

**Tobias Boos: One hat, too many heads. On the history and theory of populism.** In recent times, populism not only is on everyone's lips, but it has also been contested as scientific term. While some consider recent political developments as a repolitization and response to postdemocracy, others interpret populism as authoritarian and antipluralistic form of politics. However, a closer look reveals that the common term is very often rather obscuring. Scrutinizing the three mayor historic references of the debates on Populism – the Russian Narodniki, the US People's Party, and the national-popular governments in the 1930-50s in Latin America –, the article reveals that quite contrasting movements have been labeled as populists. Furthermore, different theoretical strands, which described them as such discerned very different aspects as their populist core. After laying out these differences, the article asks for the explanatory potential of these approaches and discusses the question if there is an intrinsic authoritarianism to populism.

**Alex Demirović; Authoritarian populism as a neoliberal crisis management strategy.** In his contribution, Alex Demirović uses the term authoritarian populism coined by Stuart Hall and understands it as a particular form of neoliberal crisis management. Similar to the Thatcherism that Hall had in mind, authoritarian populism in the current period is a policy pursued by parts of the power block. It does not contradict neoliberalism, but continues it by other means. As in the preceding phases of neoliberal politics, it is no longer a matter of hegemony, but of seeking to avoid concessions to the dominated classes.

**Dennis Eversberg: A conflict within the empire. Three theses on the relation between authoritarian nationalism and the imperial mode of living.** The article analyses the success of authoritarian nationalist party „Alternative für Deutschland“ (AfD). Firstly, it is argued that voting for the AfD was not a 'displaced' form of reaction to actual or feared experiences of economic disadvantage or relegation. In fact, the AfD's voter voted for the party because they support its authoritarian nationalist ideas. Secondly, authoritarian nationalism's character as a vertical class alliance between parts of the elites on the one and segments of the middle and lower classes on the other hand is highlighted – an alliance that wants to reverse the transformation from post-war organized capitalism to the contemporary flexible capitalist regime. Thirdly, it is argued that the current conflict between “progressive neoliberalism” (Fraser) and authoritarian nationalism takes place on the firm ground of a shared consensus about the imperial mode of living. It is a conflict about the modernization of this mode of living and about how to best defend it. A critique of the global injustices it causes and perpetuates, or credible demands for overcoming it, can only be articulated from a globally solidary position that rejects this bipolar discursive constellation altogether.

**Thomas Sablowski and Hans-Günter Thien: The AfD, the working class and the left – no problem?** The question of how to explain the success of the AfD in Germany and which counter-strategies are appropriate is controversially discussed within the social left. In Germany, two camps have emerged which seem to be irreconcilably opposed. Either the rise of the AfD is explained by the social left's neglect of social issues and the working class, or it is understood as an expression of racism and prosperity chauvinism in the middle of society or in the entire population. Thomas Sablowski and Günter Thien criticize this viewpoint.

**Brigitte Bargetz: Politics and fear. Or: homo neuroticus and the haunting of national sovereignty.** What are the contemporary conditions of Western modern democracies that make a politics of fear so successful at this present moment? In this article, the author analyzes the

relationship between politics and fear in order to move beyond a simple instrumentalization thesis. Focusing on two perspectives: the view of state sovereignty and the phenomenon of neurosis, the author argues that the contemporary Western modern politics of fear can be understood as an expression of a crisis of state sovereignty, which becomes apparent in the nation state as well as in a new mode of political subjectivation. It is a ghostly sovereignty that finds both a form and an addressee in a neurotic subject.

**Trevor Evans: The economic expansion in the US since 2009 and Donald Trump's ambitions to 'drain the swamp'.** The current economic situation in the United States can be seen as the result of three factors. The first is the long-term shift to a neo-liberal order. The second factor is the US business cycle. Periods of economic expansion in the 1980s, the 1990s and the early 2000s were each brought to an end by increasingly severe crises, the most recent of which in 2007-2009 came perilously close to causing a collapse of the US financial system. The most recent expansion, which began in mid-2009, has been unusually weak, and is already relatively long by comparison with other recent expansions. The third factor is the presidency of Donald Trump which began in January 2017. Despite a populist rhetoric and the dependence of his electoral victory on mobilising white working-class support, in government he has pursued an unashamed series of measures which primarily benefit the very richest sectors of US society.

**Klaus Müller. Poland's Illiberal Revolution.** The recent populist wave that swept Eastern Europe put an end to the illusionary victory of liberal democracy across the region. This applies especially to Poland, the country with the most impressive civil society movement, *Solidarnosz*, and the frontrunner of radical market reforms. Despite the best economic performance of all post-communist countries, the populist party Law and Justice (PiS) came to power for a second time in 2015, only to impose its reactionary national-catholic model on the media, the law system, and the public sector. The success of PiS cannot be explained by the immanent strength of its populist rhetoric but points to the wilful neglect of its liberal predecessors of regional heterogeneity, precarious working conditions, and sharpened inequalities. While the electorate supports the valid points of PiS's socio-economic programme, it is not inclined to follow its internally divisive and externally confrontational anti-EU ideology.

**Axel Gehring: On the shoulders of the EU project against the „Status Quo“. Authoritarian populism in Turkey and its crisis.** The article discusses the rise of authoritarian populism in the context of Turkey's neoliberalisation experience since 1980. For long time, populist politics in Turkey successfully claimed to be the voice of the suppressed against the ruling. In fact, they used an oppositional political language meanwhile processing the material interests of the hegemonic forces. Despite receiving considerable support, particularly from the European public, authoritarian populism fell into a deep crisis throughout the recent years – the result is its radicalisation which is often mistakenly debated as the start of populism in Turkey.

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