamber) and the ROI; granting public control functions to the ONF; a special format for propaganda political talk-shows on all the main TV channels;

2015 (3/5) – the arrests of high-ranking officials accused of corruption, including on-camera searches; the Russian Movement of Schoolchildren – an analogue of the Soviet Pioneer Organization; the recreation of the All-Russian public-state educational organization Rossiyskoye Obshchestvo "Znanie" (the Russia Knowledge Society), a Soviet educational and propaganda organization that has existed since 1947, and which fell into disarray in the 1990s;

2016 (4/11) – the Yunarmiya (Youth Army) military-patriotic movement, similar to the Soviet Zarnitsa; the Public Council in charge of building the Crimea Bridge; a special e-mail address for businesses to contact

the Prosecutor General; full-scale United Russia primaries and the collection of voters' mandates for parliamentary elections;

2017 (4/6) – the casting of candidates for the roles of governor based on the profile of the "ideal governor" and the profile requested by the region; a second wave of "Putings" – government-encouraged gatherings "against terrorism" following the protest action on March 26, and the terrorist attack in the St. Petersburg metro on April 3; the founding of EISI (The Institute of Experts on Social Research), an expert base for the President's administration; the creation of a special system for the monitoring and analysis of the results of citizens' appeals to state bodies, local self-government bodies, state and municipal institutions, and other organizations responsible for publicly meaningful functions (April).

Thus every third substitute that appeared after Vladimir Putin came to power possesses a populist nature or a noticeable measure of populism. Moreover, at the early stages of the regime, the proportion of populist substitutes reached 3/4 (2001, 2004), or even 1/1 (1999, 2003), 2/2 (2000) and 6/6 (2005). A new wave of populist substitutes coincided with the end of Dmitry Medvedev's term and preparation for Putin's third term: 2010 (2/3) and 2011 (5/9). The peaks in the creation of substitutes in absolute terms occurred during periods of serious regime transformation: in 2011 (5) and 2013–2016 (15).

The most important populist substitutes, those of an informational character, were formed by the beginning of Putin's second term: these were Direct Lines of communication with citizens (2001), networks of public reception offices (2002) and massive closed sociological opinion polls (2003). Among the informational populist substitutes, the Public Chamber (2004) and the ONF (The All-Russia People's Front) (2011) deserve mention, both having appeared in federal election years. All of them continue to be in active use, supplemented by a powerful propaganda machine (2013–2014) and the active use of both the anti-Western and anti-elite cards. Among the newest populist institutions of the current election cycle, the introduction of a system for monitoring people's applications to all state and municipal bodies, as well as to institutions and organizations that perform publicly meaningful functions (done by Presidential decree in April 2017), is worth noting. The system started functioning on July 1, and the monthly monitoring and analysis of the people's applications will be done by the Presidential administration together with the Fund for Informational Democracy, specifically authorized for this purpose. And starting July 6, during his Direct Line, the President, when meeting with governors, will start his discussion with a set of people's applications from their respective regions.

V. Populism and Public Opinion

Similar to a crooked mirror, populism reflects public opinion in the form of a triad: to monitor–to appease–and to manipulate.

Populist power, without competitive elections and an independent mass media, aims at finding out public opinion on its own and then monopolizing this knowledge. Hence, an increased interest in public opinion polls. Initially, trust was placed in closed polls taken by special services, but they did not fully work out due to the lack of professionalism and their excessive structural bias. From the mid-1990s, those in power started working more actively with FOM (The Public Opinion Fund). Initially, FOM assisted with elections and then gradually turned into its own main supplier of exclusive sociological information. In 2003, a large-scale project, Georating FOM, was launched. It was a quarterly mega-opinion poll held in 69 federal subjects (93 % of the country's population) with a sampled population of 34,500 people. All this gigantic and costly "machinery" is basically used to measure the political temperature, and it is in fact seen by only a few political technologists inside the Kremlin.

Vladimir Putin's **Direct Lines**, annual sessions of staged communication with citizens, usually attract attention just like a show, or a moment-long populism session. It is primarily a massive collection of information about the problems that worry people in each of the regions. During preparation for Direct Lines, approximately 3 million citizen's claims are collected, and they are carefully systemized by theme and by region. At the same time, those in power not only exploit the paternalism of citizens, they cultivate it. This is done not only by responding to a request, but by actually creating it.

Bread and Circuses. Sports and sports victories are given special significance; this is evident in the recent doping scandal at the Olympic Games in 2014 with the participation of the FSB; a state-run affair. It is not a coincidence that the supervision of sports is reserved for members of big business and big elites.

For those in power, it is important not only to be constantly aware of public opinion on an ongoing basis, but also to know how to quickly influence it, communicating the necessary signals to citizens. Media-generals can really be viewed as the fourth power. It's no accident that they do not change, same as in the case of the other two "supporting" branches of power: the heads of the highest courts and those party leaders who have held office since the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Interaction within the system "populism – public opinion" can be explained using the example of the model of pumping a crystal laser – those

in power decipher public opinion and, thanks to their control of media coverage, what happens can be called a multiple reflection of it with magnification. In the end, those in power get not only a maximum P-effect from their actions, but also present it as the realization of public desires. Crimea is a vivid example.

VI. Cases: The Annexation of Crimea

In the whirlpool of the events of 2014, the Kremlin's actions, which led to a serious transformation inside the regime, seem, on the one hand, situational and reactive, and, on the other, thought-through and in full agreement with the aspirations of the majority. Their mass approval is not only due to the effective influence of the propaganda machine. It should be noted that, long before 2014, sociological surveys showed that the majority of Russians consider Crimea to be originally Russian. One might recall how, long before 2014 and Vladimir Putin, the Crimea card was exploited for a time by another bright populist in Russian politics, Yuri Luzhkov. Crimea-2014 is, in a way, a populist solution to the Dutch disease, a way out of a legitimacy crisis caused by the exhaustion of the economic growth model.

After the "bloodless" annexation of Crimea, Vladimir Putin's ratings rocketed by 20 p.p., as did the Duma's, together with the government and other participants, reflecting the shine of Putin's light. Simultaneously, and also by 20 p.p., there was a decrease in citizens' perceptual acuity relative to such problems as corruption, terrorism in the North Caucasus and others. It was similar to the effect of being drunk – a drunk feels no fear.

It should be noted that the modern Russian government used the effect of a "small victorious war" as a means of raising its rating more than once: in 1994 and 1999, with the first and second Chechen wars, and in 2008 with the war in Georgia. Except for the first war's failure, it always worked.

The annexation of Crimea has already been used twice – in 2014, and a year later, when, on the occasion of the anniversary, a special movie promoting the personal role of Vladimir Putin in the annexation, "Crimea. The Path to the Motherland", was released. Vladimir Putin himself often visits Crimea; it is a winning image for him. In 2015, on the eve of a State of the Union speech, Vladimir Putin paid a blitz-visit to Crimea in order to personally open the energy-bridge from Krasnodar region, thereby ending the energy blockade caused by the destruction of the powerlines from Ukraine...

Finally, the idea to move the 2018 presidential elections to March 18 – the day Crimea was annexed by Russia, implies that the Crimea topic will be used for yet a third time...

VII. The Cost of Populism

Populism is far from being harmless. This is because it can consume a huge amount of the state's resources – financial, material, and human. Thus it leads to the degradation of both political elites and society, strengthens and encourages mass, generally unhealthy, prejudices, complexes, and phobias, including paternalism, and encourages the idea of national exclusiveness, etc. Populism means a loss of time and points of reference.

Small victorious wars are a tool from the arsenal of populism: Chechnya 1994 (failure), Chechnya 1999, Georgia 2008, and Crimea 2014. The price society pays includes human and material sacrifices, sanctions, and decades-long problems in relations with neighbors. In return, growth of the leader's rating is achieved. There is a privatization of benefits and a nationalization of costs, and the benefits are immediate, while the costs stretch out over many years.

VIII. The Populist Crater and How to Get Out

When they come into power, populist authorities get into a type of trap, almost like a crater, which manifests itself in the inevitable process of being dragged deeper and deeper inside by the burden of promises, made worse by the provocations caused by society's heightened expectations. If external factors are not favorable, say, there is no money to fulfill populist promises, a populist politician quickly loses credibility followed by power. It is possible to make new promises to replace the unfulfilled ones, even to the point of waging a small, victorious war. This, if successful, can act to write off all the politician's debts and raise his rating. However, this usually does not last for long.

Favorable external factors, say, an improvement in the financial condition of the country caused by favorable pricing conditions, can make time spent in a crater such as this relatively long, and the crater itself, relatively deep. However, at the same time, the demand for populism only rises, and with it, the downward pace deeper into the crater increases. This results in narrowed actionable time horizons for those in power, as well as a degradation of institutions, elites and society.

The two traps of populism are: (1) the use of populism over an extended time period, thus raising paternalism and respective public expectations,

and making it extremely difficult to switch to responsible politics (only through crisis and a change in leadership); it is easier to change populism's general proposition than expectations; (2) a populist leader becomes hostage to the heightened expectations created by his own promises, and he or she has to behave like a player who is always raising the stakes. There is a mutual distillation of populism and paternalism. The notorious Putin majority has transformed itself from an idyllic herd of sheep, obedient to the shepherd, rather to a flock of bulls running behind its leader.

Eventually, populism blows up just like a financial bubble. However, if in a normal democratic country it is possible to eliminate populism as a result of elections (if populists are already in power), in Russia everything is considerably more complicated and requires more time: citizens infected by populism cannot escape other than through a large-scale political crisis of the entire system. In European countries, populists coming to power or even the real threat of such an occurrence, can become a vaccination against populism. In Russia it is not so.

A populist leader can only turn up the heat, and that is why a change of leadership is a necessary condition to exit the populist crater. Unfortunately, however, it is insufficient by itself. The longer a leader was in power, the more difficult it is to imagine that the next one will not be a populist as well.

What can society, civil society, and the community of experts offer in opposition to populism? How can a transition from it to responsible politics be ensured?

First, some so-called small steps are required: responsible politics at the lower levels, including local referendums, elections, and public hearings. This helps to build social capital, and create societal fabric: an institutional environment hostile to populism.

Second, civilian control of the actions of those in power is necessary. This implies the establishment of transparency and open public discussion, critical analysis of the work done by institutions and the actions of those in power, and clarification of the risks and negative consequences of populist decisions.

Third, it implies working with public opinion, counter-propaganda, the destruction of the monopoly of power in the information space, up to and including defining the agenda and the formation of public opinion.

Eventually, populism, at least in its hypertrophied form, will exit Russian politics, but its consequences will exist for a long time before society can eventually eliminate them.

Alexander Kynev

ELECTORAL POPULISM DURING RUSSIAN ELECTIONS

When considering elections, it makes sense to look at populism not as a political philosophy, but as an element of electoral methodology, and it is not so much about discourse, as about populist practices. However, in all cases, populism uses widely spread ("folk") myths, fears, illusions, and phobias, using them to pit itself against the "other" which is thus demonized (the elite, or some part of society). It also simplifies problems, and makes their purported solutions look primitive, very often creating false expectations, illusions, and even fears. As far as electoral methodologies are concerned, a political populist is always a populist, while the term electoral populism is used in a much wider sense (often to mimic populist moods and for taking control populist rhetoric).

We can proceed from the assumption that electoral populism is behind an obvious inability to fulfill political promises, or attempts to give voters a false belief in their achievability. This impracticability can be connected either with the incompatibility of said ideas with laws of economic development, with available resources and opportunities, and with the powers of the elected body as well.

In terms of the methodologies used, specifically, ideas and slogans, electoral populism during Russian elections can be divided into power populism and opposition populism.

I. Power Populism

Power populism can be divided into *threat populism*, *promise populism* and *demonstrative actions populism*.

Threat populism aims to foster negative mobilization in order to confront a threat that is either over-exaggerated or even non-existent. Here, people are offered a solution to a non-existent problem, and those accused of being guilty are often repressed. Quite often, mobilization in order to face this sort of threat will replace a politician's positive program, and act as a substitute for the authorities' responses to criticism. It is employed on both federal and regional levels.

In the 1990s and early 2000s, threats such as "the criminals are coming," and "hunger returns" (the legendary "Buy food for the last time" from the 1996 Presidential election campaign) were used more often than others, in combination with ties to oligarchs, terrorists[1] and others. During the 1999 Parliamentary elections, the main topic of that negative mobilization was the expansion of a corrupt regional bureaucracy (to fight the Otechestvo – Vsya Rossiya [The Whole Russia is Our Motherland] electoral block), the threat of terrorism following the recent explosions in Moscow, and the calls for public order in their wake.

During the 2003 Parliamentary elections, with the Yukos case in the background, an anti-oligarch theme was prevalent, and during the 2007 elections, the fight against the "Crazy Nineties", during which liberals were used as symbols.

One of the examples of the negative mobilization of the 2000s–2010s were discussions about the "enemy's intrigues" (the term "the orange threat" appeared after the events of 2004–2005 in Ukraine), while enemies and/or critics were declared to be either the direct henchmen of external political enemies or their collaborators. For example, by the spring 2010 regional elections (long before the massive fight with the "fifth column" that commenced in the autumn of 2011), in a number of regions, stories were published about "improper" independent societal phenomena that were arranged, according to the respective comments, by Western spy agencies and extremist forces.

The topic of battling "foreign" (predominantly Western) influence became generally widespread after the December 2011 State Duma elections. The centralized mass media ran special TV programs and movies (the most famous ones – "Golos niotkuda" [The Voice from Nowhere], "Anatomiya protesta" [Anatomy of Protest], and "Anatomiya protesta-2" [Anatomy of Protest 2] on NTV). The basis for demonizing the opposition and protesting citizens was the fact they received foreign grants, took trips to events in foreign countries, and simply even met with foreign diplomats, experts and journalists. Stories about connections with the "enemy's" structures became widespread. One vivid example is the accusation of Sergey Udaltsov and the Left Front of having received money for overthrowing the current regime from Givi Torgamadze, a Georgian business executive with an ambiguous reputation. The very attempt to frame the henchmen of an insignificant Georgian businessman as the opposition may seem anecdotal, but for some, the consequences were quite serious.

[1] In the 1997 elections, both topics were actively used against the candidate for the Governor's seat of Krasnoyarsk Territory, Alexander Lebed'.

Since the end of 2011, there has been an increasing stream of publications that view the support of ideas such as taking the path of European development and the defense of human rights as a sign of amorality, a betrayal of traditional values, and evidence of sexual and moral promiscuity. The creation of laws on "protecting family values" is becoming increasingly active. Thus in July 2013 the State Duma adopted a law prohibiting the "propaganda of non-traditional sexual relationships among minors". Public scandals connected with "protecting the feelings of religious believers" have also escalated, the most obvious one being the case involving "Pussy Riot"[2].

Widespread campaigns for the "protection of the moral values" resolve two issues: first, they cause the opposition to pivot from topics that are unsuitable to those in power, namely corruption and falsifications during elections, to those that are much more controversial in the minds of the masses, and which better serve counter-propaganda and the demonization of opponents. Second, because of the controversy and ambiguity of opinions on a complex range of topics, these campaigns provoke splits within the opposition. In particular, they strengthen existing disagreements among the liberal, pro-European and more conservative parts of the opposition, especially between the so-called "non-system" and "system" blocks.

Another widespread example of threat populism is that of accusing opponents of having connections to criminals, and none of election campaigns manages to avoid this topic.

Such methods became quite popular in 2010–2011. It would seem that, after the scandalous elections of October 11, 2009, when in a number of regions, the vote counts went into litigation, the incumbent party's strategists placed their bets on the widest possible use of aggressive manipulative electoral methodologies during their resulting agitation campaigns. This included a campaign of powerful counter-agitation and black PR against the opposition, which had the goal of discrediting the opposition in advance, just in case the results of the elections caused significant claims in its favor.

Thus in 2010, during elections to the Ryazan' Regional Duma, representatives of Edinaya Rossiya (United Russia) declared that the LDPR (Liberal Democratic Party of Russia) was scheming to put the region under the control of criminals, harkening back to the "Criminal 1990s". It turned out that the criminal connection was in fact nothing more than the fact that, in the past, a few candidates had been charged with "drink-

[2] Members of the punk-group "Pussy Riot" were sentenced to two years in a general regime colony for hooliganism – for performing a so-called "punk-prayer: 'Virgin Mary, make Putin go away!'" in the Christ the Savior Cathedral.

ing alcohol in a public place, and selling goods without documentation". Another candidate was accused of tax evasion, etc.

During the March 2012 elections to the Kirov City Duma, the organization of Afghanistan war veterans Boyevoye Bratstvo (Brotherhood of War) declared their alarm at the fact that the deputies' seats in the Kirov City Duma were being targeted by individuals whose livelihoods were connected to crime. Leaflets reading "Criminals Are Preparing to Seize Kirov" were aimed at candidates from Spravedlivaya Rossiya (A Just Russia) and the KPRF (Communist Party of the Russian Federation), and accused them of either having served prison sentences, or of having criminal connections. These leaflets were spread all around the city.

Demonstrative actions populism is usually achieved using two methods. The first one is attention, immediately staged, to one or another citizen's request, accomplished in a public forum. Often it happens during a public meeting with voters, or during a "hot line" arranged with the help of a TV broadcast. It could be both small private requests (for example, a child's request to receive a dog as a present), or more significant ones (to resettle the inhabitants of a house that is in dangerously damaged condition, to pave a street, to restore a bus route, etc.). The second method is the public criticism of an official, even up to the point of his or her dismissal.

It can be an improvisation, but more often it is a grandstand play. The official being criticized has usually been appointed by the executive who is scolding him, hence making the responsibility mutual. Moreover, the junior official is often simply taking orders from above. Nevertheless, the voters have the impression that the problem is now solved and the guilty one is punished, though, in reality, neither is the case.

These sorts of staged actions were actively employed by Boris Yeltsin, who would publicly "criticize", and then fire, his subordinates. Among regional leaders, Yuri Goryachev, the Governor of Ulyanovsk, widely used the practice of "publicly scolding" subordinates in front of a camera during teleconferences. Funny, that during his visit of Ulyanovsk in the autumn of 1991, standing on the steps of his airplane, Yeltsin asked the voters whom they wanted to see as their governor. After hearing in return: "Goryachev", he approvingly exclaimed: "Let it be so!"

Promises to allocate excessive sums of money can be added to the list of populist power methodologies, as can attempts to assign credit for the results of everything done (often during many years) by those in power to one particular party.

During the 2010 Kurgan Regional Duma elections, Edinaya Rossiya placed several of their party programs in the regional newspaper *Noviy Mir* (New World). The article "Krepkoye selo – sil'noye Zaural'ye" (A Strong Village is Strong Trans-Urals) stated: "The development pro-

gram for the agro-industrial complex in the Kurgan Region through 2012 involves investment of *more than 22 billion rubles*. In 2009 alone, *more than 952 million rubles* were allocated from regional and federal budgets". Wherein the consolidated annual budget of the region was nearly 21 billion rubles, in 2010 it was planned to allocate approximately 700 million rubles for agriculture. Moreover, this program was not the only one.

Also in 2010, in June, the leading candidate on the Edinaya Rossiya list in the elections to the Chelyabinsk Legislative Assembly, Governor Mikhail Yurevich, "supported" the initiative of the regional branch of his party, and allocated 3,000 rubles for every large family with three children or more so they could "get ready for the new school year", and 500 rubles to each pensioner on the occasion of Senior Citizens' Day on October 1 (10 days before the election)[3]. According to many observers, the change of the date of the Legislative Assembly election from March 2011 to October 2010 was connected to the fact that the Edinaya Rossiya was aiming for its election campaign in the region to benefit from the "wave of support" which was expected right after the completion of road construction (the region received 1 billion rubles for its roads in 2010), and salary increases for public-sector employees[4].

The method of holding opinion polls concurrently with elections on the priorities for use of funds so they may be used during the budgeting process is actively practiced. Specifically, opinion polls with no legal force were conducted in Krasnoyarsk Region, Komi Republic, Tomsk Region and in other regions. During the elections in Tomsk Region in October 2010, the Edinaya Rossiya introduced a "People's Budget" program with a list of the city's main problems based on citizens' appeals to the Mayor and to Vladimir Putin's office. During elections in Orenburg Region in March 2011, a project called "The People's Strategy" was introduced. Here people were offered the chance to choose and prioritize from a list of projects and goals proposed by their leaders and by the party. Additional urns for this were placed next to each polling station[5].

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[3] Koretskiy A. Ocherednoy populism ot yuzhnoural'skikh "edinorossov": pensionery i mnogodetniye sem'i poluchat zhalkiye podachki [Another Populism from the South Ural United Russia: Pensioners and Large Families Will Get Pitifully Small Donations]. 27.07.2010. URL: http://www.uraldaily.ru/politika/2599.html

[4] Leonov S. Yuzhnoural'skiye deputaty pribavili k byudzhetu milliard. Myakush: "Nuzhno srochno tratit' den'gi" [Yuzhnouralsk Deputies Added a Billion to the Budget. Myakush: "We need to spend money urgently"]. 26.07.2010. URL: http://ura.ru/content/chel/26-07-2010/news/1052117275.html

[5] http://www.orenburg.rfn.ru/rnews.html?id=34455 (04.02.2011); http://orenburg.edinros.ru/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1796:2011-02-24-15-09-24&catid=1:latest-news&Itemid=1

One can add to the list of examples of official promise populism the launches of various pre-election projects that later often disappear without a trace.

In 2010 in Omsk, thanks to an initiative of the Mayor's office, before the mayoral elections, the "Agency of Good Deeds" opened its doors. This new organization positioned itself as a union of volunteer brigades. The agency's goal was to help single pensioners, and thus "psyche up" the voters on the eve of mayoral elections. The agency disappeared right after the elections.

II. Populism of the Opposition

Because of the Russian opposition's dependence on legal, financial and organizational authorities, promises are practically the only thing the populism of the opposition can offer. It almost never has an anti-elite character due to the risk of losing the ability to participate in elections.

The most widespread types of promises are social in character, and do not have any economic rationale: namely salary and pension increases, or the introduction of various additional payments. One of the most prominent and large-scale social populism campaigns was that associated with the 2007 State Duma elections. Moreover, the actual initiator of the new social-populist wave was the officially right-wing SPS (Soyuz Pravykh Sil – Union of Right Powers).

In 2006, SPS barely participated in regional elections because the party was in a deep internal crisis. Their revival started with elections to the Legislative Assembly of Perm Region, where Nikita Belykh was the Deputy Governor until he was elected as party leader in 2005. Led by a team headed by political strategist Anton Bakov, the party tried to rebrand itself by changing its traditional liberal face to a socio-liberal one. This was supplemented by the active building of agitation networks, primarily in rural areas not yet spoiled by typical "door to door" mass campaigns, and a well-chosen group of agitators who were close to the target social group (pensioners and public-sector employees). They also used all the traditional methods of "network marketing".

Nikita Belykh, with the slogan "Vote for Completion!" (the completion of building capitalism so it can reach a "civilized level"), ended up being at the center of the campaign. At the heart of the main idea of "Completion" were promises to increase pensions by 2.5 times, and public-sector employees' salaries by 4 times, and an allocation of 12 % of GDP for pensions, etc.; which obviously had nothing to do with the powers invested in regional parliaments. During the 2007 elections, the party's newspapers did not cover anything apart from social issues.

As a result, the party achieved eligibility for the elections in five regions (Komi, Samara, Tomsk Regions, Stavropol and Krasnoyarsk Territories) and came close in three more regions (Moscow, Leningrad, Orel), where it declared its victory stolen as a result of falsifications. However, in 2007, the new social populism of the SPS had a downside. While the party's results showed growth in the regions, it lost in liberally-oriented St. Petersburg, where a pronounced change in the party's positions not only did not attract new voters, but also alienated some of the old ones.

After the regional elections of March 2007 and the attempts of SPS to use social paternalism, a traditional theme used by those in power, a strong agitation program was initiated against the party, one which reminded voters that SPS supported the liberal reforms of the 1990s and also recalled its previously unpopular leaders. The party was obstructed in its agitation activities by various methods, including the use of force. As a result, the "electoral takeoff" of SPS in 2007 was interrupted as suddenly as it had begun.

Other parties quickly copied the aggressive social populism of SPS. The difference was only in the numbers. If SPS was promising to increase pensions by 2.5 times, Spravedlivaya Rossiya demanded an "increase to pensions of up to 65 % of previously earned (employment) income", and Patrioty Rossii (Patriots of Russia) at first demanded an increase to pensions of at least 15,000 rubles, and then declared that "it is necessary to increase pensions by 4 times", as well as to "increase the level of income of citizens by 2–3 times". The KPRF was offering to make pensions equal to the real living wage, etc.

The KPRF, Spravedlivaya Rossiya and other left and left-of-center parties have traditionally employed the populism of social promises. It follows that their claims are not supported by any socio-economic rationale, nor by an analysis of the consequences once they are put into action.

In November 2010, the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation adopted a resolution "On the Preparation and Conduct of the People's Referendum in the Russian Federation". Among the proposals that were offered for the "People's Referendum" were[6]:

[6] Perechen' obshchefederal'nikh voprosov Narodnogo referenduma, provodimogo KPRF v 2011 godu / Press-sluzhba TsK KPRF [List of Federal Issues of the People's Referendum held by the Communist Party of the Russian Federation in 2011 / Press Service of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation]. 23.23.2010. URL: http://kprf.ru/rus_soc/86021.html

- Do you agree with the statement that payments for housing and communal services should be limited to 10 % of cumulative family income?
- Do you think that the State should take responsibility for preventing an arbitrary increase in prices for food, medicine and essential commodities?
- Do you agree with the statement that any changes in legislation that worsen people's access to education, healthcare and culture should not be allowed and should be immediately cancelled?

One constantly recurring topic is the demand to freeze prices and tariffs. During the election campaigns of 2015–2016, the KPRF and Spravedlivaya Rossiya regularly discussed the necessity to restrain prices and fight speculators, whose activity they attempted to blame for the increases in prices, etc.

In Komi, during the State Council elections in March 2011[7], Spravedlivaya Rossiya was placing banners and posters on bus stops, and airing TV commercials with the slogan "Our Income Belongs to Our Republic! No More For Moscow!". Clearly, during regional elections, this was not an achievable objective, and the elected body did not have sufficient authority in such matters.

Electoral populism in Russia is typical not only on the left. Besides the previously mentioned social populism of SPS in 2006–2007, the experience of the Yabloko (Apple) Party is worth recalling. One example of extreme populism was the program "Moscow is a 21st Century City" during the Moscow City Duma elections in 2005. In particular, it had the following points:

- Moscow without traffic jams (to double spending on road works; *by 2015 to bring the metro to every district with a population of 50,000 or more; to develop bicycle paths, etc.)*;
- Affordable housing for Muscovites (to force the cancellation of plans to require 100 % payment of utilities; to set the maximum level of expenses for housing and communal services at a level of 10 % of family income; to break the monopoly on housing infrastructure maintenance; to replace the eviction of debtors with an administrative infraction charge; to introduce a moratorium on "one-off" residential construction, etc.);
- Social justice and the lowering of prices (the allocation of an additional 500 rubles to the monthly childcare allowance; to triple additional

[7] The pre-election program of "Spravedlivaya Rossiya" (A Just Russia). URL: http://komi.spravedlivo.ru/press/region_news/915.smx

payments to non-working pensioners and double them for working pensioners in 2006);

- A Healthy City (in 2009 to triple the salaries of medical workers by toughening penalties for poor-quality treatment; to simplify the system for treating privileged categories of citizens, etc.).

The program caused nothing but skepticism, and it was clear in advance that it was unachievable. However, it was not readily visible to many people, unlike the booklets and calendars, where the main topics were the direct election of the Mayor of Moscow and the fact that Yabloko is comprised of "a list of united democrats".

One of the popular opposition strategies in Russia is the collection of signatures during an election campaign for the dismissal of one or another official, or the demand for a referendum that obviously cannot be held, or in support of objectives that cannot be achieved.

Thus, in Ingushetia, after the 2007 State Duma elections that had an official voter turnout of 98.3 % (161,559 people out of 164,275), the local opposition ran a campaign called "I did not vote", which was organized by the "Ingushetia.ru" website. The collected signatures of 45,000 people stating that they did not vote in these elections[8] were sent to Moscow, where they subsequently disappeared.

The same happened to signatures that were collected by Spravedlivaya Rossiya, which disappeared "to nowhere". The party collected signatures in Chuvashia for the dismissal of regional head, Mikhail Ignatiev; after his election campaign, demands by Spravedlivaya Rossiya to dismiss the Governor of the Kursk Region, Alexander Mikhailov, disappeared, as well as those from the KPRF for the dismissal of the Governor of the Tver Region, Dmitry Zelenin. Currently, the KPRF is collecting signatures for the dismissal of the head of Khakassia, Victor Zimin, etc.

One of the main trends of opposition populism in Russia is the introduction of either obviously unenforceable or inadmissible bills that guarantee news coverage and end up as permanent entries in the chronicles of scandal.

Thus in the State Duma's convocations from 2011 through 2016, such bills were repeatedly proposed by deputies Oleg Mikheev (Spravedlivaya Rossiya), Vadim Den'gin, Roman Khudyakov and Mikhail Degtyarev (LDPR), Vladimir Zhirinovsky himself, and others.

[8] http://rus.delfi.ee/daily/abroad/v-ingushetii-idet-akciya-ya-negolosoval.d?id=17780446

In June 2014, deputy Mikheev sent a petition to the Eurasian Economic Commission requesting a change to the requirements of the technical regulations of the Customs Union. The deputy suggested prohibiting flat shoes and high-heel shoes as they cause foot deformation[9]. In July 2016, Mikheev proposed a bill that would prohibit exploiting interest in sexual themes in advertising.

In 2014, LDPR deputy Roman Khudyakov discovered that the 100-ruble banknote depicts a statue of a naked Apollo, and considering his genitals indecent, requested that the Chairman of the Central Bank change the banknote's design. However, the Central Bank refused to make any changes, leaving the banknote as is. Several times, deputy Mikhail Degtyarev proposed prohibiting the use and storage of US dollars in Russia. Besides the US currency, in 2013 Degtyarev proposed prohibiting car alarms, as well as ending sperm donorship for homosexuals. In July 2014, Degtyarev offered to rename regions and districts into provinces and counties. In addition, Degtyarev offered to repaint the Kremlin white so that the image of the white-stone Kremlin would become a symbol of the importance of moral norms in the daily lives of our citizens and rulers, as opposed to the moral decay of Western countries. On March 12, 2014, Vladimir Zhirinovsky proposed removing the letter "ы" from the Russian alphabet.

* * *

These examples of electoral populism differ depending on whether they are used by those in power or by the opposition. They also differ in terms of methodology. Promises, threats, and demonstrative actions were used with differing intensities in the 1990s, the 2000s, and the 2010s. Among all the promises, the most stable ones were the promises of those in power to build, open, or finance something, etc. Only the style of presentation changed. If in the 1990s it was more of a "people's populism", when promises were made during meetings with voters, and often in an informal and aphoristic form (Yeltsin's famous "take as much sovereignty as you can digest"), in the 2000s–2010s, populism became rather technocratic and dry, more often addressed to audiences in a hall, rather than to people at a voters' meeting. It is often presented in the form of tables with numbers and charts, which is aimed at convincing the voters of the bureaucratic realism of the things being promised.

[9] Deputat Mikheev predlozhil zapretit' kedy, baletki i shpil'ki [Deputy Mikheev offered to prohibit sneakers, ballet flats and high heels]. 19.06.2014. URL: https://www.novayagazeta.ru/news/2014/06/19/102079-deputat-miheev-predlozhil-zapretit-kedy-baletki-i-shpilki

Threat populism had obvious peaks in 1996 (negative mobilization against the threat of the restoration of Soviet laws), then in the autumn of 2009 after the protests. During 2010–2011, it was the peak of a populism of "threats that criminals could come to power", which was the "asymmetrical" response of the opposition to the exposure of electoral falsifications. After the protests in the winter of 2011–2012, the populism of "threats that criminals could come to power" was almost completely replaced by the populism of the "threat from the fifth column", and of the "opponents of moral values". In mid-2014, after the system opposition was actually destroyed and after its de facto union with those in power, with the "post-Crimean consensus" in the background, the necessity for large-scale information wars against the parliamentary opposition actually disappeared, and in 2015–2016, rare bursts of threat-based populism only had an effect on the weakened "non-system" opposition.

Demonstrative actions populism in the 1990s usually took the form of the public criticism of subordinates, and the firing of negligent officials, and this emphasized the charismatic style of the bosses of the 1990s as strong leaders. In the 2000s, this became rare, and we were more likely to see a demonstrative immediate fulfilment of some request addressed to an official. In fewer and fewer cases would you see large-scale meetings with the voters, rather than communication with the use of communication tools.

On the one hand, the peak of the social populism of the opposition occurred at the beginning of the crisis of the 1990s and during the massive impoverishment of the population; on the other hand, 2005–2007 was the period after the monetization of the social benefits in conditions of increasing income coming into the budget, together with high energy prices. Later, oppositional social populism stabilized and it will not experience any more remarkable outbursts. The only new word in populism can be considered to be "anti-corruption populism", where Alexey Navalny is its most outstanding representative (Boris Nemtsov, with his famous speeches, can be partly considered his predecessor). The role of "anti-corruption populism" has been constantly growing since 2011.

At the same time, the lower the voter turnout, the greater the role of electoral populism becomes, because in Russia, low voter turnout almost always means that this turnout relates to the least well-off, the most socially dependent, and at the same time, to the most aged and the least educated groups of voters.

These voters are the least capable of critically analyzing the promises of candidates and parties, and can be influenced the most by direct promises of various types of social benefits, and by simple answers to complicated questions. From 2013 onward, the tendency toward decreasing voter

turnout became especially noticeable, when instead of two voting days (in March and October), one voting day (the second Sunday in September) was decreed. As a result, the vast majority of the 2013–2016 elections established local records for low voter turnout. For example, during the elections for the Governor of Arkhangelsk Region on September 13, 2015, voter turnout was only 21 % (the lowest result for a Governor's election in the entire recent history of elections in Russia)[10].

At the same time, to a large extent, electoral populism (especially as it relates to the opposition) during Russian elections has an institutionally forced character, and is a direct and inevitable consequence of the constitutional model that was formed in 1993.

The Federal Parliament does not in fact influence the formation of the government, regional parliaments do not influence the formation of regional administrations, and local councils – the formation of local administrations. The absence of representative bodies with real power, in the eyes of the citizenry, makes the existence of parties useless. In the situation when it is understood in advance that parties cannot put their programs into action as a result of winning elections, it turns the competition among parties from a competition of ideas into a competition for mandates and parliamentary seats. The confrontation of programs and ideologies and, as a result, the parties expressing the interests of one or another group of voters, take on the form of a type of imitation. Promises that cannot be fulfilled (and it is clear in advance), false threats and scandalous behavior in the run-up to elections become inevitable, and often end up being the only content of election campaigns. Because of this specific type of competition for seats in institutionally weakened governmental bodies, large-scale electoral populism takes place, as does the widespread lack of citizens' trust in political parties that is currently recorded by opinion polls.

[10] Kynev A., Lyubarev A., Maximov A. Na podstupakh k federal'nym vyboram – 2016: regional'niye i mestniye vybory v Rossii 13 sentyabrya 2015 goda [Getting Closer to the Federal Elections – 2016: Regional and Local Elections in Russia on September 13, 2015]. Moscow: Fond "Liberal'naya Missiya" [Liberal Mission Foundation], 2015.

Georgy Chizhov

UKRAINE IN THE EMBRACE OF POPULISM

I. Prerequisites for Political Populism in Ukraine

Since the founding (or restoration) of Ukrainian statehood at the end of the 20th century, the role of populism in domestic politics has turned out to be quite significant. This is partially attributable a large segment of society not being ready to abandon Soviet reality, combined with the fact that another notable social group believed the illusion that independence itself could provide a decent and comfortable existence for the country and its citizens.

In the 1990s, a strong paternalistic demand had formed in Ukrainian society. The idealization of the socialist way of life of the recent past, which included the over-exaggeration of its positive attributes, was witnessed in many post-Soviet countries. Specific to Ukraine was that large clusters of people with nostalgia for the past (now gone) could be identified not only by age (the older generation), but also by territory (the Crimean Autonomous Republic and the eastern regions), as well as by population density (rural areas).

With what seemed to be a favorable background, the left flank of the Ukrainian political spectrum, in its 25 years of existence, demonstrated instability, weakness and an unwillingness amongst its parties to adhere to certain positions in principle. Predictably, the most successful party on the left was the Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU), the successor to the Republic's branch of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). At the peak of its popularity in 1998, the CPU even took first place in parliamentary elections, tallying 24.65 % of the vote, but without any path to real power. In 1999, the party's leader Petro Symonenko made it to the second round of the presidential elections, but afterward, the party never repeated its success. Moreover, it was becoming more obvious to the voters that, regardless of its opposition rhetoric, the CPU in Parliament always cast the lacking votes needed to serve the interests of the oligarchs, primarily those from the so-called Donetsk Clan.

Since 2004, the party and Symonenko were openly playing along with Viktor Yanukovych, and it was becoming more difficult to conceal. As a result, in 2006, the party barely made it into the Verkhovna Rada where the minimum vote percentage at the time was 3 % (they received 3.66 % of the votes). After their last success in 2012 (13.18 %), after the early elections of 2014, they ended up out of the parliament altogether. The CPU's most consistent electorate ended up being not so much leftists, but pro-Russian voters. However, neither Crimea, nor a part of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions, participated in the elections...

The fate of the Socialist Party of Ukraine (SPU) turned out to be even more bizarre. The SPU had significant influence from the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s, but then got lost in its own political maneuvering by first supporting Viktor Yushchenko, then his opponent Yanukovych. In the end, it lost most of its high-profile members, and the last bit of the voters' trust. Other projects on the left sometimes made noise about themselves, but soon ended up heading into political oblivion.

Nostalgic and paternalistic points of view are not the only reasons for the prosperity of political populism in Ukraine. Paradoxically, its established democratic practices also have a role to play. Although based on the findings of various international research projects, Ukraine has never been considered a fully democratic country[1], the changeover of power here happens highly regularly, usually with every electoral cycle, if not more often. For example, out of four Ukrainian presidents who have completed their terms, only one, Leonid Kuchma, was elected twice. Viktor Yushchenko held the highest state position for one constitutional term, while Leonid Kravchuk and Viktor Yanukovych left the President's seat early, each for different reasons. Even during Leonid Kuchma's rule, a record by Ukrainian standards (10.5 years), the substance of his power was not preserved: parliamentary elections and the country's active political life changed its configuration numerous times.

The flipside of having a permanently active election campaign, a condition in which the Ukrainian political elite permanently exists, was the fact that the majority of political forces were counting on loudly pronounced slogans rather than meaningful and responsible discussions about the direction of the country's development. Experience shows that attempts to initiate these discussions do not have majority voter support and do not bring the desired political result to the initiators. A recent example is the campaign of Hennadiy Korban for Mayor of Kyiv, which was conducted with an emphasis on modern urbanism, and attracted serious expertise,

[1] http://gtmarket.ru/ratings/democracy-index/info

analyzing the challenges facing the city and seeking their solutions. This intellectual approach was not only unsuccessful for the candidate (he only took 10th place), but also caused little social interest, regardless of the significant investment into the campaign.

Accordingly, the pre-election programs of almost all Ukrainian parties are characterized by extremely weak, declarative content, and, in general, turn out to be purely secondary, with loud slogans and the figures of party leaders in the background. Despite the rich tradition of competitive elections in Ukraine, a party system has not taken hold in the country, and the most influential political parties, with rare exceptions, are only "support clubs" for their leaders. This is a prevalent perception of Ukrainian leadership, where no one believes that any politician is a miracle-worker (faith in "miracle-workers" existed in the past, during Viktor Yushchenko's presidency), but voters try to compare a candidate's strong-worded slogans with their personal priorities, often ignoring the party's real activities.

This way, a leader and his party are released from political responsibility if they do not fulfill their promises. In supporting radical slogans, the voter generally understands that they are not too realistic, and instead, views them as a party's general direction. "The opposition wins almost all our elections", says Irina Bekeshkyna, director of the Democratic Initiatives Fund. "That is because our elections are just promise competitions"[2]. If, however, a politician who achieves a degree of leverage, tries to develop his or her success using obvious practical populist approaches, the deferred negative consequences are not taken into account at all, because the voter usually demonstrates only short-term memory and is not inclined to "present a bill" for accountability.

Having become Prime Minister of Ukraine for a second time, Yulia Tymoshenko rushed to start paying out compensation on deposits in Sberbank USSR (the USSR State Savings Bank). Of course, it is not totally accurate to call it compensation: all former account-holders that met certain criteria simply received 1,000 hryvnas (about 200 US dollars at the exchange rate of that time). The rest was promised some time later. The distribution of "Yulia's thousand", as the people called it, did not resolve the issue of the devaluation of Soviet-era deposits, or improve the well-being of Ukrainian families in any noticeable way, but it did significantly boost inflation and drain the budget on the eve of the economic crisis of 2008.

A little later, the Party of Regions, having the largest fraction in the Verkhovna Rada and in preparation for the presidential election, man-

[2] https://focus.ua/country/354230/

aged to "push through" a decision to increase social standards that was not based on economic realities, but which would soon be a blow to Tymoshenko's government, and also to those ordinary Ukrainians who "benefited" from it.

The passing of the law "On the Basis for State Language Policy", also known as the Kivalov–Kolesnichenko Law, is an example of the "non-financial" populism of power. The law contained a set of contradicting norms; in particular, it introduced the notion of the regional languages of national minorities. In an effort to win over the majority of Russian-speaking voters on the eve of the 2012 parliamentary elections, the incumbent Party of Regions voted for conditions of loyalty to recognize a language as regional, but the law never went into effect. The authority to recognize the language of national minorities as regional belonged solely to the Verkhovna Rada, but it never used this authority. President Yanukovych was afraid of the practical implementation of the law. However, its adoption caused, on the one hand, mass protests of nationalistically and national-democratically oriented forces, and on the other hand, a wave of illegal declarations of Russian and some other languages as regional by local councils. All this seriously aggravated an already difficult situation in the country, and contributed to a split within society.

The specific perception of elites by Ukrainian society also contributes to populist moods. There is still no distinct class division, as the classes themselves, together with mechanisms of interaction between them, are only now being set. The majority of politicians and business persons are so-called "men of the people". Almost all of them have "family" home villages, where their relatives live (in Ukraine, the concept of relatives includes a wide range of people), with cousins, and family friends, and all of them sometimes being on very different levels of the social ladder.

In this way, the life of the elites goes on practically in plain view of the public; however, an immense difference in material wealth generates alienation amongst ordinary people, leading to a total lack of trust. Having an idea of how the elites live, an ordinary Ukrainian obviously does not trust anyone from their ranks, and therefore does not comprehend their complex messages. This lack of meaning is replaced by simple messages that do not require trust, as long as they coincide with a person's emotional understanding of the message. The simplest demarcation of "us vs. them" takes place, which has no substantive basis (since everyone is "them"!) and is therefore based on a simply formalized appraisal.

Ukrainian political nationalism also uses tools which are absolutely populist. Representatives of this movement state that the poor record of success of the country's development can be explained by the dominance of non-Ukrainian interests and non-Ukrainian individuals in the domes-

tic economy and politics. These are then usually opposed by some patriotic, pro-Ukrainian ideas, people and practices. It should be noted that the question of ethnicity in determining the criteria of "Ukrainianness" and "non-Ukrainianness" tends to be mixed, as it is something of which even the nationalists themselves are unsure.

Actually, nationalist organizations parted ways from the national-democratic movement in the first years following Ukraine's independence. Their range of views turned out to be quite wide in scope. However, the most influence in Ukrainian politics was achieved by the UNA-UNSO organization (Ukrainian National Assembly – Ukrainian People's Self-Defense) and Svoboda (Freedom) party (called the Social-National Party of Ukraine until 2004). If, during its years of existence, UNA-UNSO had political affairs, split up, reunited, and changed its leaders, and still never achieved success as a political party, Svoboda's actions were more goal-oriented. The party changed its leader only once (along with its title), after which it was headed by Oleh Tyahnybok, at the time, the only member of parliament from the SNPU (Social-National Party of Ukraine). In 2012, for the first and so far the only time, the party made it into parliament, gaining 10.44 % of the votes, and, after the victory of the Revolution of Dignity, for a short time entered the ruling coalition (as a result of the early elections in 2014, only seven Svoboda members, elected in majority districts, made it into the Verkhovna Rada).

Both the political and socio-economic programs of the party are definitely considered populist. "Simple" and usually unfeasible ideas are proposed: from the restoration of Ukraine's nuclear status to the nationalization of the property of foreign companies founded by Ukrainian oligarchs. Like many nationalist parties in Europe, a lot of attention goes to fighting immigration, although for Ukraine this problem is almost irrelevant. By the way, after the party entered parliament, anti-Semitic and xenophobic rhetoric almost disappeared from the speeches of its leaders, even though it had been quite typical earlier.

After the mass protests began in fall 2013, a number of marginal and small nationalist organizations merged into the Right Sector, which became famous and popular, primarily because of constant references to it in Russian media. It should be noted that at the peak of its popularity in 2014–2015, the Right Sector was not a typical nationalist organization, specifically as many of its activists communicated among themselves in Russian. At the same time, in their platform documents and slogans, the Right Sector declared simple and radical ways of resolving complex issues, a typical feature of right-wing populists.

The victory of the Revolution of Dignity in 2014, as strange as it may seem, worsened populist tendencies in Ukrainian politics. Under these

new conditions, the political subjectivity of society has increased both generally and when discussing the organized active representatives of its separate groups. In fact, the ruling authority is forced to consider a position taken by protesting activists if the position has considerable acceptance from within society, even if it contradicts certain formal legal requirements or is not economically feasible. Examples include cutting off electricity supplies to the Crimean peninsula, the ban on the movement of goods across the contact line in the Donbass, and sanctions against subsidiaries of Russian banks.

II. The Situation Today

Based on research done in 2016, the Gorshenin Institute cited the following reasons for the rise of populist tendencies in Ukraine:

– political fragmentation of the society;
– distrust of institutions of power;
– lack of a basis for national consensus;
– poverty (to be more exact, impoverishment – the rapid decrease in the standard of living of most Ukrainians in recent years)[3].

According to the Institute, populist party projects in Ukraine can rely on a voters' cluster of 30–33 %. Even a base-level analysis of the party spectrum shows this evaluation is significantly lower than in reality.

The Batkivshchyna (Fatherland) party headed by Yulia Tymoshenko is considered to be the gold standard of populism for two decades running (although this did not prevent it, at a certain time in history, from being the leading force of the opposition as well). The most remarkable public statement about this was made on February 14, 2017, by the Ukrainian Prime Minister, Volodymyr Groysman: "In my opinion, the mother of Ukrainian corruption, populism and inefficiency is Yulia Tymoshenko"[4]. The party joined the current Verkhovna Rada by just barely passing the 5 % barrier in 2014. Today, according to various polls, it is again a leader in the electoral ratings, primarily due to its well thought-out populist policies. The Batkivshchyna party consistently criticizes all the unpopular decisions of those in power, arguing that it is quite possible to survive without another increase in utility rates, narrowing the list of persons entitled to benefits, etc. Recently, the leitmotif of the speeches of the party's representatives has been the fight to reduce the cost of utilities.

[3] https://lb.ua/news/2016/08/10/342294_populizm_fenomen.html

[4] http://news.liga.net/news/politics/14691048-groysman_timoshenko_mama_ukrainskoy_korruptsii.htm

As far as the informal rating of populism is concerned, then Oleh Lyashko's Radical Party is also in contention for the leader's laurels with the Batkivshchyna. Its rhetoric and practice offer basically nothing but populism. However, they use an unusual set of tools: national stereotypes and archetypes. Lyashko can hardly be considered a true nationalist; he does not go deep into the jungle of ideology and completely emasculates the essence of his appeals as glorious traditions of the past. This allows the party to quickly change its agenda and serve the interests of various financial and industrial groups. The main support base of the Radical Party is people from the villages and small towns of Central Ukraine, while in the Western part of the country Lyashko is far less convincing.

Even though Svoboda (Freedom) party mentioned above is not a parliamentary party right now, it has a substantially strong position in Western Ukraine and a good chance of returning to the Verkhovna Rada. As a typical right-populist party, it does not avoid "left-wing" topics: it promises to lower utility rates, increase salaries, and get rid of unemployment. In mid-March of this year, Oleh Tyahnybok signed a National Manifesto with the party leaders of the Right Sector (Dmytro Yarosh has had nothing to do with the party since the end of 2015) and the National Corps which was founded on the same basis as the Azov Regiment. Among the goals outlined in the Manifesto are the cessation of diplomatic relations with the Russian Federation, the permission to own firearms, the fight against illegal migration, and making the subsoil, strategic sites and privatized companies state-owned once again[5]. The signing of the Manifesto became an important piece of news in Ukrainian politics, as before it, members of the "Svoboda" party and the right radicals spoke of each other quite coldly, and even with utter contempt.

A number of political scientists consider the Samopomoshch (Self-Reliance) party lead by Lviv Mayor Andriy Sadovyi to be populist. However, it is not that simple. After reaching the national level (it had once been viewed only as a regional force), the party was able to attract two completely non-intersecting electoral blocs. On the one hand, it was the pro-European, but conservative voters from the western regions; on the other hand, it was young, educated people from large cities across the country. In an effort not to lose the support of any of these groups despite their utterly different values, the party has been forced to find a dangerous balance and utilize populist rhetoric (which is primarily targeted at the conservative bloc).

[5] http://nv.ua/ukraine/politics/svoboda-pravyj-sektor-i-natsionalnyj-korpus-podpisali-dokument-ob-obedinenii-812693.html

A logical question arises: where on the "political map" of Ukraine are the "classical" left-wing populist forces? During the last couple of years, their location has changed radically. Kyiv's loss of control of the "most left-wing" territories, society's view of the "reds" as allies of the enemy, Russia, the discrediting and prohibition of the Communist Party, and the complete fiasco of the socialists, etc., have significantly narrowed the left-wing electoral field. Now, the Opposition Bloc has reaped most of the benefits from it. Yesterday's allies of Yanukovych have perfectly mastered populist phraseology: they demand an end to the war, a reduction in utility rates, an increase in pensions, salaries and so on, assuring that all this can be achieved immediately if there is the political will in place. The electorate of the Opposition Bloc is currently estimated at 13–15 %, which can bring it to second or third place if there are early parliamentary elections. A smaller but also noticeable segment of paternalistic-oriented voters is drifting towards the Batkivshchyna party.

Meanwhile, Ukrainian liberals are increasingly less inclined to support the current government. At the same time, no liberal or right-wing liberal parties have yet been founded in post-revolutionary Ukraine. There is an obvious lack of public demand for clearly defined paths out of the crisis, which can only be quite painful to say the least. In an attempt to grab their part of the populist electoral "pie", politicians prefer to talk about measures to lower utility rates. Therefore, a new phenomenon, which can be called "democratic populism", has appeared in the country.

The most vivid representative of this trend is Mikhail Saakashvili, former president of Georgia and former governor of the Odessa Region. In the last two incomplete years, he managed to announce several political projects: the anti-corruption Movement for Purification, the Volna (Wave) party, and another party called the New Forces Movement. The latter was officially registered by the Ukrainian Ministry of Justice at the end of February. As of the beginning of April, there are no program documents on the party's Internet web site. The rating of Saakashvili's yet unfounded party was quite high at the beginning of 2016 (about 10 %); however, by summer it had already dropped to 3 %. However, if it becomes an active campaign and uses its leader's charisma, the New Forces Movement has a chance to pass the 5 % barrier.

Is the largest party in the country, Petro Poroshenko's Bloc Solidarity, populist? Petro Poroshenko's Bloc represents a typical post-Soviet "party in power", has a rather amorphous structure and includes representatives of various interest groups. Of course, the party uses populist methods from time to time; however, also from time to time, it actually takes responsibility for unpopular decisions. It is impossible to view Petro Poroshenko's Bloc as an ideological party – it is rather a union of strong and situational

supporters of the current president. Nevertheless, as elections get closer, whenever they do occur, an increase in populist rhetoric is expected here as well.

It is not difficult to list the main themes used by opposition populists to attack those currently in power.

This is the aforementioned increase in utility rates for housing and communal services, which is indeed one of the most painful social and economic problems of today's Ukraine. Right from the populist handbook, in conditions of permanent pre-election mobilization, the issue of bringing utility prices in line with market realities has been pushed back consistently by the ever-changing Ukrainian authorities since essentially the late 1990s. The ultimate need to resolve this issue has coincided with a rapid decline in the population's standard of living in 2014–2015. It should be noted that populists do not offer a serious discussion or any inquiries into mechanisms of controlling rate increases. Instead, they reduce the issue to simply a lack of political will and the existence of personal interests on the part of those in power.

Another topic is criticism of the Minsk Agreements, which quickly reduced the intensity of military operations in the East of the country. Hundreds of articles were written proving how the nature of these agreements were unfavorable to Ukraine, and dozens of implications were made about the bad, secretive foundations for the decisions made by the country's leadership after their military losses in September 2014 and February 2015. However, the alternatives proposed were absolutely unworkable: from an all-out offensive and the liberation of Donetsk and Lugansk (the nationalists) to the immediate cessation of the war as a result of amicable agreements with the unrecognized republics and Moscow (the Opposition Bloc).

The topic of fighting corruption, so strongly supported by society just a year ago, is now simply an annoyance for many. Special anti-corruption organizations and institutions were created in the country, but they are locked in endless arguments with one another, and do not demonstrate the efficiency expected of them. Meanwhile, all populist politicians identify corruption as one of Ukraine's principal problems, and promise to defeat, and finally be rid of it.

There are also some more localized, "niche" topics that help specific populist forces find and mobilize supporters. This includes a blockade of trade with the areas that are out of Kyiv's control and actions against banks with Russian capital, as well as the language issue, which is still relevant for some target audiences.

It can be predicted with confidence that, in the next few years, populism will maintain, if not total hegemony, then at least a clear dominance

in Ukrainian political discourse. A decrease in the importance of its role is possible only if these standard-issue leaders are finally fully discredited in the eyes of voters, and there is a formation of societal demand for responsible political forces that are ready to propose both well-constructed and instrumental solutions.

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