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The European political landscape has recently been undergoing a major paradigm shift. Events such as the economic crisis, Brexit, and the influx of immigrants from Islamic countries, evoke extreme emotions and make people cease support for traditional political parties. New movements are trying to capitalize on these social moods in order to rise to power and shatter the established *status quo*.

Imagining the Peoples of Europe: Populist Discourses Across the Political Spectrum, edited by Jan Zienkowski and Ruth Breeze, is a compilation of articles that attempt to supply the readers with an insight into the strategies used by modern populist parties to sway the voters to their side. The authors challenge the traditional understanding of the term populism, and demonstrate that it is not exclusively tied to right-wing political movements. The thirteen chapters of the volume outline various case studies based on corpus evidence, analyses of argumentation and dialogicity, and discourse analysis. The readers will find three chapters tackling the scarcely explored topic of left-wing populism, four chapters heavily centered on parliamentary discourse, and several chapters dedicated to research on right-wing populism. The interplay among the authors and the way in which they contrast with each other when it comes to defining populism is thought-provoking. Although they agree that the scientific world is in need of a new and improved definition of the term, they differ in their arguments and suggestions concerning the way in which a definition of populism should be arrived at.

The first chapter of the book, "The populist political logic and the analysis of the discursive construction of 'the people' and 'the elite,'" by Benjamin De Cleen, is the only purely theoretical work in the whole volume, which introduces the controversies and problems concerning the concept of populism. De Cleen outlines some of the previous approaches to defining populism, addresses the issues that they created and offers solutions. The author does not attempt to invent a new definition, but rather intends to add precision to the previously formulated discourse-theoretical conceptualization of populism found in Ernesto Laclau's *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory* (1977), as well as in *On Populist Reason* (2005). Laclau's theories serve as a point of reference, not only for De Cleen but for most authors of the volume under review. De Cleen enumerates the issues that make it hard to formulate a clear definition of populism which could serve as the foundation for research. They include our inability to cover the diversity of populist discourse, and to distinguish populism from other concepts that share similar characteristics. The author concludes that to truly understand the role of populism, we need to study how parties construct the two nodal points: "the people" and "the elite," and understand how this populist political logic connects to the overarching political strategy of the populist political actor in question. Similarly to the authors of the other chapters in the volume, De Cleen also points out that populism can be combined with any political ideology, be it right-wing or left-wing.

Chiara Degano and Federico Sicurella, the authors of "A dialogue on populism?," base their discussion of populist discourse on a framework created by combining critical discourse analysis, argumentation theory, and the study of dialogism. Their research focuses on how editorialists define and evaluate populism and the topoi they employ, as well as on how they build counterarguments to populism, which they perceive as an unequivocally negative phenomenon. Using as corpus Italian and English newspaper editorials covering about Brexit, they show that journalists do not usually attempt to define populism, but rather use it as a derogatory term defined through semantic prosody. The authors also discuss the argumentative topoi used by editorialists and the use of heteroglossia in the anti-populist rhetoric, which prevails in the researched newspapers. The chapter also demonstrates how a discussion of issues related to populism differs between academia and the press.

Chapter 3, "European populism(s) as a counter to hegemonic discourse?," by Arthur Borrielo and Samuele Mazzolini, tackles the less-explored issue of left-wing populism. In their both quantitative and qualitative study, the authors analyse two different approaches to combatting neoliberal hegemony employed by the Spanish *Podemos* and Italian *Movimento Cinque Stelle* (M5S). The authors present the findings of a corpus-based analysis of the

discourse used by both political parties, referring to a broader definition of discourse proposed by Laclau and Mouffe (1985). The analysed corpus consists of articles, press interviews, and parliamentary debates, which were selected based on the presence of key terms such as "crisis," "economy," "austerity" and "Europe." The researchers analyse the frequency of lemmas related to the political concepts of the people and political adversaries. They also study the use of metaphor in the speech of both parties and discuss similarities and differences between the two groups. In conclusion, Borrielo and Mazzolini assert that both Podemos and M5S follow the populist logic, but that there are major differences between them when it comes to their ideological background, structure, and the strategies of shaping new political subjects.

Chapter 4 by Hayriye Özen, "Islamic conservative populism in Turkey," sheds light on another unexplored area which is the political scene in Turkey, an Islamic country located on the border of two continents. Özen, similarly to other authors of the volume, draws heavily from Laclauian concept of populism to analyze the populist discourse of the Justice and the Development Party (Turkish: *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, or AKP). The author offers a unique insight into the recent history of the Turkish political scene, both as a researcher and a citizen of Turkey, who has experienced recent historical events first hand. Based on the empirical analysis of the AKP political programme and other political documents created by the party members, Özen offers an in-depth analysis of its populist and antihegemonic discourse. The author argues that AKP's populist discourse has changed over the years when it comes to the usage of the signifier "the people." It started as a more general term and devolved into a signifier related more to religious and conservative themes. Özen explains why AKP remains a populist movement, despite excluding more and more groups of people. The author argues that it is due to the way in which the party pits "the people" against "the power."

The authors of "The articulation of 'the people' in the discourse of *Podemos*," Nicolina Montesano Montessori and Esperanza Morales-López, focus on the construction of *pueblo* ('people') and *patria* ('homeland') in the discourse of this populist party, using the theoretical framework of critical discourse analysis. Relying on classical discourse analysis, the researchers adopt a perspective that differs from the approaches of other contributors to the volume. Rather than treat populism and the lexical items used to construct the meaning of populism as predetermined categories, the authors perceive them as everyday notions that need to be submitted to a discursive, rhetorical analysis. Similarly to chapter 4, the findings of this research are preceded by a short history of the political party *Podemos*, which allows

for a better understanding of the context. Following this short introduction, large chunks of texts from the corpus are featured and analysed. The authors discuss how members of Podemos construct their relationship with their electorate and how they use language to create the "antagonistic divide" between the people and the elites. The main methods seem to be synecdoche and spatial and temporal metaphor, used to conceptualise "the people." The authors conclude by listing the metaphors used commonly in *Podemos*' rhetoric and by pointing out what they believe to be mistakes in the populist rhetoric of the party.

Chapter 6, "Building left-wing populism in Denmark" by Óscar García Agustín, is yet another article that tackles the issue of left-wing populism. Here the understanding of populism is based on the approach of the Essex School (Stavrakakis et al. 2014), whose definition of populism is rooted in the people-elite antagonism. The chapter is an account of the populist turn of the Red Green Alliance, a Danish political party, whose popularity, in the author's view, has significantly increased. The author analyses different kinds of texts created by the party, addressed to the public and to the party members. The RGA's new populist approach is compared with the previously known right-wing populist approach practised by other parties in Denmark, e.g. DDP. Some similarities that exist between them, despite the RGA seemingly occupying the opposite side of the political spectrum, are also pointed out. The author discusses the signifiers used by the RDA's politicians, which help build the populist narrative. One peculiarity of the Danish populist discourse that the readers might find interesting is the distinctive lack of "the people" as a signifier. Other signifiers such as "wage earners," "Danes" or "community" are the nodal points used instead.

"Performing 'the people?'" by Andreas Önnerfors is an analysis of new performative strategies used by the German populist movement PEGIDA, which traces its roots to the GDR citizen movement. Unlike other groups previously analysed in the volume, PEGIDA (Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the Occident) is a social movement rather than a political party. The author sets to find out how this new ideological movement has managed to rally people to their side through creating an image of crisis and by using this image to construct and perform "the people" as a political actor and audience. *Pegida: Spaziergänge über den Horizont. Eine Chronik* authored by Sebastian Hennig, a recent convert to Islam who was still following the movement of anti-Islamization in 2014, serves as a corpus for the research. Önnerfors sees this type of corpus as more suitable for research than the numerous YouTube videos made by individuals associated with PEGIDA, however, the author acknowledges that they still provide great insight if one wants to experience unfiltered performative staging of the movement. Similarly to other contributors to the

volume, Önnerfors focuses on the signifier "the people" and on other similar lexical items. The German term *Volk* ('the people') is usually avoided due to the associations with Adolf Hitler's regime, thus political actors often opt for different signifiers, especially in the mainstream discourse.

Chapter 8, "The discursive construction of the people in European political discourse" by Naomi Truan, presents detailed research on parliamentary debates in three countries: Germany, France and the United Kingdom. With a corpus of 44 parliamentary debates, the author analyses references to "the people" made by speakers in the respective parliaments. Based on the analysed corpus, Truan argues that referring to the people is the basic component of politics in general and an element of democracy rather than a proof of the political actor employing populist tactics. Akin to other authors of the volume, Truan looks at various words used to denote "the people", which are more frequent in Germany for historical reasons and the controversies around the term *Volk.*

In "Standing up for 'real people,'" Samuel Bennett presents a study on how the right-wing populist UKIP from the UK constructed "the people" during the Brexit referendum campaign. In his research, the author uses language data excerpted from UKIP's Twitter accounts. One part of the chapter discusses Twitter's value as a source for discourse analysis. Apart from its popularity as a social media platform, it also provides direct access to statements made by politicians, without any intervening moderators, which is the case in the traditional media. Bennett speculates that the current rise of populist movements can be largely attributed to how the contemporary global society revolves around the Internet. The research itself is grounded in the critical discourse analysis approach. The author analyses the usage of topoi, recontextualization and nominalization, to find out how UKIP constructed the empty signifier and then produced those they claim to represent. In the author's view, this is typical of populist movements.

In Chapter 10, "'The people' in the discourse of the Romanian government and opposition," Raluca Mihaela Levonian presents an analysis of the discourse used by two political coalitions in post-communist Romania. The choice of corpus guarantees a full scope of the political language used in Romania. Political statements and speeches delivered in the Romanian senate between 2011 and 2012 were divided into those made by politicians representing the government and those representing the opposition. The linguistic research is interlaced with a historical outline of Romanian politics, which gives the readers additional insight into the background of these political movements. A quantitative analysis of the corpus data allows the author to assess the frequency of some terms related to "the people,"

and present it in tables and charts. The results are discussed at length and followed by an in-depth qualitative study of the narrative of both the government coalition and the opposition. Levonian concludes that while both political movements claim to represent "the people," any real dialogue between them is impossible. This is because they both refuse to acknowledge each other's followers as "the people."

"The Volk ('people') and its modes of representations by *Alternative für Deutschland* AfD (Alternative for Germany)" by Miguel Ayerbe Linares takes the readers back to the topic of German politics. The author investigates the language of the new German right-wing populist Eurosceptic party AfD and explains the populist strategies employed by the party and its narrative. Linares investigates various sources such as the party's manifesto, a bulletin created with the party members in mind, as well as statements posted on Twitter. With well laid-out examples and detailed graphs, the author describes how the discourse of the party differs depending on the target audience, with the official documents being more politically correct and balanced, and the social media posts being more informal and containing controversial words, e.g. *Volk*, usually associated with the Nazi regime.

The main argument of the penultimate chapter, "Measuring people-centrism populist political discourse" by Maarten van Leeuwen, is that measuring the frequency of signifiers related to "the people" in political texts should not be the only way to approach the problem of researching populism. The author presents a case study of Dutch politics centered around the populist politician, Geert Wilders, and his main opponent, Alexander Pechtold. In the study, van Leeuwen aims to show that it is the way in which the politicians make references to "the people" in their speeches that should be analysed, rather than the pure frequency of the usage of this signifier. Using examples from the corpus, van Leeuwen discusses how the syntactic position of words affects the prominence of the information conveyed by them. The author analyses how the frequency of "the people" in the positions of subject, complement and adjunct, differs between the two prominent Dutch politicians. The author argues that making frequent references to "the people" does not automatically make the political actor a populist, which falls in line with the conclusions made by various other authors in the volume.

In "Populist discursive strategies surrounding the immigration quota referendum in Hungary," the final chapter in the volume, Peter Furko attempts to analyse the populist rhetoric used in parliamentary speeches related to the issue of immigration in Hungary. Combining critical discourse and corpus linguistics approaches, the author looks at both the pro-government and anti-government campaigns and at the differences in the use of populist

strategies by the two sides of the argument. Furko aims not only to compare the two discursive strategies, but also to find out which of the two was more effective in influencing the results of the referendum. The referendum was considered void due to low turnout of about 41%, but it had an overwhelming majority of pro-government votes. The main focus of Furko's analysis are pragmatic markers (PrMs) and how they are used for the conversationalization of political discourse, which, as the author argues, can be used for manipulating the public opinion.

The volume ends with concluding remarks authored by the editors, who juxtapose the different approaches to populism adopted by the authors of the individual chapters and highlight the pivotal parts of all the studies presented in the book. They also explain how these contributions can help provide insight into various political agendas and state that populism is not a concept one can easily exemplify, as it can be performed in many distinctive ways. The authors close with an encouragement for further research in the field.

All in all, *Imagining the Peoples of Europe: Populist Discourses Across the Political Spectrum* is a monumental collection of articles, all backed by solid and extensive research that will no doubt widen the readers' perspective on populism as a concept, and provide expertise required for a better understanding of European politics of the recent decades. Due to a variety of approaches employed by the authors, the volume will prove useful not only for researchers working within the discourse studies framework, but also for other kinds of linguistic approaches and for research in other fields of science that focus on the world of politics. While not lacking in professionalism, the articles are written in a clear and accessible way, without overcomplicated language and advanced terminology. The volume will serve as an exceptional resource to both accomplished scholars to further their research, as well as to fledgling researchers making their foray into the world of science.

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