

When voters are dissatisfied with a national government, they do not support opposition parties, but rather vote for new alternatives. When answering the question of which explanations for territorial heterogeneity of the vote for Western European countries could be applied for the East, the authors examine territorial cleavages, authority of the region and electoral rules. Variables under these headings appeared in several country chapters. This brings us back to the question from the introduction of the book: are regional elections in Eastern Europe regionalized or nationalized? The overall conclusion indicates that the most of regional elections in Eastern Europe are nationalized. Even the regional presence of significant ethnic minorities is not a sufficient condition for regionalization of the vote. Nationalization of the vote is enhanced by a widespread tendency of keeping regional government as weak as possible or by adopting mechanisms to restrain regional parties.

Based on these conclusions, the common explanatory model appeared to be powerful in the Eastern European environment too. But it is important to note that the presented results also confirm that some key second-order effects play out differently in the analysed countries. Apparently, voters in Eastern European countries behave in specific way. This opens up demands for further research.

The book *Regional and National Elections in Eastern Europe: Territoriality of the Vote in Ten Countries* provides a systematic examination of the processes structuring electoral behaviour at the regional level in Eastern Europe. Not placing the state at the common centre of analysis allowed its authors to comprehensively focus on territorial heterogeneity. The greatest value of this book lies in its cross country comparison of Eastern European countries without leaving out important contextual factors of the analysed countries.

Together with previous research devoted to territoriality of the vote in Western European countries, the authors present a complete picture of electoral outcomes at the regional level across Europe.

References:

- Bochsler, Daniel. 2010. *Territory and electoral rules in post-communist democracies*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Dandoy, Régis and Schakel, Arjan H., eds. 2013. *Regional and national elections in Western Europe. Territoriality of the vote in thirteen countries*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Martina Mudříková
Faculty of Social Sciences, Masaryk University

Pauwels, Teun:

POPULISM IN WESTERN EUROPE: COMPARING BELGIUM, GERMANY AND NETHERLANDS.

Abingdon: Routledge. 2014. 209 pages.

DOI: 10.5817/PC2018-1-84

The book, written by Teun Pauwels, is the result of his PhD, and covers his main areas of research in Populism, Ideologies and Voting Behaviour. The relevance of his research in understanding the motives of populist rise and its voters are undeniable in the current situation. The rise of Trump to the White House, together with the 'near-misses' in France and Austria, and the general rise in populist parties across Europe and other areas have put in the limelight the old term 'populism'.

The research poses the question of *what causes people to vote for populist parties*. This is divided into who they are, why they gain support,

why people vote for them, and how they survive over time. These questions are asked in the context of three countries: Belgium, Netherlands, and Germany, that, according to the author, share similar institutional settings, and host a variety of populist parties.

After a broad introduction of the topic, the research delves into the many definitions of populism and finally adapts its characterisation as a 'thin-centred ideology', as explained by Mudde (2007), including the '4 dimensions' inherent to populist discourse (dichotomy between the elite and the people, depiction of elite as corrupt and the people as inherently honest, homogeneity within the two groups, and favour measures of direct democracy), analysing both the supply side (what parties offer) and the demand side (what voters want). The author, through a review of the literature and a content analysis (manual and computerised) of party manifestos, identifies and classifies the populist parties in these three countries. Of these, and with a threshold of a sufficient number of voters to allow voter study, 6 parties are selected for study (2 neoliberal populist, 2 social populist and 2 national populist).

After the parties have been identified, the research moves towards voting behaviour, where the factors motivating voters are divided into the categories of purely populist (such as support for direct democracy), facilitators (such as ideology), and specific (which only affect certain types of populism, such as immigration and national populism). They are studied case by case, together with a description of each party and its history. This process is later evaluated in a meta-analysis comparing all the hypothesis-testing for each factor on each party.

The main findings of the research are that dissatisfaction with the functioning of democracy is a major reason for populist voting. Dissatisfaction, in fact, provides no ex-

tra support to any other party. Together with this, a preference for direct decision-making is identified, with education being relevant for right-wing populists and, in general, with a group of 'losers from globalisation' as potential voters. The research also found that young and nonreligious voters are more likely to support populist parties, most likely for their minimal attachment to the system. As for attitudes, egalitarian ones favour social populists, anti-immigration favour neoliberal ones, and anti-immigration and authoritarian favour national populists. The support of parties over time is linked to how rooted they are in society and their structure (pre-existing networks and resources). This frame and these findings will now be commented.

First of all, the book introduces an interesting and systematic scheme for using both qualitative and quantitative techniques to classify and identify populist parties. As the book highlights, the discussion on what is populism is far from over, nor is there consensus, but the fact that Mudde's four dimensional approach, together with the idea of a thin-centred ideology, has been able to provide a clear typology of either-or is a positive sign. Particularly given the fact that virtually every party uses populist techniques available in their repertoire to some degree.

Secondly, the differences in analysis between populist factors, facilitators, and specific issues, allows differentiation between populist parties in a solvent form: the well-known 'rise of populism' is therefore dissected into small pieces that not only tell why populist parties succeed, but why certain types of them do so. This also maximises the comparability and further applicability of this study: populist drives seem to differ greatly in France and in Poland, for instance, but the methods applied would work equally in all cases. If anything, the typology should be enlarged for certain specificities of Central and Eastern

Europe, something noted by the author in the final comments.

Particularly important is the intuitive finding that dissatisfaction with democracy and political distrust are key *necessary* factors in the rise of populism: it outlines the causes at the root of the issue. Together with two issues proposed for further research by the author (political context in detail and media studies, as they most likely play a fundamental role in shaping these perspectives), the study could be turned into a systematic analysis finding not only who votes for what and why, but also which ingredients in the broader sense play a meaningful role.

Interestingly, at several points the book discusses the idea of populism linked to democracy, as to criticise a petition for more democracy, from a democratic point of view, may seem counter-intuitive. The reflection offered considers that populist voters (and populist leaders) do not necessarily favour higher levels of popular participation in the democratic systems. They rather ask for an *ex post facto* approach to the decision-making, where the people has a plebiscitary power over the final outcome. This is ingrained in the mistrust and contempt for the 'elite' and the assumed good-willed nature and wisdom of the people. However, it can be argued that this process effectively obscures the decision-making process, particularly in terms of civil society engagement, deliberation and multi-level governance; the fact that the 'leader' of the people asks the questions and shapes the possible answers gives it far more concentrated and unchecked power than in a more dispersed system with intermediaries (the so-called elite). Historically, this mistrust for the 'elite' may refer to a conglomerate of economic and political powers, including parliamentary democracy (like DeGaulle in France) or an independent judiciary (such as the current PiS government in Poland).

Regarding the studies themselves, a potential shortcoming for further applicability of the study (and within the study itself, given the differences in availability of electoral studies) is the reliance on existing electoral studies and previously conducted content analyses, which can limit the study to cases for which available data exists and may cast doubt on the comparability of the project. These facts are nevertheless acknowledged by the author.

Another relevant issue is the role of the 'political context', together with the demand and supply for populism. To better understand the reasons behind populist success, the study could benefit from objective data about the political setup. Instead, voting behaviour based on political trust, among others, are used as a proxy for the political context. While some may argue that, in Thomas' words, 'what men define as real becomes real in its consequences' (Thomas, Thomas 1928), there is a difference between voters' perception of the political context and the effective cartelisation of politics, or corruption. This is particularly true if the question is to further understand the rise of populism as something other than a mere discursive battle; that is, if there is, for instance, an issue with immigration, or just a perception of it.

In this same sense, it could also be argued that a broader 'demand' approach on voters' conditions could also provide more amplitude to the research, namely the socioeconomic and cultural structures of the countries. This is particularly relevant under the research's assumption that the three countries have a similar institutional setup: the fact that these conditions are not considered in the next steps of the research (other than in the case-study presentation for each party, but not relevant for the conclusions) does not avoid the fact that is a rather questionable assumption. The Netherlands is a relatively small, homogeneous country; Belgium is a small but drastically

divided one, in language and administration; and Germany is much larger and is relatively homogeneous (compared to Belgium) but has the normal divergences of large federal entities. This is taken into account in the case of SED/Die Linke when the author mentions the 'losers of unification' as the main voters, but it is very vaguely explored overall, which precludes finding any kind of correlation between a specific setup and a particular populist occurrence. Of course, considering these factors would notably enlarge the research project itself in scope, and would probably make the results more complicated and ambiguous.

In conclusion, the research effectively answers the question it poses to itself, showing who votes for populist parties and for what reasons, subjectively speaking. It provides a well-thought and sound study of the success of populist parties related to voters' motivations, and particularly provides a blueprint to conduct similar studies on many more European countries, which could eventually, if the hypotheses keep working, create a framework for populist voting behaviour without 'proper names' in the best (neo)positivist tradition. However, the work could have benefitted from a broader demand perspective and richer political context consideration. This is outlined, nevertheless, in the final part of the book regarding additional research, where the author acknowledges this particular lack of study of the causes of populism at the aggregate level, together with the absence of a media study.

References:

- Mudde, Cas. 2007. *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Thomas, William I. and Thomas, Dorothy S. 1928. *The Child in America: Behaviour Problems and Programs*. New York: Knopf.

Pablo Ribera Payá
Faculty of Social Studies, Masaryk University

Renwick, Alan and Pilet, Jean-Benoit:

FACES ON THE BALLOT: THE PERSONALIZATION OF ELECTORAL SYSTEMS IN EUROPE.

Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2016.
338 pages.

DOI: 10.5817/PC2018-1-87

Electoral systems belong to the most attractive research areas in political science. During the long period of electoral systems research, there was primary focus on inter-party dimension of electoral systems referring to distribution of power between political parties. In other words, one of the leading questions in this field of electoral studies is how the electoral rules influence the distribution of power between parties within national party systems. However, more recently, a more attention is given also to intra-party dimension which relates to the distribution of power within parties. The roots of this shift may be found in changing patterns of politics in the European democracies. It is argued that party identification has lost importance in voters' decisions and partisan loyalties have declined. Hand in hand with these changes, the electoral volatility has increased. Additionally, there is also a growing scepticism among public in relation to politics, and especially to political parties. With respect to these changes, the concept of a personalization of politics with its core assumption that while the political parties are less popular, the role of individual politicians become more important, gained higher relevance. This line of thinking is common for most studies focusing on personalization of politics, and the Renwick and Pilet's *Faces on the Ballot: The Personalization of Electoral Systems in Europe* is not an exception.