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How to Define the Elephant: Towards a Novel Conceptualization of Populism

Fili Nasıl Tanımlamalı: Yeni Bir Popülizm Kavramsallaştırmasına Doğru

Giray Gerim[1]

Abstract
In recent decades, a serious number of studies have been dedicated to defining and conceptualizing populism in order to enable proper and comparative analyses of the phenomenon. They usually studied populism by reducing it to an ideology, discourse, or strategy and provided analytical approaches accordingly although some other approaches (style of communication, political project, etc.) are possible to come across in the relevant literature. Critically engaging with the most influential ones, this article ascertains two principal deficiencies in these bodies of work. Firstly, the minimal and generic definitions presented in these studies empty the concept to a broad extent. Secondly, most scholars assume the concentrated dimension of populism as the whole of the phenomenon and undertake its conceptualization with this assumption to a large extent. As a result of a comprehensive discussion on these main and also some secondary deficiencies, this article offers two ways to treat them. Scholars who examine populism and make comparisons between different cases can either carry out their analyses by taking the multi-layered nature of the phenomenon into account or by clearly stating the dimension of populism which they study and, in this way, limit their work to this dimension without further claims. In addition to all these, showing the inadequacy of the Sartorian approaches that dominate the literature, the article discusses that Wittgensteinian approaches can provide appropriate alternative frameworks for the conceptualization of populism.

Keywords
Populism, Populist Politics, Populist Discourse, Populist Strategy, Populist Parties

Öz
Son yıllarda, fenomenin doğru ve karşılaştırmalı analizlerini mümkün kılmak amacıyla, popülizmi tanımlamaya ve kavramsallaştırmaya yönelik ciddi sayıda çalışma yapılmıştır. İlgili literatürde başka yaklaşımlara (iletişim tarzı, siyasi proje vb.) rastlamak mümkün olsa da söz konusu çalışmalar popülizmi genellikle bir ideoloji, söylem veya stratejiye indirgeyerek incelemişler ve bu doğrultuda analitik yaklaşımlar sunmuşlardır. Bunlar arasında en etkili olanları eleştirel olarak ele alan bu makale, iki temel sorun tespit eder. Birincisi, bu çalışmalarda sunulan minimal ve genel tanımlar, kavramın içini geniş ölçüde boşaltmaktadır. İkincisi, araştırmacıların büyük bir kesimi, popülizmin üzerine yoğunlaştıkları boyutunu fenomenin bütünü varsaymakta ve kavramsallaştırmasını büyük oranda bu varsayım üzerine inşa etmektedir. Bu iki temel sorun ve ayrıca bazı ikincil sorunlar hakkında kapsamlı bir tartışmanın sonucu olarak, makale, popülizm araştırmacıları için iki yol sunar. Popülizmi inceleyen ve farklı vakalar arasında karşılaştırmalar yapan araştırmacılar, analizlerini ya olgunun çok katmanlı yapısını dikkate alarak kurabilir ya da popülizmin inceledikleri boyutunu açıkça belirterek yürütebilir ve bu şekilde çalışmalarını sınırlayabilirler. Tüm bunlara ek olarak, makale, literatüre hâkim olan ve çalışmada eleştirel bir biçimde incelenen Sartorici yaklaşımların yetersizliğini göstererek Wittgensteincı yaklaşımların popülizmin kavramsallaştırılması için daha uygun alternatif çerçeveler sunabileceğini tartışır.

Anahtar Kelimeler
Popülizm, Popülist Siyaset, Popülist Söylem, Popülist Strateji, Popülist Partiler

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Introduction

Chavez, Morales, Trump, Bolsonaro, Le Pen, Wilders, Duterte, Modi, Tsipras, Turrión; what exactly is common among them? Their movements' location in the political spectrum? An affinity in terms of ideology? Any specific discourse or strategy? It is quite difficult to answer. At the very least, there will be serious opposition to our response in any case. Let us change the question and ask instead, "What is the link in our minds that relates these names to each other?" There will be almost a consensus on the "populism" answer. Laclau (1977, p. 143) exactly describes this situation, "We know intuitively to what we are referring when we call a movement or an ideology populist, but we have the greatest difficulty in translating the intuition into concepts." Still, in recent decades, the striking rise of the leaders and movements called or labeled "populist" all over the world has immensely increased the interest in populism as a subfield. This interest has instinctively brought about competing definitions proposed to obviate, overcome, or at least diminish the conceptual ambiguity. However, populism's elasticity, ambiguity, and according to some, omnipresence in politics, discourage attempts to find a clear-cut definition (Taguieff, 1995). It is often discussed in contemporary studies that populism changes color according to its environment and appeals to the grievance of the people, intertwined with the ideologies to which it is attached (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2011, p. 33; Taggart, 2000, p. 2). It is the reason that, beginning with early studies, the inability to evaluate the phenomenon on its own has emerged as one of the biggest difficulties encountered in conceptualizing it (Ionescu and Gellner, 1969, p. 4). Additionally, heterodoxy and pragmatism embedded in it in terms of politics render it even more elusive (Bartha, Boda, and Szikra, 2020).

Of course, these adversities do not prevent scholars from seeking inclusive definitions for populism and concept-building efforts. It has been claimed that a minimal definition is necessary "to theoretically comprehend populism" (Deiwiks, 2009, p. 8) or to compose "a general theory of modern day populism" (Pappas, 2016, p. 14). Another reason behind the efforts in defining the boundaries is to obtain safer and more credible grounds for comparisons:

> If two or more items are identical, we do not have a problem of comparability. On the other hand, if two or more items have nothing, or not enough in common, we rightly say that stones and rabbits cannot be compared. By and large, then, we obtain comparability when two or more items appear "similar enough," that is, neither identical nor utterly different (Sartori, 1970, p. 1035).

Sartori (1970, pp. 1051-152) complains about conceptual stretching and damage created by "meaningless togetherness" in the construction of concepts. His concept-building approach is based on negation and a ladder of abstraction. He argues that negative identification is a requirement for determinate concepts, and concepts without opposite concepts are indeterminate. In other words, "any determination involves a negation" in order to specify the boundaries. Moreover, for valid, comparative frameworks, a researcher must check where the phenomena stand on the ladder of abstraction. He also carefully adds that the goal to establish a minimal common denominator is not an excuse to feed "primitivism and formlessness." This rigorous approach has been very influential on concept-building efforts including the ones on populism, and many scholars have

struggled to build a concept of populism from their perspectives by finding minimum common denominators and demarking the concept via negations in their works.

The scholars directly or indirectly influenced by this Sartorian definitionism usually set common denominators and boundaries and develop definitions based on them. It has been a common view to date that clear definitions would facilitate comparative studies and provide a significant breakthrough in theory. However, in my opinion, there are some serious downsides that are clearly overlooked. One of the most serious of these, as Finchelstein (2017, p. 145) expresses, is that generic and minimal definitions are usually based on self-referentiality. After articulating the question "What is populism?" and giving a delineated answer to this question, scholars usually limit themselves to their answers and evaluate the cases within the frameworks which they construct themselves. Secondly, adhering to classical definitionism brings about the risk of dismissing the opportunities which can be benefited from ostensive definitions. Lastly and interrelatedly with these two, strict definitions mostly confine a multi-faceted and multi-layered concept like populism to one of its dimensions emphasized in each of them. Roberts (1995, pp. 84-85) adequately explains and summarizes such difficulties in defining populism with the parable of the blind men and an elephant. He contends that most scholars pay attention to its historical/sociological, economic, ideological, and political particularities, rather than seeing the complexity of the phenomenon, and this causes them to fail in grasping the adaptive and dynamic properties and transformations of the concept. Moreover, the analyses within single perspectives give contradictory outcomes to each other.

Although there are works regarding populism as a form of mass politics (Collier, 2001), a political project of mobilization (Jansen, 2011), a political form referring to a definite regime in power (Finchelstein and Urbinati, 2018), a political communication style (Jagers and Walgrave, 2007; Manin, 1997; Moffitt, 2016), recently, when we review sociology and political science literature on this phenomenon, conceptual approaches have gathered in three main groups. Gidron and Bonikowski (2013) state that populism is defined as an ideology, a discourse, or a political strategy by scholars, and in a more recent work, De la Torre (2019, p. 4) categorizes the approaches to populism as "discursive, political, and ideational theories." Although the nomenclature changes, it is observed that there is an overlap in this ternary classification. The first goal of this study is to examine how the influential works in these main groups approach and define populism and to show one by one how and why they fail to address the concept in a well-rounded way.

Contrary to classical definitionism which aims to clearly set the boundaries of populism as a concept, we see the Wittgensteinian family resemblance approach. Referring to his famous "game" example, Wittgenstein (1958) asserts that we use this term to describe card games, board games, ball games, and so on although we do not have a clear definition of it. According to him, even if there is no property shared by all of the games and we cannot develop a definition on common denominators, we still detect a network of overlapping and crisscrossing similarities and affinities. Considering the range of populisms, some scholars have remarked that the Wittgensteinian way is necessary to characterize this phenomenon (Brubaker, 2017; Canovan, 1981; Ceci, 2019; Collier, 2001; Roberts, 1995; Sikk, 2009). The opinion shared by them to a broad extent is that the term "populism" can cover very dissonant movements at the same time, and what diverse populist cases

share is a family resemblance. Consequently, different combinations of traits, not "the full set of traits," constitute each case of populism (Collier, 2001, p. 11816). In my view, such an approach has more potential to grasp this elusive concept and to provide grounds to analyze it than definitions with sharp boundaries. However, even though Brubaker's (2017) relevant study made a serious contribution in this direction, a comprehensive set of traits to address the family resemblance and a conceptualization which relies on such a set that enables to construct frameworks in order to comparatively analyze cases of populism are still missing in the literature. Consequently, the second goal of this study is to provide this set of traits for contemporary populism and to make room for discussions on a new conceptualization in this direction.

Conceptualizations of Populism and the Problem of Context

Before critically engaging with the three prominent approaches to populism, I would like to shortly discuss the "context" issue, which, I believe, can give us some insights into further analyses. Since populism has an extremely amorphous structure, context is of vital importance in making sense of each case. Populist politics provides a basis of identification for individuals and groups who have not identified with positive social identities by utilizing "deep feelings of discontent" with both political and social life (Spruyt, Keppens, & Droogenbroeck, 2016, p. 335). However, sources of discontent over the rise of populism vary among societies and are intertwined in most cases (Noury and Roland, 2020), and the significance of the roles played by each alters in every single case. Furthermore, how and in which ways that discontent is reconstructed and presented are as vital as what it really is. For this reason, conceptualizations through abstractions that do not pay enough attention to the context mislead and direct us to seek the "essence." Worsley (1969, pp. 212-213) aptly draws attention to this problem and rejects the Platonist assumption that "ideas can be isolated in some pure, original, embryonic, or archetypal form." In some studies, this search for the unchanging "idea" or "essence" sometimes breaks populism from its contemporary context since this phenomenon is evaluated over a very broad time span. In her seminal work on populism, Canovan (1981) specifies two main varieties of populism and states that the first broad family, agrarian populism, is a feature of modernizing rural societies while the second one is more about political problems of democracy. Although it can be seen that the agrarian type takes up a lot of space in the theory since the Russian Narodniks and American populists are usually considered the pioneers of populism, this genre's connection with the contemporary phenomenon is extremely weak. First of all, we should state that there was no direct link even between these two cases in terms of agency. The Narodniks were the Russian intellectuals who believed that the moral regeneration and the political transformation of the Russian people had to be formed around the *narod*, which means "folk," "people" or "nation."[1] On the other side, the American case amounted to a type of radical rural politics carried out by farmers (Allcock, 1971, p. 372; Canovan, 1981, pp. 5-6). Moreover, it remained limited to the agrarian and rural segments of society (Goodwyn, 1978; Postel, 2007). Largely for this reason, Müller (2017, p. 88) also asserts that the first American populists were not actually populists in the sense we understand

1 Worsley (1969, p. 221) enounces that the equation between the words "narodnichestvo" and "populist" is actually a matter of categories available in language.

today since they did not pretend to represent the people as a whole. Secondly, it should be reckoned that the majority of populations were located in rural areas regarding that time, so the disadvantaged conditions such as undeveloped transportation and communication should also be taken into account (Johnson, 1983). This very dissimilar context has to be taken into account when questioning why early populists did not have strong leadership. In the same vein, Moffitt (2016) asserts that populism in its contemporary context is quite different from these early examples since it has crucial importance today in dealing with how populism is mediatized and stylized through media.

On the other side, conceptualizations too attached to particular contexts lead to seriously controversial results, such as identifying the aforementioned "idea" or "essence" of populism within those contexts. To exemplify, particularities such as egalitarian stance, redistribution policies, and support for the state intervention in the economy, exhibit the leftist nature of populism in Latin American countries (Mudde, 2011; Seligson, 2007; Weyland, 2010). Focusing on this continent, some scholars evaluate populism through the economic policies in Latin America where popular governments attempt to revive national economies through redistribution of sources which is most of the time followed by massive irresponsible or ill-planned spending (Acemoğlu, Egorov and Sonin, 2013; Dornbusch and Edwards, 1991). Yet, both Roberts (1995) and Weyland (1996) show us that there is no direct causal link between populism and any specific socio-economic model. In parallel, Hawkins and Rovira Kaltwasser (2017a, p. 522) criticize economic definitions such as these and claim that they restrict populism to leftist or inclusionary forms and exclude right-wing instances.

To capitalize on the discussion carried out so far, it can be concluded that the ways to approach populism can be as problematic as the phenomenon itself. Therefore, I assume that each of the competing approaches should be examined through such a lens as well.

Populism as an Ideology

The ideational approach may be the most popular one among all which aim to define populism. As a prominent name of this approach, Mudde (2004, p. 543) gives a frequently cited definition of populism:

> …an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, "the pure people" versus "the corrupt elite", and which argues that politics should be an expression of the volonté générale (general will) of the people.

Although it is possible to see various definitions of political ideology in the literature, almost all of them share the emphasis on a coherent set of beliefs, ideas, and values both to comprehend and explain the world and also on a program for action based on this set (Ball, Dagger, and O'Neill, 2014; Freeden, 2006; Heywood, 2003; MacKenzie, 2003). However, it is almost impossible to infer any reference to such a program.

Mudde borrows the term "thin-ideology" from Freeden's work. According to the morphological perspective propounded by Freeden (2006, p. 77), ideologies are "characterized by a morphology that displays core, adjacent, and peripheral concepts." He describes the term "thin-centered ideology" which has a restricted core compared to full-fledged ideologies and remarks that a thin-centered ideology shows "a structural inability to offer complex ranges of argument" (Freeden, 1998, p. 750). Yet, he also

argues that "decreased integration does not imply the absence of a set of unifying core concepts altogether." It is quite difficult to extract a sound understanding of the term. For instance, in examining nationalism, he concludes that this phenomenon oscillates between being a thin-centered ideology and existing as a component of other ideologies (p. 751). Mudde (2004) draws on his ideational approach on this slippery slope. Aslanidis (2016, p. 91) severely criticizes this and asserts that we always need a limited set of core attributes when it is necessary to define something. He contends that an endless number of concepts such as Euroscepticism, fascism, xenophobia, technocracy, racism, globalization, consumerism can be called ideology within this "concocted" framework; even concepts like people-centrism and anti-elitism, which are presented as the core features of populism, can be viewed as thin ideologies.

Stanley (2008, p. 100) aptly denotes another difficulty in recognizing populism as an ideology:

> Whilst many prominent ideologies have 'left record' of themselves in the shape of philosophical political institutions that transcend individual parties, movements or leaders, there is little evidence of institutional elements indicating a common purpose or unity amongst populists: there is no Populist International; no canon of key populist texts or calendar of significant moments; and the icons of populism are of local rather than universal appeal.

Nevertheless, he thinks that these can be disregarded due to the aforementioned "thin" nature. According to him, populism is a "distinct ideology" even though it does not have a comprehensive program to offer solutions to substantial political questions; however, its thin nature disables it "to stand alone" (p. 95). He specifies the conceptual core of populist ideology with a few concepts which can be summarized as the antagonistic relationship between the people and the elite, the positive valorization of the first and denigration of the second, and an emphasis on the idea of popular sovereignty (p. 102). Nevertheless, is such a core enough to evaluate populism as an ideology, even if a thin one? Compared to other ideologies, Bonikowski (2016, p. 12) asserts that "populism is based on a rudimentary moral logic," and instead of providing a comprehensive understanding of politics or society like them, it only gives "a simplistic critique of existing configurations of power." Besides, this logic is not unique to it. Laclau (2005a, p. 18) contends that simplification of political space through antagonisms cannot be seen as a trademark which is peculiar to populism because this is just at the center of the political. According to him (2005b, p. 47), no political movement can be entirely exempted from populism, because all of them discursively construct "the people" against the enemy to configure the political sphere.

Another issue to examine regarding the approaches which view populism as an ideology can be the repeating themes in the definitions. Müller (2017, p. 19) regards populism as "a particular moralistic imagination of politics," a way of perceiving politics as a confrontation between the pure, unified people and morally inferior elites. According to another popular and very similar definition by Albertazzi and McDonnel (2008, p. 3), populism is "an ideology which pits a virtuous and homogeneous people against a set of elites and dangerous 'others' who are together depicted as depriving (or attempting to deprive) the sovereign people of their rights, values, prosperity, identity and voice." It can be seen that "virtuous and homogeneous people against immoral elite" is a leitmotiv in the definitions. But is this explanatory enough for all cases of populism?

Katsambekis (2016, p. 6) examines the case of Syriza and asserts that the plurality embedded in the notion of "the people" in this party's discourse contrasts with the homogeneous and unified people concept in ideational approaches. As he points out, Syriza's appeal is to a "plural people" which consisted of various excluded, marginalized, or empowered groups. Furthermore, he discusses that the moral ground suggested by these approaches is not validated in this case. In this party's discourse, the predominant division is between the "neoliberal establishment" and "those without a voice." Therefore, he propounds that this populist case is not mainly moralist, and the moralistic embellishment of antagonism is not necessary in general. Although the antagonism can be primarily moralist as in the cases of Chavismo or Podemos, it can also be political as in the case of Syriza.[2]

Papas (2016, pp. 8-9) draws attention to a problem other than homogeneity and morality in the conceptualization of populism and discusses that elitism cannot be "a real negative pole for populism," because, in diverse political situations such as aristocracy, oligarchy, fascism, authoritarianism, technocracy, and meritocracy, it is possible to claim that some "elite" rules, and none of them is intrinsically in enmity with populism. In parallel, Akkerman, Mudde, and Zaslove (2014, p. 1328) firstly claim that elitism is the mirror image of populism, but they later admit that they are "not necessarily mutually exclusive" in practice and they also share a disdain for politics.

By ruling out key elements such as leadership, strategy, and style of communication, ideational approaches and the definitions set forth by them reduce populism to an ideology relying on the dichotomy of the pure people and the immoral elites, and such conceptualizations may work to comprehend radical right-wing parties at the margins of the political systems, particularly when they are in opposition (De la Torre and Mazolleni, 2019, pp. 85-87). Yet, this dichotomy does not grant much insight into the transformation of the mainstream parties to adopt the populist style and discourses.

Some advocates of the ideational approach also justify that scholars would need to draw from the insights of alternative approaches in order to examine the issues such as the conditions brought about by populist leaders or the impact of populism on democracies. Attested also by its proponents, the ideational approach fails or seems inadequate in understanding the interaction of populism with other political ideas and in theorizing the "modes of political organization" pursued by the populists (Hawkins and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017b, p. 526). Still, many scholars insist on this approach since it gives them the opportunity to make at least an ostensible difference between populist and non-populist, and to carry out comparative analyses; however, this function is not problem-free. By addressing the newly founded parties in Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia, Sikk (2009) shows that the distinction between the populist and non-populist is very disputable especially in the cases of new parties since they intrinsically incorporate anti-incumbency. In my opinion, this point concerning the "thin-ideology" in question is very significant. If we go a little further with the argument, any opposition party is inherently "anti-establishment." Moreover, all of them may consider a party in power as the "ruling

2 In his more recent study, Katsambekis (2020) strengthen this point by examining parties and leaders of the populist left in Europe and concludes that constructing homogenous people is not a necessary condition for populism. Besides, he points out that moral framings are prevalent in political discourse in general and cannot be considered specific to populism.

elite" to some extent, and all of them may also have a claim to represent "the people." Therefore, this is an easy template to fill and does not say much on its own. Thus, it can easily dilute what ideology refers to in political analysis.

We may give an example of this issue. After examining Le Pen, Haider, Chavez, and Morales, Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2011, p. 31) ask what is in common among them. They admit that the first two are very different than the latter two. In the cases of Le Pen and Haider, the socio-cultural dimension is prominent, and the exclusionary features (against the immigrants) are clear, while in the latter cases of populism, the socio-economic dimension prevails, and the inclusionary features are more noticeable. However, they still claim that there are parallels among all of the leaders, such as complaining about the corrupted state of the system which brings about the misuse of political representation, the elites' incapacity or lack of interest in addressing the "real" problems of the people, and the elites' intention to rule against the will of "the pure people." According to them, these are sufficient to assert that all four of these figures share the same ideology.

Moreover, to highlight the ideological ground, Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2014, p. 383) trivialize the significance of other aspects of the phenomenon of populism, such as leadership. They argue that many populist political parties have outlived their founding leader or never had a dominant leader. They give the Belgian Flemish Party and the Danish People's Party (DFP) as examples. However, they miss a critical point concerning this matter. The ideological core of the VB is Flemish nationalism. There is a demand for nationalism, anti-immigration attitudes, and so on, and the party canalizes them to party politics. The same can be said in the case of the Danish People's Party (DFP) as well. That is why focusing on populism as the ideological core is misleading in these cases. These parties may apply populist discourses and strategies to gain power, but they still do it in accordance with their already existing ideological framework. Instead of "populist," it may be clearer to use specific terms such as "xenophobic," "illiberal," "right-wing nationalist," etc., as Sikk (2009, p. 11) suggests for such cases.

All in all, it is not possible to state that populism can be adequately understood and explained with ideological terms alone. The frames offered by ideational references do not provide much beyond the well-known premises of party politics.

Populism as a Discourse

In dealing with populism as a discourse, we should make a distinction at the beginning. Although most of the approaches rely on Laclau's works or have been developed through critical readings of them, there is also one other branch that can be considered a part, or (mostly methodological) extension, of the ideational approach. We will examine them in order.

Although Laclau (2005a; 2005b) did not put forward a systematical and clear methodology to examine populism, he delineated a theoretical framework for this phenomenon. He asserted that we can understand it by focusing on how "the people" is constructed as a hegemonic concept in political discourse. The antagonistic logic created by the boundaries of this construction is at the core of the phenomenon.

Parallel to Laclau, Panizza (2000, p. 179) propounds that populism discursively builds "the people," "the other," and the antagonism between them in economic or political terms or sometimes as a combination of both. According to him, "at the heart of the

populist appeal lies the imaginary constitution of popular identities in opposition to the established order." But, in another study, he also notes that "almost every political speech appeals to the people or claims to speak for the people, which could make it impossible to distinguish populist from non-populist political entities" (Panizza, 2005, p. 5). This theoretical line concentrates on how social categories are configured and prescribes a shift from ideology to political logic; however, some scholars put the antagonism at the center (De Cleen, 2019), while some put the resentment at the centre of populist logic instead of it, and assert that logic of resentment sets populism in motion by creating identifications and normative group boundaries (Da Silva and Vieira, 2019).

Undoubtedly, discourse is a vital part of populism and populist politics. Notwithstanding, proponents of discursive approaches have a tendency to induce populism to one of its dimensions. As a good example, Aslanidis (2016) puts forward that finding and analyzing discursive elements which exalt the "noble people" and condemn "corrupt elites" is sufficient to seize and measure populism. Therefore, he denotes that populism is a discursive frame rather than a strategy or ideology. According to Aslanidis, Laclau "pioneered efforts to discard nonessential dimensions (economic, social, etc.) that contaminated the literature and focused on the discursive construction of populist appeals," but his theory heavily relies on a qualitative and interpretive ground; therefore, "it fails to provide objective comparative methodological instruments, remaining indifferent towards any quantitative valuations" (p.97). This is exactly where discourse-oriented interpretations of the ideational approach come into play. Aslanidis argues that Mudde's ideological definition can be turned into a discursive definition with a little change:

> Based on the above, we consider 'discourse' as much better suited to characterize the conceptual genus of populism. If we do away with the unnecessary ideological clause in Mudde's (2004) formulation, we are left with a purely discursive definition: populism modestly becomes a discourse, invoking the supremacy of popular sovereignty to claim that corrupt elites are defrauding 'the People' of their rightful political authority. It becomes an *anti-elite discourse in the name of the sovereign People* (p. 96).

Hawkins and Rovira Kaltwasser (2017a, p. 513) state that the ideational approach "draws heavily from earlier discursive theories" and propound that its superiority to political-strategic, structuralist, and economic approaches comes from its ability to provide "empirical measures" thanks to this. They argue that this approach enables scholars all around the world to possess the tools to analyze populism, and they attempt to illustrate it through their study which comparatively addresses the presidential discourses of three Latin American countries, namely Argentina, Peru, and Chile. They use holistic grading, which prescribes reading the text in its entirety, to deal with the selected speeches of the leaders, and the coders assign scores: 0 means "little or no populism," 1 means "moderate or inconsistent populism," and 2 means "strong and consistent populism" (p. 518). According to them, this systematic reading of political speeches is both impressively successful in "capturing scholarly wisdom" and helpful for revealing "the shortcomings of alternative definitions" (p. 523).

Actually, it is possible to detect many problematic points in this approach and its methodology. First of all, the ideational approach is not a must for such research. In any approach, researchers can set a priori criteria and make assessments based on them. Secondly, what each score amounts to is not clearly explained at all, and what that "little

populism" actually means is clouded. Thirdly, the study controls the effectiveness of the ideational definition of populism through the criteria that are already set by that very definition, which looks like a vicious circle. We can explain this point a little further. Hawkins and Rovira Kaltwasser (2017a, p. 519) state that although Carlos Menem has been generally viewed as a prototypical neo-populist figure of the 1990s' Latin America by some scholars (Gibson, 1997; Weyland, 1996), the analysis of his selected speeches in office could not find clear references to the Manichean distinction between the people and the elite. They add that his discourse has a highly redemptive but also a pluralist tone that is so much less populist than the discourse in his first presidential campaign, and they give an example to validate this claim in which Menem emphasizes the necessity of reunifications of Argentineans. Indeed, this is a very good example of the aforementioned vicious circle. The criteria set by the approach to identify populism are applied to a case; it is declared that according to these criteria, no populism is detected in the case, and the writers then propound that the approach validated its empirical convenience. Moreover, as De la Torre and Mazzoleni (2019, p. 89) assert, Hawkins and Rovira Kaltwasser (2017a) restrict the discourse analysis to the text itself, but such an analysis should involve some complementary components such as the performances of speeches and the reception dimension of the discourses. They also put forward that Hawkins (2010, p. 77) reaches false positives in another study through a similar statistical measurement of political discourse, such as categorizing George W. Bush as a populist, who clearly is not, or counting a socialist leader, Salvador Allende as a populist, whose ideology already accommodates a discursive "the people against the oligarchy" theme on a Marxist ground.

As the last issue, human subjectivity in the assessment is as evident as in any other approach. Poblete (2015, p. 214) successfully clarifies that in Hawkins' methodology, the holistic grading technique is "properly qualitative" although the comparison of the cases is carried out within a quantitative framework. Because, at the end of the day, what he applies are the hermeneutic skills of the analyzer. Therefore, he posits that the analysis should be considered closer to qualitative comparative analysis which is contrary to what the researchers emphasize.

Akkerman, Mudde, and Zaslove (2014) aim to measure populist attitudes and explore the link between them and party preferences in the Dutch case. Their dataset specifies three attitudes, namely populist, elitist, and pluralist, and put the first one. However, the statements they call populist, elitist, and pluralist are quite disputable. According to them, "The politicians in the Dutch parliament need to follow the will of the people" is a populist statement that is what people simply expect in every democracy. Another statement is "It is important to listen to the opinion of other groups," and they call this a pluralist statement (p. 1331). In my view, it is not surprising at all if a participant gives high points to both statements since there is no conflict among them prima facie. Thus, when such a study obtains some numeric data, this does not mean that it is entirely free from subjectivity. Furthermore, if we use this dataset in another case country, it will likely differ in what they understand referencing these statements (such as the concept of "other group"), and this will not give us a healthy comparative quantitative framework. Eventually, for a comparative analysis of the cases, we still need the researcher's interpretation as in other approaches, and Kuhn (1962) showed us that the nature of observation is not free from

the theories which researchers rely on and is not independent of their prior experiences and held beliefs. This is contrary to the prominent scholars writing on populism such as Müller (2017, p. 40) who thinks that populists "employ a very specific kind of language," and therefore it does not depend on subjective impressions to decide if someone speaks this language or not; focusing on discourse is not a panacea to the subjectivity problem in this matter.

Lastly, in addition to these theoretical and methodological issues, I would like to shortly discuss another issue concerning the discursive approaches to populism. As we all know, what discourse means can be conceived beyond speech and text. Accordingly, the dimensions such as means and performative aspects of discourse are also critical to evaluate discourse since populism can also be seen as a political communication style (Jagers and Walgrave, 2007; Moffit, 2016). Manin (1997, p. 220) aptly argues that contemporary political communication via mass media changed the nature of representative democracy because political figures do not depend on the mediation of the party network to directly communicate to their electorate. To some extent, it gives a face-to-face, a direct link between the leader and voter, which stands out as a significant aspect of contemporary populist cases. In the same vein, Moffit (2016) puts forth that definite traits of and tendencies in media logic, such as simplification, intensification, dramatization, personalization, emotionalization, and prioritization of conflict are analogous with or complementary to populism, and this explains the recent success and proliferation of populism around the world. It is possible to think about this issue in a way that is connected to the neglect of the role of leadership in the ideational approach, which is also a controversial issue. Concerning it, Weyland (2017, pp. 53-54) notes that Hawkins' approach scores the speeches made by top leaders and does not even examine other documents of the movements, but he still prefers not to acknowledge the essential role of leaders in his conceptualizations. He regards this as a critical failure of ideology-centered and discursive approaches that causes them to miss the core intention of populism, which is not to empower "the people" but to embody the general will of the people in a personalistic leader.

Nevertheless, even if these points are considered, discourse can only give us a partial picture of the phenomenon of populism. Social circumstances of discursive practices are constitutive and constructive for any discourse, and they are also crucial for the analysis of discourse (Fairclough, 1992, p. 4). Social reality is actually a conglomeration of discourse, practices, and structures, and it cannot be reduced to any of these components; therefore, scholars who analyze the discursive aspect of social reality usually aim to place it within a broader social context (Parker, 1998; Wodak, 2006). Consequently, although political discourse is an essential part of the phenomenon, it should not be simply considered equal to populism.

Populism as a Political Strategy

Even though there is no consensus on the main attributes of populist strategy among the scholars who use the political approach, it can be easily stated that they all hold the same focus on agency and political action rather than ideology (Barr, 2018, p. 44). Therefore, conceiving populism as a political strategy shifts our attention to populist mobilization

itself from varying ideological tenets, political positions, and organizational structures, and, to some extent, helps us to broaden our understanding of the phenomenon which at times stays confined to definite and undisputedly populist actors in politics (Gerim, 2018, p. 428). To illustrate the point, Ware (2002) asserts that in the case of the U.S., it is extremely difficult to make a distinction between populist appeals and mainstream political traditions, values and conflicts. He notes that there once was a political movement under this name, but now it is a political strategy which is deployed by a wide range of politicians. Bonikowski (2016, pp. 13-16) expounds this argument well by remarking that populism is not a stable property of political actors, and for this reason, making a clear-cut distinction between the populist and non-populist is not easy and postulated in the ideational approach. Politicians' reliance on populism varies on the conditions. Being a strategy applied by "political outsiders," the populist tone may change over the course of a career. As an example, he shows that less experienced U.S. presidential candidates have a greater tendency to draw on populist rhetoric than those who previously held office in Washington D.C. In addition, it is difficult to assume that populist strategy works at the same efficiency level everywhere or in every political campaign. The preferences and interests of voters give it a level and a form most of the time. Therefore, he claims that it is "not a coherent worldview but a dynamic framing strategy" (p. 23). As another proponent of this approach, Barr (2018, p. 50) puts forward that the propositions which the ideational approach scholars offer to keep the core of the concept to a minimum can result in an expansive extension. For instance, if the Manichean discourse is what defines the core of populism, then it is possible to consider both George W. Bush and ISIS populists. Regarding all of these, one can say that the idea of a unifying ideology is clearly disavowed in this approach.

The proponents of the political-strategic approach emphasize that populist actors rely on a specific strategy to reconfigure the political sphere. According to De La Torre (2019, p. 2), we can attain a similar political logic and strategies among populists to get to power and to rule:

• They conceive politics as an antagonistic contest between the people and their enemies. That is why democratic adversaries are seen as enemies by them.

• They claim to be the only voice and even the embodiment of the people.

• After gaining power, they have a tendency to disregard pluralism and try to control the public sphere and civil society.

Based on these features, De la Torre (2019, p. 9) defines populism as "political discourses and strategies that aim to rupture institutional systems by polarizing society into two antagonistic camps." Similarly, but emphasizing the demand side as well, Betz (2002, p. 198) defines populism as primarily a political strategy whose political rhetoric is the evocation of latent grievances and the appeal to emotions provoked by them.

Still, possibly the most influential and also the most controversial definition in the political-strategic approach belongs to Weyland (2001, p. 14; 2017, p. 59).

> ...a political strategy through which a personalistic leader seeks or exercises government power based on direct, unmediated, uninstitutionalized support from large numbers of mostly unorganized followers.

Weyland's theoretical approach completely rules out the ideological component in populism (2017, p. 54):

> The driving force behind populism is political, not ideological. Prototypical populist movements are practically impossible to define in ideological terms. Argentine Peronism for decades spanned the full arch from fascist right to radical left. And who could define the Bolivarianism of Hugo Chávez, who took advice from reactionary Norberto Ceresole as well as Marxist Heinz Dieterich?

Nevertheless, it is obvious that both of these leaders have some ideological preferences affecting their strategies. For this reason, ignoring this component poses a risk of giving us a deficient picture of the phenomenon due to the lack of showing how ideological stances are articulated to populist strategies or vice versa.

When it comes to the methodology in examining populism, although Weyland (2001) was convinced to make binary categorizations in his previous conceptualization, his recent study remarks that the fuzzy-set approach circulated by Ragin (2000) is more helpful in capturing the gradations and chameleonic nature of populism in reality (Weyland, 2017). He argues that by virtue of this approach, considering how they score in their ideological commitments, party organizations, personalistic tendencies, and populist aspirations may give more reliable results in the analysis and comparison of populism, especially in the European cases. Thereby, he posits that the political-strategic approach has clear analytical advantages compared to other approaches such as separating right-wing extremism from populism and capturing the volatility, changes, and transformations of the populist movements and leaders (p. 68).

By focusing mainly on Weyland's works, Rueda (2020) asserts that the political-strategic approach is conceptually unfit for the analysis of populism. According to him, this approach disregards the significance of ideological stances of leaders and views their policies and discourses only as instruments to attain power (p. 3-5). To some extent, it can be argued that the political-strategic approach does not pay enough attention to how populist strategy is articulated to the ideological positions of leaders. However, he also argues that this is misleading since we only see them as profit-maximizing rational actors, and we cannot be sure about what is on their minds "without getting into the populist's head," as Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2012, p. 9) state. Interestingly, in direct contrast to Rueda, Aslanidis (2016, p. 96) criticizes the same approach by denoting that "one could rightfully claim that each and every political action is strategic rather than ideological or straightforwardly technocratic since political agents are rational actors aiming to maximize political returns for their decisions," and therefore, we cannot "simply lump together every type of political behavior under strategy." According to him, we sacrifice populism's conceptual refinement by defining it as a strategy since "strategy is inherent in political activity" (p. 96). This is, again, to some extent, correct, but it is still a debatable argument because one can easily answer it by stating, "so does discourse," which is what populism is according to the definition offered by Aslanidis himself. In other words, if we put every political action or behavior into the category of discourse, the result is the same; we miss the social and political reality beyond the discursive dimension although this is a quite significant part of the processes through which these realities are constructed. Then, this is a criticism that can be directed to all approaches we addressed.

Another topical issue concerning the political-strategic approach is the essentiality of personalistic leaders (De la Torre, 2010). Hawkins and Rovira Kaltwasser (2017a, p. 523) allege that political-strategic definitions privilege charismatic leadership and fail to grasp that populism is above all a moral set of ideas. They remark for instance that the people "who supported Alessandri in Chile in the 1920s or Perón in Argentina in the 1940s did not vote for them simply because they were enchanted by a charismatic leader."

In fact, in most cases, populist leaders are central, and their direct link to and identification with ordinary people render them "akin to infallible sovereigns," and to a broad extent, make their decisions unquestionable (Arditi, 2004, p. 143). A personalistic leader embodies the will, interests, and aspirations of a homogeneous people, and in this way, gives them an identity (De la Torre, 2019; Diehl, 2019). Therefore, it is at the core of the phenomenon in many cases. Similarly, Urbinati (2014, pp. 128-129) argues that there is a difference between populism and popular movements such as Occupy Wall Street and the Tea Party. According to him, they do not have a centralized leadership to obtain political power by mobilizing the masses, and populism is more than discontent and protest.

Personal charisma is also usually regarded as an important part of this leadership (Weyland, 2017, p. 50). However, even a proponent of the political approach, Barr (2018, p. 55) admits that charisma and other personal characteristics are quite difficult to reliably specify and assess, and this fact has the risk to undermine comparative analysis. In all likelihood, the concept of charisma is what causes the trouble at this point. If populism is conceived within a reciprocal relationship, it becomes easier to understand that this concept, most of the time, indicates to the relationship between the leader and the supporters rather than an innate quality (Knight, 1998, p. 231). In other words, what matters is the perception of the supporters (Albertazzi & McDonnell, 2008, p. 6), and it is actually something constructed, rather than an innate leader trait.

Roberts (1995, p. 87) holds a similar position in regards to the problem of leadership and states that "deinstitutionalization of political authority and representation" through personalist leaders is substantial for comprehending some contemporary forms of populism, especially in Latin America. I believe that this is the most significant point concerning this issue. The proponents of ideational approaches mostly study European cases and do not put enough emphasis on leadership, whereas the scholars advocating the political-strategic approach deal with Latin American cases and view leadership at the center. Indeed, this is maybe the most prominent feature in a lot of cases of populism outside Europe. However, for the sake of reaching a consensus-based on least common denominators, the definitions developed in the ideational approach generally do not mention it as a core feature.

However, regarding all the discussions, it is still possible to assert that addressing populism as a strategy can only offer a partial and inadequate picture of the phenomenon although it provides us with important theoretical and analytical insights, just as the other approaches do.

Defining the Elephant: A Reconceptualization of Populism

To capitalize on the discussion carried out so far, it is apparent that each of these approaches enlightens significant dimensions of populism. However, each one highlights

the lacking and lagging aspects of the others although sometimes they exaggerate these aspects in order to show that the rival approach is not suitable to define populism. Then what is populism? Is it an ideology, a discourse, or a strategy? It is viewed as none of them. Generic and well-constrained definitions in a classical Sartorian way do not offer an adequate framework for this multi-faceted and multi-layered phenomenon. What I argue at this point is that studies on populism should either clearly acknowledge which component(s) of populism they address or deal with this phenomenon within a framework that integrates its components and constituents. The first option is rather clear. To exemplify it, a scholar may aim to analyze or compare discursive aspects of populism in two or more cases. In this situation, indicating the discursive features to focus on and accordingly specifying the same codes to be comparatively analyzed would be sufficient. However, it is important to realize and clearly state that this is a one-dimensional and partial analysis of populism rather than a comprehensive one. To put it differently, what should be denoted is that this hypothetical work examines populist discourse, not populism, although it is a vital part of the entire phenomenon. On the other hand, the second option requires a new conceptualization of populism.

In general, I concur with De la Torre and Mazzoleni (2019) that populism scholarship should embrace "pluralism and hybridism" without reducing the phenomenon to any of its components. Based on this, what I propose here is a Wittgensteinian approach to populism which is combined with a multi-dimensional conceptualization, and I will try to give an outline for it. It is previously argued by some scholars that Wittgensteinian family resemblance may give more fruitful outcomes if it is used to examine populism instead of dichotomous categorizations. Nevertheless, some of them discussed secondary issues, such as the usage of the term "populism" as a classifier, admonition, and descriptor, and the family resemblance among these usages (Ceci, 2019; Sikk, 2009), while some others did not offer any clear model (Canovan, 1981; Collier, 2001). Roberts (1995) and Brubaker (2017) stand out among those scholars by listing the core properties they derive from different approaches. While both have listed key points to describe the phenomenon, there are some points that are overlooked or not sufficiently emphasized on both lists. For instance, Brubaker gives an account of populism "as a discursive and stylistic repertoire," and his list says nothing about leadership or the redistributive (or clientelistic) populist economic strategies, which are critical especially for populist political strategies outside of Europe. Roberts' list includes these, but on the other hand, his list does not touch, for example, one of the most fundamental elements of populist politics, antagonism. For this reason, delineating a set of ideas and features by completing the missing places and by also making use of the elements highlighted by different approaches in the discussions so far is the first step of this conceptualization. However, I should state in advance that the goal of forming this set is not to attain a definition of populism that is applicable to all cases but to enable a conceptualization through family resemblances (Collier, 2001, p. 11816). In other words, it is not necessary to have A-B-C-D-E as a set to define populism, as one case may have A, C, and E traits while another features A, B, D, and E. Reckoning with this, we can say that the following are the common traits of populist politics:

• The claim to speak on behalf of "the people" which is sovereign (Brubaker, 2017); and usually presented as moral and homogenous, although not always (Katsambekis, 2016).

• A redefinition of "the people" in a way that an idealized group replaces the whole and an allegation that only the ones in this group are sovereign (Egedy, 2009; Taggart, 2002; Urbinati, 2019a).

• An anti-elitism that is usually accompanied by anti-pluralism (Müller, 2017).

• An anti-establishment stance appealing to the subaltern, marginalized or resentful sectors (or groups) of society.

• Redistributive and often clientelistic economic policies appealing to the lower segments of society (Roberts, 1995).

• A political logic based on antagonism instead of rivalry and a reconfiguration of politics relying on this antagonism (Brubaker, 2017; De la Torre, 2019; Laclau, 2005a).

• A personalistic and strong political leadership identified with the party or movement, which is in this way also identified with "the people," and a kind of relationship between the leader and supporters bypassing intermediary institutions or diminishes their significance (Albertazzi and McDonnell, 2008; Urbinati, 2019b; Weyland, 2017).

• A particular interpretation of democracy that highlights one of its main principles, the sovereignty of the people, against, or sometimes at the cost of, the others, such as rule of law, separation of powers, etc. (Akkerman, 2003; Finchelstein and Urbinati, 2018; Jagers & Walgrave 2007).[3]

In each populist case, it is possible to find at least several of these properties. Besides, in each case, some of them are more prominent than others since every single case has its own dynamics which are forged by the social, cultural, economic, and political circumstances of its home country. At this point, the alternative perspective suggested by Jansen (2011) sounds very helpful. By focusing on populist mobilization, he evaluates populism as a political project rather than as a type of ideology, regime, party, or movement. Needless to say, each mobilization project has some peculiarities. By identifying populism through family resemblances, we also ensure that these peculiarities do not prevent us from studying the cases under the umbrella of this concept. This is a crucial advantage of the Wittgensteinian approach over Sartorian definitions. It shifts the focus from an unfruitful "populist or not" discussion to the study of populist premises in different layers of this mobilization process.

The second step of my reconceptualization is to adopt a multidimensional approach to populism. As previously discussed, each of the approaches substantially enlightens one side of the phenomenon. Nonetheless, each of them neglects some dimensions and aspects that do not fall within their point of view. For this reason, any comprehensive conceptualization of populism has to adopt a multidimensional approach considering all of them. What I propose is a tripartite conceptualization that can also be utilized to

3 Especially the last feature creates a serious problem in terms of objectivity for the study of populism and prevents some scholars from taking an unbiased stance particularly when it comes to populists in power. Because they clearly consider populism as a serious threat to democracy which reflect the will of the powerful as the popular will and aim to rule out checks and balances such as rule of law, separation of powers, civil society, on this will by reducing democracy to its main principle (Finchelstein and Urbinati, 2018; Müller, 2016; Urbinati, 2019a). Some regard the situation as a right-left distinction and argue that left populism has progressive attributes, compatible with constitutive democracy (Akkerman, 2003; Mair, 2002). Yet, wider discussion on this issue is beyond the scope of this article.

construct analytical frameworks. To flesh it out, a populist case can be both identified and analyzed through ideological, discursive, and strategic dimensions in an interaction with one another. If we think of this in the form of intertwined circles, ideology takes place in the innermost circle. Every political movement has an ideological basis, although some do not completely coincide with an ideology since it is quite common to see ideological stances which combine certain elements from different ideologies. Besides the narrow meaning of the term, it would be useful to consider what is meant by ideology as the position of a movement or party in a specific political spectrum. In each populist case, the traits listed above are combined with this basis in a particular way. Nevertheless, we should keep in mind that it is not an addition but an articulation (De Cleen, 2019, p. 37). In other words, it deeply reforms this basis. Therefore, it is essential to address this articulation while analyzing populism.

We can view the discourse as the circle just above. This dimension shows how the articulation of the ideological priorities of political movements with the populist characteristics mentioned above reflects on the dimension of political discourse. As discussed earlier, the political communication style adopted to convey the populist message to the masses is also an element of discourse. Moreover, it is clear that this dimension has more concrete data to offer for the analysis of populist cases than other dimensions. However, when taken on its own, problems with the context dimension of the analysis are inevitable. Besides, while we are dealing with a case, we cannot analyze the ideological stance without resorting to the discursive dimension, and it is not possible to analyze the discourse without the ideological context. Therefore, any multilayered analysis of the phenomenon must take into account the intense permeability between these two layers.

Strategy is a broader dimension that can be seen above the first two. Political movements determine their strategies aiming to come to power by taking into account the political and social conditions they are in. For populist politics, this strategy can be seen as the construction of politics through an antagonistic logic rather than competition. However, all factors such as the balance of power with political rivals and the socio-economic conditions in the country are taken into account when constructing this antagonistic strategy.

It is essential to see that there is an intense interaction between all these dimensions. All are important elements and context providers in shaping others. But none of these levels or dimensions alone has the power to explain the phenomenon of populism. For this reason, analyses that manage to count in and integrate all of them have the opportunity to provide us with a much more comprehensive picture of the phenomenon.

Researchers can develop different datasets and analysis frameworks for each level/dimension with the help of the properties of populism listed above to analyze their cases and they can also design their studies focusing on a single layer/dimension. However, if a roadmap needs to be presented in this study to aid a holistic analysis, we can briefly go over an imaginary X party/movement. The first task in such an analysis could be to focus on this party's manifesto, program, party family, position in the political spectrum, etc., and examine how these are articulated with the populist premises given above. Afterward, speeches of the party leaders, election campaigns, communication methods, and so on

could be surveyed to explore the populist components in the discourse of the party in question. In the following stage, the populist elements in the party's political strategy could be addressed by scrutinizing how it establishes its relations with the other actors in the political and social spheres of the country in order to come to power or maintain power. Again, it is possible to establish alternative analysis structures considering the multidimensionality of populism, and this roadmap is only one of them.

As the last point, I should note that this study does not aim to reconcile the reviewed approaches. Therefore, it is beyond the scope of this study to discuss and resolve the ontological and epistemological contradictions between these approaches. The point emphasized in the study is that although the definitions offered by each approach point to essential dimensions for the study of populism and provide significant insight into explaining this phenomenon, each of them gives us an incomplete picture of the phenomenon when taken alone. Furthermore, variability of the prominent properties among cases makes it impossible to define the phenomenon with the possibilities offered by Sartorian approaches. The multilayered and Wittgensteinian approach propounded in this study is a solution proposal to overcome this problem and provide a more profound insight into populist politics.

Concluding Remarks

It is extremely difficult to make unquestionable definitions of many concepts in social sciences, and when it comes to populism, it is almost impossible to present a generic and universal definition of a phenomenon whose unique variants are seen in such a wide geography. This study proposes a new conceptualization based on family resemblance rather than definitions that claim to be suitable for all such variants and generally rely on minimal common denominators and lack much explanatory power.

The study accomplishes this conceptualization in two stages. In the first stage, it is argued that so far the studies have tried to explain populism by reducing it to any of its dimensions, and therefore, both such explanations and analyses of the phenomenon based on them are inadequate. For this reason, a multi-dimensional and family resemblance-based approach is defended instead of such unidirectional and Sartorian definitions. In the second stage, the features in which this family resemblance can be identified are listed, and a multi-layered conceptualization combining ideology, discourse, and strategy as layers that interact with each other is presented.

Certainly, this proposed conceptualization does not pretend to end the ongoing discussions between competing approaches. Nevertheless, it aims to contribute to the broadening of our perspective on the phenomenon that is increasingly an integral part of democracies such as populism. If we end by referring to that famous parable again, evaluating the elephant as a whole, rather than the parts that are closest to us or appear most decisive to us, will put our discussions on this animal on a more fruitful path.

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