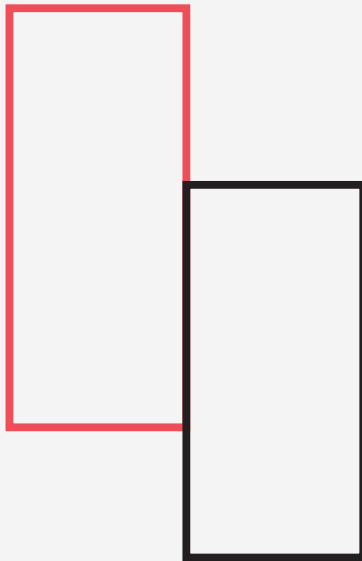


# Populist Attitudes

## IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE



**RESEARCH WORKSHOP**  
**BAMBERG, 13 JUNE 2018**  
**PROGRAMME AND ABSTRACTS**

**BAMBERG**  
**GRADUATE SCHOOL**  
**OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**



## — Workshop Concept

Recent elections in Germany but also elsewhere have shown that populist parties are on the rise. No more are they mere outsiders at the edge of the political spectrum, but they even gained foothold within government coalitions. In recent years scholars increasingly devoted their intention to describing and analyzing populist attitudes, voters and parties. Yet, in many instances these insights remained specific to the distinctive fields of research. The workshop is designed to integrate ideas and explanations from various fields, i.e. political science, sociology, social psychology and communication science. In doing so, scholars will discuss and put together combined approaches for analyzing and combatting populism.

# Time Schedule

June 13, FG1/00.06

9:15 - 9:30: Introduction

9:30 - 10:15: Anne Schulz

Measuring Populism across Nations: An Inventory of Populist Attitudes - Discussant: Christopher Wratil

10:15 - 11:00: Andrej Zaslove

Measuring Populist Attitudes: New Wine in an Old Bottle? Or just Better Wine? - Discussant: Marc Helbling

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11:15 - 12:00: Christopher Wratil

The Populist Market Place: Unpacking the Role of “Thin“ and “Thick“ Ideology - Discussant: Andrej Zaslove

12:00 - 12:45: Susanne Veit

Embedding Populist Attitudes: Bridging the Gap between Basic Psychological Concepts, Views on Society, and Measures of Populist Attitudes - Discussant: Saskia Ruth

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13:45 - 14:30: Marc Helbling and Sebastian Jungkunz

Social Divides in the Age of Globalization - Discussant: Bruno Castanho Silva

14:30 - 15:15: Saskia Ruth

Measuring Populist Attitudes in Latin America’s Parliamentary Elites - Discussant: Anne Schulz

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15:30 - 16:15: Bruno Castanho Silva

The World Sucks and I Know It: The Psychological Underpinnings of Populist Attitudes - Discussant: Susanne Veit

# Keynote Speech

June 13, FG1/00.08

18:15 - 19:30 Bart Bonikowski

## The Mobilization of Resentment: Populism, Nationalism, and Authoritarianism in the United States and Europe

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Scholarly and journalistic accounts of the recent successes of radical-right politics in Europe and the United States, including the Brexit referendum and the Trump campaign, tend to conflate three phenomena: populism, nationalism, and authoritarianism. While all three are important elements of the radical right, they are neither coterminous nor limited to the right. The resulting lack of analytical clarity has hindered accounts of the causes and consequences of ethno-nationalist populism. To address this problem, I bring together existing research on nationalism, populism, and authoritarianism in contemporary democracies to precisely define these concepts and examine temporal patterns in their supply and demand, that is, politicians' discursive strategies and the corresponding public attitudes. Existing research shows that both the supply and demand sides of radical politics have been relatively stable over time, which suggests that in order to understand public support for radical politics, scholars should instead focus on the increased resonance between pre-existing attitudes and discursive frames. Drawing on recent research in cultural sociology, I argue that resonance is not only a function of the congruence between a frame and the beliefs of its audience, but also of shifting context. In the case of radical-right politics, a variety of social changes have engendered a sense of collective status threat among national ethnocultural majorities. Political and media discourse has channeled such threats into resentments toward elites, immigrants, and ethnic, racial, and religious minorities, thereby activating previously latent attitudes and lending legitimacy to radical political campaigns that promise to return power and status to their aggrieved supporters. Not only does this form of politics threaten democratic institutions and inter-group relations, but it also has the potential to alter the contours of mainstream public discourse, thereby creating the conditions of possibility for future successes of populist, nationalist, and authoritarian politics.

**Anne Schulz**  
University of Zurich

**Measuring Populism across Nations: An Inventory of Populist Attitudes**

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The rising voter support for populist parties in Western Democracies in recent years has incited academic interest in populist voters and attitudes connected to voting propensity of populist actors. In line of this research numerous scales to measure populist attitudes among voters have been proposed. In most cases, however, the measurement of populist attitudes was tailored to a specific country or even party and its applicability to other countries or even cross-national research on populism was not assessed. This paper uses a cross-national survey to assess the measurement invariance, reliability, and validity of a deductively developed inventory for populist attitudes (IPA). The findings suggest that there is a common attitudinal base to left- and right-wing populism which may be measured reliably and invariantly across nations.

**Authors:**

Anne Schulz, Martin Wettstein, Marco Steenbergen, Christian Schemer, Dominique S. Wirz, Philipp Müller, Werner Wirth

# Andrej Zaslove

Radboud University

## Measuring Populist Attitudes: New Wine in an Old Bottle? Or just Better Wine?

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What explains why voters support populist parties? Two competing explanations dominate the literature. The more standard explanation focuses on conventional indicators such as political trust, efficacy, and political satisfaction. The argument goes as follows: voters with lower levels of trust, efficacy, or satisfaction with government are more likely to support populist parties (Fieschi & Heywood, 2004; Krouwel & Abts, 2007). The second approach focuses on populist attitudes, arguing that citizens with higher levels of populist attitudes (defined as a people-centered notion of political representation) are more likely to support populist parties (Akkerman et al, 2014; Van Hauwaert and Van Kessel, 2018). The populist approach does not deny that indicators such as trust and efficacy may partially explain support for populist parties, but it goes a step further (Akkerman et al 2017). It argues that those who support populist parties do not only support populist parties because of their political disaffection. Those who support populist parties may also possess a specific concept of political representation, i.e. a people-centered notion of political representation. In essence, the first approach equates populism with an anti-establishment vote, while the second approach argues that populism is not only a vote against the political establishment but it is a vote for an alternative (Spruyt et al 2016).

To determine which of these two approaches best explains support for populist parties, we first need to take a step back. We need to examine whether the diverse indicators measure something different. We know that lower levels of trust and lower levels of political satisfaction predict voting for populist parties fairly well (c.f. Norris 2004). While we also know that scoring higher on a people-centered measure of populism does well in predicting voting for a populist party (Akkerman et al 2017; Van Hauwaert and Van Kessel 2018). The first part of the paper identifies whether the different indicators, perhaps, measure the same thing? The purpose of this first part of the paper is to assess the extent to which the populist measure taps into something different than the more standard trust and efficacy measures. The second part of the paper, subsequently tests the extent to which the different indicators are able to explain support for populist parties.

Using data from the Netherlands (NKO) from the 2017 elections we first perform a confirmatory factor analysis using the standard six populism questions (Akkerman et al 2014), political trust, external efficacy, and internal efficacy items. We show that that political trust, external efficacy, internal efficacy and populist attitudes are different constructs. Second, using structural equation modelling we build a vote choice model with populist attitudes, trust and efficacy as our main independent variables. In this part we show that populist attitudes, rather than trust or efficacy, is the most important indicator to explain voting for a populist party.

The results have important implications for further research on populism. The findings demonstrate that populism is not just a protest vote, but also a choice for an alternative, i.e. for the idea that solving the most pressing political problems is possibly if politicians follow the will of the people. These findings are important for future research. By better understanding the differences (and/or the links) between populism and other measures of political preferences we are better able to understand why voters support populist parties and we can also perhaps better explain why populist parties remain successful.

**Authors:**

Andrej Zaslove, Bram Geurkink, Kristof Jacobs, Roderick Sluiter

# Christopher Wratil

University of Cologne

## The Populist Market Place: Unpacking the Role of “Thin“ and “Thick“ Ideology

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Scholarly work on populism initially centered on the “supply side” of populism – analyzing populist parties and discourse in various countries. More recently, attention has shifted to the “demand side” – concentrating on analyzing voters’ populist attitudes. Much of the recent work in both of these literatures adopts the “thin” ideology conceptualization of populism in which populism is defined by the struggle between the elites and the people. Populist parties, however, also adopt issue positions that can be described as “thick” or “host” ideologies. Therefore, there is a need to unpack whether voters are drawn to these parties because of the thin essence of populism or because of the thick issue positions these parties adopt. We thus set out to test the extent to which “thin” valence-issues (e.g., expanding direct democracy, fighting corruption) and “thick” populist position-issues (e.g., deporting refugees, leaving the European Union, taming globalization) affect vote intentions. We leverage a conjoint experiment fielded on a nationally representative sample of Germans in the run-up to the 2017 German federal elections to unpack the role of thin and thick ideology on candidate choice. Our findings highlight the central role “thick” populist supply and demand play in the electoral marketplace.

### Authors:

Christopher Wratil, Fabian G. Neuner



# Susanne Veit

WZB Berlin Social Science Center

## Embedding Populist Attitudes: Bridging the Gap between Basic Psychological Concepts, Views on Society, and Measures of Populist Attitudes

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In recent years, several scholars have proposed instruments to measure populist attitudes. These instruments capture specific attitudes towards political actors, processes and institutions and are very well able to predict political behavior – for example, voting for populist parties. While this is clearly an important contribution, we consider it necessary to go one step further by embedding populist attitudes in a broader context to understand the rise of populism. Following Taggart, we link existing measures to more general feelings about and attitudes towards society. By incorporating ideas and concepts from socio-psychological research on political ideologies we present an integrated framework which sheds light on the foundations of populist attitudes.

Based on a representative survey conducted in Germany (N = 2,000), we validate this framework by linking general characteristics and ideologies (e.g. RWA, dogmatism), feelings and perceptions about specific aspects of society (e.g. heartland, sense of crisis, homogeneity of the people) and specific attitudes on politics and politicians (e.g. people’s sovereignty, anti-elitism). Using SEMs, this paper contributes to the understanding of populist attitudes by identifying its more general foundations. Results suggest that populist attitudes are indeed closely linked to several established psychological concepts encouraging further interdisciplinary research.

### Authors:

Susanne Veit, Heiko Giebler, Magdalena Hirsch, Benjamin Schürmann

# Marc Helbling and Sebastian Jungkunz

University of Bamberg

## Social Divides in the Age of Globalization

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Over the last decades a new integration-demarcation cleavage has emerged in Europe that opposes political parties that are in favor or against globalization. While we know a lot about the socio-structural basis and the political organization of this cleavage we do not know to what extent these political divides have led to social divides. The aim of this paper is therefore to investigate how losers and winners of globalization oppose each other. On the basis of representative online experiments in Germany we study attitudes and behavior towards people with different nationalities, education and party preferences, which correspond to the cultural, socio-structural and organizational elements of the new cleavage. More particularly we like to know to what extent people are willing to interact with each other in daily life and how much they trust each other. Our main results show that people who identify with different parties (especially if they belong to the different sides of the cleavage) oppose each other much more than people with different nationalities. To a lesser extent we also observe polarization between people with strong and weak populist attitudes. There is however no divide between low- and high-skilled persons. Finally, it appears that the social divides are asymmetrical: winners of globalization resent the losers more than vice versa.

# Saskia Ruth

GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies

## Measuring Populist Attitudes in Latin America's Parliamentary Elites

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Populism has a long history in Latin America since many countries in this region experienced traditional forms of populism in the first half of the 20th century as well as modern forms of populism that reappeared after the third wave of democratic transition. Existing research has focussed on the clarification of the concept of populism as well as on explaining the success of populist contenders. Recently, empirical research has also advanced in the task of measuring the complex phenomenon of populism, e.g. through textual analysis of political speeches or public opinion surveys to measure populist attitudes of voters. However, with the exception of key political figures like presidents, prime ministers and political parties in general, the inclination of parliamentary elites towards populist attitudes has yet to be explored. This paper sets out to close this gap and presents a first glance on data measuring populist attitudes of parliamentary elites in several Latin American countries. Therefore, we follow established conceptualizations of political attitudes into three categories: populist attitudes, pluralist attitudes and elitist attitudes.

### Authors:

Saskia Ruth, Adriana Marcela Ramírez Baracaldo

# Bruno Castanho Silva

University of Cologne

## The World Sucks and I Know It: The Psychological Underpinnings of Populist Attitudes

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Much has been talked about the characteristics of populist discourse among political actors: it defines politics in a Manichaeian, good-versus-evil way, targets an elite as the group to blame for all problems in politics and society, and is centered in the notion of a unified good “people”. However, researchers have not yet tested whether individuals who hold a populist view of politics, and have a preference for such politicians, display psychological characteristics that correspond to these dimensions. We hypothesize that each of the main characteristics of populism – anti-elitism, people-centrism, and Manichaeianism –, are the political manifestations of more fundamental attitudes and beliefs about the world, such as a general distrust and blaming of others for one’s own problems, a belief in the existence of pure good and pure evil in the world, among others. We perform exploratory analyses using data from two countries: a student sample from Croatia (N = 193), and a pilot online survey with 722 respondents, along with a novel and multidimensional scale to measure several constructs that are conceptually part of a populist view of politics. We examine how populist attitudes, and each of its dimensions, is related to higher-order psychological constructs. We find that individuals with a high level of populist attitudes tend to think the world is unfair and filled with essentially evil people, and that they are very certain of such beliefs – being highly dogmatic. This study casts light onto the psychological aspects that can help explain the appeal of populist discourse in much of the Western world today.

### Authors:

Bruno Castanho Silva, Erin K. Jenne, Levente Littvay, Kosta Bovan, Nebojsa Blanus

# SERVICES

## Refreshment Breaks / Lounge

In the morning breaks and afternoon breaks, coffee, soft drinks and small snacks, e.g. pretzels, small cakes, are offered in front of the lounge room FG1/00.06

## Lunch Break

For lunch, we booked a table for 10 persons at Il Cartoccio, Kloster-Banz-Straße 53 for 1 pm which is only a few minutes away by foot from the Feki. Alternatively, we recommend visiting the university's cafeteria ("Mensa"). A meal costs between five and eight EUR. They also offer vegetarian and occasionally vegan options.

## Wi-Fi

You will also have free Wi-Fi access at the University of Bamberg. In Bamberg in general you have many hotspots that support @BayernWLAN, which is a free Wi-Fi service provided by the Bundesland of Bavaria.

## Public Transportation

The most frequent bus connection from the conference venue to the city center is bus number 931. It stops in front of the cafeteria/Mensa at Feldkirchenstraße (Stop: Universität, see campus map). Busses leave at xx:00, xx:10, xx:20, xx:30, xx:40 and xx:50. Bus #931 stops at the train station and ends at the central bus station (ZOB). Bus tickets are available from the bus driver. The single fare is EUR 1.90, alternatively, you could get a multi-trip ticket for four trips which costs EUR 6.50. Please note that you have to pay in cash with the bus driver.

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Seminar Rooms:  
FG1/00.06 + FG1/00.08

## Workshop Dinner

Wednesday, 13 June  
20:00 Eckerts  
Obere Mühlbrücke 9,  
96049 Bamberg

## Further Questions?

For all further questions, please refer to our staff at the registration desk. They will be available to support you throughout the workshop.

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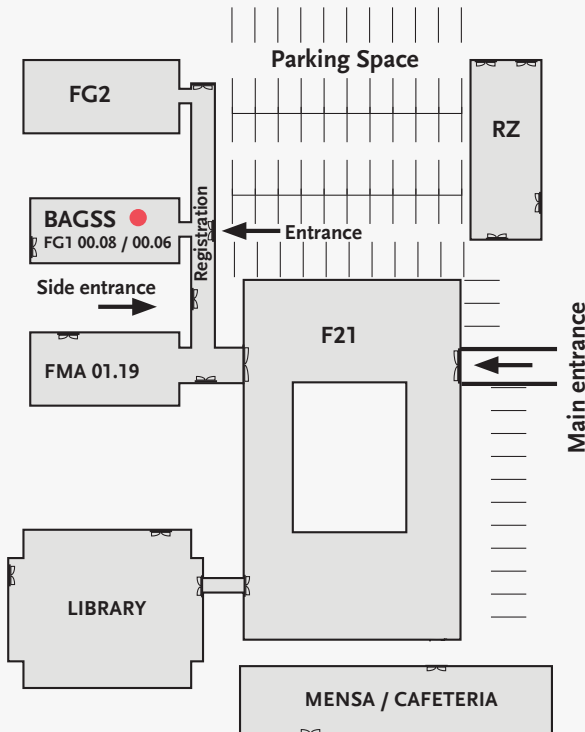
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