



University of
Stavanger


FACULTY OF ARTS AND EDUCATION

MASTER'S THESIS

Programme of study: MHIMAS-1 19H
History and History didactics

Spring semester, 2020
Open

Author: Tor K Kristiansen



(Author's signature)

Supervisor: Tyson Ashley Retz

Thesis title: Populism in in the Weimar Republic and in the USA today
with a focus on Adolf Hitler and Donald Trump

Keywords: Populism, Democracy, Weimar
Republic, USA, Adolf Hitler, Donald Trump

No. of pages: 97

Stavanger, 1 July 2020

Sammendrag

Den primære målsetningen med denne masteroppgaven er å undersøke om Adolf Hitler gjorde bruk av populistiske metoder i sin agitasjon for nazismen i Weimar-republikken. En moderne forståelse av populisme er benyttet i denne undersøkelsen. Oppgaven omfatter en gjennomgang av hovedsakelig de siste års akademisk litteratur om populisme, som blir brukt som en referanse i undersøkelsen av Hitler og hans agitasjon for nazismen. Utgangspunktet for undersøkelsen er Hitlers bok *Mein Kampf* og utdrag fra noen av hans taler. Utdrag fra artikler i det venstreorienterte ukemagasinet *Die Weltbühne*, som ble utgitt i Weimar-perioden, er benyttet for å belyse hvorledes Hitler og Nazistene ble omtalt i samtiden. Noe historisk bakgrunnsinformasjon om utviklingen i Weimar-perioden er inkludert. Konklusjonen på denne delen av oppgaven er at Hitler gjorde seg bruk av populistiske metoder for å komme til makten i 1933.

Den sekundære målsetningen med oppgaven er å beskrive hvorledes populisme er kommet til uttrykk i USA i de tre første årene av Donald Trumps periode som president, primært ved å studere utdrag av noen av hans taler. Den akademiske litteraturen om populisme er benyttet for å forklare noe av bakgrunnen for Trumps populistiske oppførsel. Meninger som er kommet til uttrykk i den liberale pressen, hovedsakelig *The New York Times* og *The Washington Post*, men også i nylig publiserte bøker om Trumps utøvelse av presidentembetet er benyttet for å illustrere situasjonen.

Populisme trives i den spenningen som eksisterer i et demokrati mellom folkesuverenitet og liberalt demokrati, med sitt fokus på menneskerettigheter, individuelle friheter, et politisk ordskifte basert på ekspertise og fakta og rettssikkerhet. En tredje målsetning med oppgaven er å gi noen kommentarer til hvorledes populistisk lederskap har utfordret det liberale demokratiet, eksemplifisert ved Donald Trumps presidentskap og Adolf Hitlers maktovertakelse i Weimar-republikken.

Summary

The main objective of this thesis is to investigate if Adolf Hitler used a populist style in his campaign for power during in the Weimar Republic. A contemporary understanding of populism has been used in this investigation. The thesis provides a review of recent scholarly literature on populism which is used as a reference in the investigation of Hitler and his agitation for the Nazi party. The basis for the investigation of Hitler is his book *Mein Kampf* and excerpts from some of his speeches. Excerpts from the leftist weekly magazine *Die Weltbühne* that was issued during the Weimar period has been used to provide some insight into how Hitler and the Nazis were viewed at the time. Some historical background for the events during the Weimar Republic is provided. The conclusion of this main objective of the thesis is that Hitler used a populist style to gain power in 1933.

The secondary objective of the thesis is to provide a description of how populism has been expressed in the USA during the first three years of Donald Trump's presidency. The scholarly literature on populism is used to explain some background for Trump's populist behaviour. Opinions from the liberal press, mainly *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* and also from recent books on Trump's presidency are used to illustrate the situation.

Populism thrives in the tension which exists in a democracy between popular sovereignty and liberal democracy with its emphasis on human rights, individual liberties, a political discourse based upon expertise and facts and the rule of law. A third objective of the thesis is to provide some comments on how populist leadership has challenged liberal democracy, as exemplified by the presidency of Donald Trump and Adolf Hitler's assumption of power as *Reichskanzler* in the Weimar Republic.

Table of Contents

1.	Introduction.....	6
2	Defining Populism	9
2.1	History	9
2.2	Populism as a Thin Ideology	14
2.3	Populism as a Political Style	15
2.4	‘The People’	20
2.5	‘The Elite’	21
2.6	The General Will	22
2.7	The Leader and the Media	23
2.8	Crises and Fear	24
2.9	Populism and Democracy	26
2.10	Populism and Fascism	31
3	The Weimar Republic	35
3.1	Establishment of the new Republic and Hitler’s <i>Mein Kampf</i>	35
	Political Background.....	35
	The Establishment of the Nazi Party	36
	<i>Mein Kampf</i> and Hitler’s Views on the Jews.....	38
	<i>Mein Kampf</i> and Hitler’s Views on Democracy	40
	<i>Mein Kampf</i> and Propaganda	41
	<i>Mein Kampf</i> and Nazism as a Fascist Belief System	44
3.2	1923; French Occupation of the Ruhr and Hitler’s Speech 4 May	45
	Political Background.....	45
	Hitler’s Speech 4 May 1923	45
3.3	1924 – 1929; The Golden Years	47
	Political Background.....	47
	Hitler’s Speech 18 January 1927	49
3.4	1930- 1931; The Years of Recession.....	51
	Political Background.....	51
	Hitler’s Speech in Munich 16 September 1930	52
3.5	1932; An Election Year	54
	Political Background.....	54

Hitler's Speech 27 January 1932	55
The Political Situation in the Spring of 1932.....	57
Hitler's Speech Prior to the <i>Reichstag</i> Election 31 July 1932	58
The Political Situation in the Autumn of 1932	59
Hitler Speech on New Year's Day 1933	60
3.6 1933; The Final Year of the Weimar Republic	61
Political Background.....	61
Hitler's Proclamation on 30 January 1933.....	62
The Political Situation in the Spring of 1933.....	62
3.7 Hitler's Populist Hallmarks in the Weimar Period	64
Political Style	64
The People Versus the Elite	64
Bad Manners	66
Crises, Breakdown and Threat	66
The Leader and the Media	67
The Nazi Movement and Democracy	68
Populism and Fascism.....	69
4 Populism in the USA	70
4.1 Historical Roots	70
4.2 Socioeconomic Background for the Current Rise of Populism.....	70
4.3 Donald Trump's Election Campaign	72
Donald Trump Announces his Candidacy 16 June 2015	72
Donald Trump's speech 8 November 2016	74
4.4 Donald Trump's Presidency	75
Press Conference 16 February 2017	75
Donald Trump gives a Speech at a Political Rally in Duluth, Minnesota 2 June 2018	77
A Tweeting President.....	79
A President Providing 'Alternative Facts'	80
4.5 Trump's Populist Hallmarks during his First Three Years in Office	82
Political Style	82
The People Versus the Elite	82
Bad Manners	83
Crises, Breakdown and Threat	84

The Leader and the Media	84
Donald Trump and Democracy.....	85
Populism and Fascism.....	86
5 Conclusion	88
Populist Leadership and Democracy	88
LITERATURE AND SOURCES.....	91

1. Introduction

The term populism is widely used and has generally a negative connotation, at least in Europe. In April 2010, Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Union, gave an interview with *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* in which he declared populism as the biggest danger to Europe. ‘As a Belgian, I know what that means’, he said, and Van Rompuy referred to the Belgian anti-immigration party *Vlams Belang* (Stabenow). Later developments in Poland and Hungary where populist, anti-immigration parties have gained power have been a significant challenge to the EU’s ability to maintain its liberal democratic ideals within the Union, and have upheld Van Rompuy’s prophesy. Additionally, the election of a populist president in the USA has perhaps been an even bigger challenge to Europe.

The study of populism is an exercise in the history of political thought, with its roots in the Greek democracy of Plato and Aristotle. As stated by Quentin Skinner we should approach the past with a willingness to listen, and an understanding of the past can help us appreciate how the values of our present life reflect a series of choices made at different times in different societies (Skinner, 2002, p. 6). In the modern era democracy has developed into a form of rule that in principle is based upon the sovereignty of the people, but over time a set of traditions based upon a liberal discourse have been introduced that govern the exercise of this rule. This liberal discourse is founded on the values of individual liberties and the principles of human rights. This means that there is a tension between two different traditions: on the one hand, the liberal tradition based upon the rule of law, individual liberties and human rights; and, on the other hand, the democratic tradition based upon equality of people and popular sovereignty. In our Western democracies the liberal traditions have become dominant and have created a ‘democratic deficit’, which populist parties have seen and exploited. Liberal democracies obtain their legitimacy from popular sovereignty, and due to the threats against the liberal values from populists it is necessary to defend these values. It is clear that in a liberal democracy it is necessary to limit popular sovereignty in order to protect the liberal values. Chantal Mouffe calls this tension between popular sovereignty and liberal democracy, in which populist politicians thrive for the ‘Democratic Paradox’ (Mouffe, 2000, pp. 2-4).

The main objective of this thesis is to examine whether Adolf Hitler employed populist strategies to gain support for the Nazi party during the Weimar Republic, a support that eventually led to his nomination as *Reichskanzler* in 1933. This investigation is based upon the present-day understanding of populism, which is discussed at length in Chapter 2. ‘The historian should study what appears to be worth understanding, first asking what might be the purpose of studying it at all’ (Skinner, 2002, p. 20). Given the rise of populism in the world today and knowing the terrible consequences of Hitler’s assumption of power in Germany, it is hoped that something can be learned from a better understanding the conditions which led to this disaster.

The secondary objective is to describe how populism is expressed in the USA under Donald Trump and finally to make a comparison of the conditions and consequences of populist leadership for liberal democracy in the Weimar Republic and the United States respectively.

The thesis has the following parts: a review of mainly recent scholarly literature on populism, an assessment of Adolf Hitler's populist style during the Weimar Republic, an assessment of Donald Trump's populist style during his first three years as president, and finally a short comparison of the consequences of populist leadership on liberal democracy in the two cases. The review of the recent literature on populism starts with a description of how the term 'populism' has been used historically. The term is often used in political discourse today and the term does not have a well-defined meaning. In selecting scholarly literature for an analysis of the term 'populism', works of authors have been selected who have published their works recently and who are often cited in other scholarly works. The examination of scholarly views on populism has been organised thematically.

Two central themes in populist rhetoric are 'the people' and 'the elite', and it is a part of the populist style to create or build on a conflict between these two groups, often by the mobilisation of fear. Following what has been stated above with respect to the Democratic Paradox, the populists' relationships to democracy and to fascism are discussed in the thesis.

The discussion of Hitler's populist traits during the Weimar Republic is a main part of the thesis. As the historical events during the Weimar period are less well known today, some historical background has been provided for the consecutive periods of the Weimar period that has been selected for the study. Hitler's populist traits have been documented through excerpts from his book *Mein Kampf* and excerpts from some of his speeches. Excerpts have been selected that illustrate populist behaviour and a populist style. In order to gain some insight into how Hitler was considered in his own time, articles in the leftist weekly magazine *Die Weltbühne* have been cited and used. This magazine was issued between 1918 and 1933 and its editor was from 1927 Carl von Ossietzky. The magazine was based in Berlin. The texts used to illustrate Hitler's populist views and methods have been commented throughout based upon the scholarly views presented in the theoretical part of the thesis, and at the end of this section on the Weimar period there is a summary of how Hitler can be regarded as a populist, based upon the main criteria used in the scholarly views of populism. Hitler built his rhetoric on a conflict between his followers, his 'people' and an inefficient state, 'the elite' that Hitler gave the responsibility for the joblessness and the suffering of the German population, particularly after the world economic crisis of 1929.

The discussion of Trump's first three years as president is comparatively shorter as the events of this period are assumed to be well known; but an introduction is given aiming to explain some of the socioeconomic conditions in the USA that have contributed to the election of president Trump. Trump's populist traits are illustrated by excerpts from some of his speeches and a few tweets. The excerpts are selected in order to illustrate Trump's use of populist rhetoric. The discussion of Trump is augmented with commentary and opinions from the liberal press, mainly *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*, and some recent books

on his execution of the presidency. Trump is a very controversial president and the sources used are critical of Trump. At the end of the section on Trump a summary is provided that explains how Trump can be regarded as a populist based upon the main criteria used for the scholarly views of populism. As with Hitler, Trump builds his rhetoric on a conflict between his followers, his ‘people’ and the Washington establishment, or ‘the elite’. Trump also builds on fear, a fear he to a large extent has created himself by focusing on illegal immigration. Trump’s political aims are to fulfil his election promises to his ‘people’.

The last part of the thesis is a short discussion of the conditions that brought populist leaders to power in the Weimar Republic and in the United States respectively, populist leadership and how this has undermined liberal democracy. Some similarities, like large income inequality, an ineffective parliament and a polarised press can be found between the Weimar Republic and the USA today. Hitler quickly dismantled the liberal democracy that was the basis of the Weimar Republic after assuming power. In the United States, President Trump has shown no respect for basic democratic rules like the separation of power between Congress, the courts and the executive, and he openly mocks important institutions in a liberal democracy like a free press and a political discourse based upon expertise and facts. Together with other worrying aspects of American society, including increasing political polarisation, racial tensions and strong cultural divisions in society, this does not bode well for American liberal democracy.

The literature is divided on whether Hitler was a populist or not. Anders G. Kjøstvedt writes in the introduction to the Norwegian edition of *Mein Kampf*: ‘Hitler was no populist’ (Hitler, 2019, p. 30). In an e-mail to this author, Kjøstvedt confirms that this is a matter of how a ‘populist’ is defined. If it is defined as a politician who employs a populist style, by generating a conflict between the people and the elite, using bad manners and focusing on threats as is done in the present study, Kjøstvedt agrees that Hitler can be considered a populist during the Weimar period and also after 1933.

Translations of German and Norwegian texts to English have been provided by the author.

2 Defining Populism

2.1 History

In his book *What is Populism*, the political scientist Jan-Werner Müller suggests that the understanding of the term populism must have some connection to the people who first called themselves populists. He is referring to the intellectual revolutionary Russian *narodniki* movement that appeared in the second half of the nineteenth century. Their ideology was named *Narodnichestvo*, which is usually translated as populism. The movement idealised the Russian peasantry and looked upon village life as a model for Russia. The *narodniki* also promoted asking the ‘people’ for advice on political issues (Müller, 2016, p. 480).

One of the first to use the term populism in Norwegian political discourse was the sociologist and left wing politician Ottar Brox. In his book: *Hva skjer i Nord-Norge? – en studie i norsk utkantpolitikk* from 1966, Brox used the term to describe the economic development policies he favoured. Brox’s book discussed different economic development strategies for Northern Norway, and he meant that there were cognitive differences in the way the different groups involved viewed the challenges. The technocrats and the bureaucrats studied how the conditions for the different industries could be improved, while the populists were more focused on the society as built up by families and local communities, and how their economic situation could be improved. Brox promoted maintaining the existing settlement structure, rather than centralisation. Depending on the focus, different economic policies would be required (Brox, 1966, p. 178).¹

In 1967 there was a large conference at the London School of Economics that aimed to define populism. But the participants could not agree on a definition. At the time the term populism appeared in discussions about such diverse topics as decolonization and the origins of communism and Maoism (Müller, 2016, p. 7).

In 1995 Pierre-Andre Taguieff published the article: *Political Science confronts populism: From a conceptual mirage to a real problem*. Taguieff is of the opinion that the term ‘populism’ has become popular but it has escaped scholarly discourse, and in the media it has got a derogatory connotation. Populism is seen as a danger to democracy. He writes about the populist leader:

The populist leader is regarded as a cynical and talented demagogue who, through his charisma, his rhetoric and his promises is able to take power through normal procedures, only to subsequently destroy and subvert them (by outlawing all opposition, instituting a one-party-state, eliminating alternatives, indoctrination) (Taguieff, 1995, p. 10).

¹ Ottar Brox explains in the notes of his book that he has been convinced of the appropriateness of the term populism as a description for the policies he promotes by the reading of Isaiah Berlin’s article *J.G. Herder* in *Encounter*, July and August 1965 and Peter Worsley’s book *The Third World*, London 1965.

In their book *Right-Wing Populism in America: Too Close for Comfort* published in 2000 Chip Berlet and Matthew N. Lyons discuss different sub-categories of populism and conclude that all forms of populism ‘involve some kind of exaltation and appeal to “the people” and all are in some sense or another anti-elitist’, and they use this as their working definition of populism (Berlet & Lyons, 2000, p. Introduction).

The Dutch social scientist Cas Mudde published a paper in 2004 with the title *The Populist Zeitgeist*. This was at a time when radical right wing politicians like Jörg Haider (the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ)), Jean-Marie Le Pen (the French Front National (FN)) and Pauline Hanson (the Australian One Nation party) were associated with populist politics. The right wing party of Silvio Berlusconi (Forza Italia) was also labelled populist. Against this background Mudde writes that although these parties are labelled ‘populist’ by scholars, these scholars are not always sure what characterises such political parties. But scholars agree, Mudde writes and quotes Taguieff’s opinion that ‘populism is understood as a pathological form, pseudo- and post-democratic, produced by the corruption of democratic ideals’ (Taguieff, 1995), in other words, a disease that has hit western democracies. However, Mudde takes issue with the pathology thesis and claims that the populist discourse has become mainstream in the politics of western democracies, and he illustrates this by the use of the term ‘the Populist Zeitgeist’ (Mudde, 2004, pp. 541 - 542).

Bearing in mind that Taguieff, to whom Mudde refers, published his paper in 1995 and Mudde is writing nearly 10 years later, the increasing support of populist political parties in this period may be behind the new understanding.

The Argentinian philosopher and political scientist Ernesto Laclau published his much quoted book *On Populist Reason* in 2005. Laclau explains that the ‘referent to “populism” in social analysis always have been vague’, and that he is not attempting to find the ‘true’ definition of populism, but to do the opposite: ‘to show that populism has no referential unity because it is ascribed not to a delimitable phenomenon but to a social logic whose effects cut across many phenomena. Populism is, quite simply, a way of constructing the political’ (Laclau, 2018, p. xi). In this book Laclau sees populism as a collective identity and he uses among others Freud’s theory on group psychology to explain the emotional bonds between the members of populist groups and the bonds between the group and the leader. With respect to the populist groups Laclau writes:

Crowds have the effect of lowering the average intelligence of their members, as the result of the lowest minds establishing the level to which all have to submit, and of the increased suggestibility of the crowd members (Laclau, 2018, p. 49).

One of Laclau’s aims in the book is to show that ‘populism is the royal road to understanding something about the ontological construction of the political as such’ (Laclau, 2018, p. 68). Populism is not a ‘type’ of movement, but a ‘political logic’, which Laclau sees as a social logic ‘involving a rarefied system of statements – that is to say, a system of rules drawing a horizon within which some objects are representable while others are excluded’. Any process of social change takes place through ‘the variable articulation of equivalence and difference and the equivalential moment presupposes the constitution of a global political subject

bringing together a plurality of social demands'. This in turn involves the establishment of internal frontiers and 'the identification of an institutionalized "other"'. When we have this combination of structural moments, 'whatever the ideological or social contents of the political movement in question, we have populism of one sort or another'(Laclau, 2018, p. 117). More concrete Laclau writes that:

There is in any society a reservoir of raw anti-status-quo feelings which crystallize in some symbols *quite independently of the forms of their political articulation*, and it is in their presence we intuitively perceive when we call a discourse or a mobilization 'populistic' (Laclau, 2018, p. 123 emphasis in the original).

Benjamin L. McKean writes that one of the main insights of Laclau is that engagement in politics can give people new identities, rather than treating politics as a conflict between established interests or identities. According to Laclau politics have the power to change how we understand who we are, and populism does this by combining demands for which the political concept is less important than the possibility it provides to identify with 'the people'. Laclau emphasises the importance of identity over policy. In this sense populism is how individuals use grievances to identify with 'the people', as opposed to the others who they blame for their problems. As the political concept is less important, anger and dissatisfaction can be directed in various directions. But Laclau states that for satisfaction of demands to be seen as a win for 'the people' there need to be equivalence within the group. McKean argues that many groups, like workers are inherently identified as different, including immigrants and African Americans. When they demand to be treated as equals he writes: 'many populists see that as special pleading. To want to be different and equal seems unfair to the populist mind-set. The result... is racial resentment' (McKean, 2016, pp. 1 - 6).

Cas Mudde and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser published the book: *Populism, a very short introduction* in 2017. The Norwegian translation of the book was issued in 2019 with the title: *Populisme*. Mudde and Kaltwasser place populism within the liberal democracies based upon the studies they have performed (Mudde is a specialist on European populism, and Kaltwasser has studied South American populism). The authors explain that populism is a debated concept, and refer to the book *Populism: Its Meaning and National Characteristics*² where different contributors define populism as an ideology, a movement or a syndrome. It is also so that populism in different parts of the world has a tendency to be associated with special phenomena. In Europe it is common to associate populism with resistance towards immigration and fear of strangers, while in South America it is often associated with clientelism and corruption. Part of this confusion is caused by the fact that populist politicians or parties rarely adopt this designation themselves. In addition, since there is no clear definition of populism, scholars and journalists use this term to describe very different phenomena (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, pp. 22-23).

Mudde and Kaltwasser write that it is common among American historians who have studied the early North American populists of The Populist Party towards the end of the 1880s to see populism as positive public engagement in politics on a democratic basis. In the political

² Ghita Ionescu and Ernst Gellner, ed. *Populism: Its Meaning and National Characteristics*, New York, Macmillan, 1969.

philosophy developed by the Argentinian political scientist Ernesto Laclau and his wife Chantal Mouffe, populism is viewed not only as the essence of politics but also as a liberating force. In their view liberal democracy was the problem and radical democracy was the solution. Populism contributed to radical democracy by introducing conflict in the political discourse and mobilising groups that had been alienated to politics. The socioeconomic approach to populism dominated studies of Latin American politics in the 1980s and 1990s. Here populism was associated with irresponsible economic policies, characterised by unchecked public spending based upon foreign borrowing, followed by hyperinflation and severe economic adjustments. Even though this socioeconomic approach to populism has lost support, it is still used by economists and journalists in the USA in a more popular form, to characterise an economic program that is considered irresponsible since it includes too much re-distribution of capital and an increase of public spending (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, pp. 23-26).

The Norwegian translation of Cas Mudde and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser's book: *Populisme* has an introduction by political scientist Anders Ravik Jupskås. Jupskås mentions that the use of the term 'populism' to describe irresponsible economic policies can also be found in Norwegian political discourse, where the term 'petroleumspopulisme' has been used in the press to describe proposals for irresponsible use of the State's petroleum revenue (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, p. 11).

A newer approach to populism is that it is foremost a political strategy where a certain type of political leader tries to gain support and to govern based upon direct support from his followers. This approach to populism assumes a strong and charismatic leader who concentrates power and who maintains a direct connection with the masses. From this perspective populism is restricted to the leader's tenure of power and a conflict-laden struggle can be expected to follow (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, pp. 25-26).

In his book *The Populist Explosion, How The Great Recession Transformed American and European Politics*, John B. Judis provides a historical view on the rise of populism (Judis, 2016). Judis is of the opinion that populism cannot be defined:

there is no set of features that exclusively define movements, parties and people that are called populists ... the different people and parties called 'populist' enjoy family resemblances of one to the other, but not a set of traits can be found exclusively in all of them (Judis, 2016, pp. 13-14).

In Judis' view, populism is not an ideology, but rather a political logic, a way of thinking about politics. He has included in his book the following quote from Michael Kazin's book *The populist Persuasion: An American History* (1995)³:

Populism is a language whose speakers conceive of ordinary people as a noble assemblage not bounded narrowly by class; view their elite opponents as self-serving

³ Michael Kazin *The populist Persuasion: An American History*, Ithaca and London, Cornell University press, 1995.

and undemocratic; and seek to mobilize the former against the latter (Judis, 2016, p. 14).

Judis for his part distinguishes between right-wing populists and left-wing populists. He writes that left-wing populists mobilise the people against an elite or the establishment. At the heart of its politics it assumes a basic antagonism between the people and the elite. Right-wing populists mobilise the people against an elite that they accuse of going soft on a third group that can consist of immigrants, people of colour and Islamists. As there is no common ideology that defines populists, there is no particular group that comprises 'the people'. It can be the poor, the middle classes, blue-collar workers or students. In the same way, there is not a common identifier of 'the elite'. Populism is not defined by 'the people' or by 'the elite', but by the conflict between the two (Judis, 2016, p. 15). Ernesto Laclau writes on the distinction between right wing and left wing populism that there is a 'nebulous no-man's land' between the two forms that have been crossed many times. The need to express social division is often stronger than ideology (Laclau, 2018, pp. 87 - 88).

The Norwegian journalist and historian Simen Ekern has written the book *Folket det er meg; Den Europeiske Høyrepopulismens vekst og framtid* (Ekern, 2017). Ekern writes that the different right-wing populist parties in Europe represent quite different political projects. But they are united around two large topics: They are against the influence of Islam in Europe, they are against the EU, and they are *patriots*; and Ekern claims that this is the same political movement that led the UK vote to leave the EU. They are also spokespersons for the same frustration over the elites that led to the election of Donald Trump in the USA. Ekern quotes Marine Le Pen's important advisor Florian Philippot's statement after the election of Donald Trump: 'Their world collapses, ours is about to be built' (Ekern, 2017, p. 15).

The French Front National movement has been an inspiration for many of the other Right-Wing populist movements. The party was established in 1972 with Jean-Marie Le Pen as its leader. But Ekern writes that it is possible to trace its roots much further back, to the French Revolution, Anti-Semitism and the Dreyfus case towards the end of the seventeenth century. Anti-Semitism has for generations been one of the strongest motors for the extreme right in France (Ekern, 2017, pp. 31-32). Ekern has included in his book an interesting quotation from 1998 from Jean-Marie Le Pen illustrating his view of himself:

When I decided on my support for Iraq during the Gulf War, some people did not understand, because they are less intelligent than me. They are less political than me, less intuitive than me. Which mean: They are not political leaders. I am a political leader. It is me who commands the troops. I am a kind of democratic monarch⁴ (Ekern, 2017, p. 52).

However, within Front National there was a view that Jean-Marie Le Pen was not really interested in political power. He had achieved some success by being an agitator on the

⁴ Valérie Igounet: *Le Front National: De 1972 à nos jours*, Éditions du Seuil 2014 loc.7525 in chapter 4, in the sub chapter 'Deuxième étape: L'élimination du chef'.

outside of the political life in France (Ekern, 2017, p. 50). On 5 January 2011, Jean-Marie Le Pen's daughter Marine Le Pen was elected President of Front National (Ekern, 2017, p. 80).

2.2 Populism as a Thin Ideology

In the article *Nationalsozialismus und Populismus* Andrea D'Onofrio writes that in line with the opinion of other scholars, he views populism as a 'thin ideology'. This term is used to describe a political movement that changes its ideology in an opportunistic manner like a chameleon. D'Onofrio studied the presidential election in Germany in March 1932 where Hitler obtained 30.1% of the votes and was the strongest challenger to Hindenburg. Just days after the election was announced, the press supporting the National Socialists (NS) significantly sharpened its attacks on the other political parties, using very derogative terms. The relations to the other parties became in a sense 'anti-relations'. The NS was at the time in opposition and showed all signs of a right wing populist party. The party mastered the strategies of populist rhetoric. Things were either black or white, complicated issues were dramatically simplified and the rhetoric showed an aggressive and derogative attitude towards political enemies – that in terms of the presidential election was the political establishment and the political elite. Furthermore, Hitler projected himself as the spokesman for 'the people', as opposed to the vertical understanding of the people below and the elite and the system above. An assumed conflict between freedom and bondage was also put forward in an emotional and dramatic fashion (D'Onofrio, 2012, pp. 257- 263).

Cas Mudde writes that most definitions of populism have at least two things in common, 'the elite' and 'the people', the people against the powerful. But is populism an ideology, a syndrome, a political movement or a political style, he asks. Mudde then defines populism as: 'an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogenous and antagonistic groups, "the pure people" versus "the corrupt elite", and which argues that politics should be an expression of the general will of "the people"' (Mudde, 2004, p. 543). This definition implies that there are two contraries, elitism and pluralism. Elitism wants politics to be based upon the views of the moral elite, while the pluralist view is based upon an understanding that different groups in society often have very different desires. Mudde also sees populism as a thin ideology based upon few political concepts. The core concepts are 'the people' and its opposite 'the elite', and as a thin ideology it can easily be combined with other ideologies like communism, ecology, ethnic nationalism and socialism. In the populist outlook there are friend and foes. This definition of populism is tied to morality. The two groups not only have different interests, they also have different moral status. Opponents of populists are not just people with different political priorities, they are evil or corrupt (Mudde, 2004, p. 544). As Mudde writes, many scholars argue that populism is a sign of a political crisis. The current (2004) wave of populism could be seen as a consequence of the transformation to a post-industrial society and the inability of current governments to handle this transformation adequately (Mudde, 2004, p. 547).

Mudde and Kaltwasser write that although there is disagreement in academia about the definition of the term populism, there is a general agreement that all forms of populism include an appeal to 'the people' and a condemnation of 'the elite'. It follows from this that populism always includes criticism of the existing and an elevation of ordinary people. The authors define populism as a 'thin' ideology based upon an understanding of society as consisting of two homogeneous groups, the unsoiled people and the corrupt elite and based upon an understanding that politics need to be an expression of the will of the people. As the thin ideology of the populists is limited in scope, it is normally always coupled with ideas from other ideologies like socialism. Populism in itself has not normally a solution to actual political issues. This adoption of ideas, often conflicting, from other ideologies has the effect that populism can take different forms. One of the main criticisms of this approach to the definition of populism is that it possibly can be used to describe all political actors, movements or parties. So this definition is only useful if it not only includes what should be included but also excludes everything else. And there are two direct opposites of populism, *elitism* and *pluralism*, the authors write (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, pp. 26-29).

Due to the thin ideology of populism it can appear in different forms and support different projects, depending on the socioeconomic and political context (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, p. 30). Populism can be found all over the world, but is most frequent in America and in Western Europe. The populist movements are politically very different, and can be found on the left and on the right of the political spectrum; they can be progressive, conservative, religious or secular. Some will say that something so different cannot have something in common, and will discard the term populism as a designation for these movements. But the reason why the movements can be so different is that populism is a 'thin' ideology and appears in combination with other ideas. For the left wing movement it can be socialism and for the conservative movement it can be nationalism. It is often some social discontent that takes part in the definition of the overall ideology (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, pp. 44-45).

Like all political phenomena, populism is a response to particular social, political and cultural situations. This is the reason why populism exists in different forms. As a thin ideology populist actors can adopt the overall message to the requirements of the situation. It is the combination of populism and the host ideology that creates the specific interpretation of 'the people' and 'the elite' (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, pp. 65-66).

2.3 Populism as a Political Style

Benjamin Moffitt published the book *The Global Rise of Populism, Performance, Political Style, and Representation* in 2016. Moffitt points to that the concept of populism as an *ideology* is dominating, particularly in Europe, and this can be attributed to Cas Mudde and his minimum definition of populism as a thin ideology (Mudde, 2007, p. 23). Moffitt refers to a number of other scientists who share this view. Mudde's definition is useful in that it allows identification of populist politicians, and those who are not. But Moffitt points out that the use of the word ideology is problematic, in that there is no distinct populist ideology (Moffitt, 2016, pp. 17-20).

Muffett writes that despite an extensive academic interest in populism today, there are many aspects of this phenomenon that we do not know. Muffett thinks that we have to move from viewing contemporary populism as an entity towards viewing it as a ‘political style’ that is used in many cultural and political contexts, ideas he discusses in his 2016 book. The leader is viewed as *the performer*, ‘the people’ as *the audience* and crisis and media as *the stage*. Muffett notes that contemporary literature is approaching populism either as ideology, strategy, discourse or political logic, respectively. In identifying the features of populist political style, Muffett has analysed twenty-eight populist leaders across the globe (Moffitt, 2016, pp. 1-6).

Some see populism as a *strategy*. Moffitt refers to Weyland who defined populism as: ‘a political strategy through which a personalistic leader seeks or exercises government power based on direct, unmediated, uninstitutionalized support from a large number of mostly unorganized followers’. This direct relationship between the leader and his followers bypasses established organizations and subordinates them to the leader’s personal will (Weyland, 2001, p. 14). In such a strategic approach, populism is not defined by the political values of the political actor, nor by the way they communicate, but by the (direct) relationship with their followers. The problem with this definition according to Moffitt is that will capture a number of manifestations that we normally would not call populist, like religious movements. Also some populists are well organized, like Marine Le Pen in France. This definition also leaves out ‘the people’, which is central to the populist idea (Moffitt, 2016, pp. 20-21).

Others see populism as a *discourse*, which establishes a confrontation between the people and the elite (Hawkins, 2009, p. 1040). Instead of being a set of political beliefs, here populism is a kind of political expression in speech or text. Moffitt points out that there is an important difference between those who see populism as an ideology or as a strategy, and those seeing populism as a discourse in that the former see populism as an either/or, while the latter see populism as a matter of degree. A politician can in this view be more or less populist. Moffitt refers to Hawkins (Hawkins, 2014, p. Loc 540) who states that an ideology has a normative programme for political action, while a discourse has not. Moffitt notes that Chávez has a populist discourse, while his ideology is not populism but socialism (Moffitt, 2016, p. 21).

Moffitt notes that the ideological, discursive and strategic approaches have been developed mostly for empirical research, Laclau’s concept of populism as a *political logic* has had the biggest impact in the area of political and social history. Moffitt refers to various articles by Laclau and his book *On Populist Reason*. Laclau argued that ‘populism is a particular structuring logic of political life, evident wherever equivalence triumphs over difference’. Laclau argued that this is the logic of the political, because any political project is premised on the difference between two antagonistic groups. Groups are formed based upon demand for something, and different groups with different demands form chains (the people) as they share a common animosity towards the system. If the people are the subject of the political, then populism is the logic of the political. In this sense Laclau argues that all politics are populist. What sets Laclau apart from other scientists is that he saw populism as something that is *done* and the political *practice* of populism. The process that Laclau saw as populism is

the acknowledgement that populists do not speak for some pre-existing ‘people’ but bring the subject known as ‘the people’ into being through a process of naming, performance and articulation (Moffitt, 2016, pp. 23-24).

Moffitt writes that the various concepts of populism are often interpreted differently by authors, although there is a mild agreement on which politicians can be called populists. A more exact definition of populism is missing. But Moffitt argues that there is no single definition of populism ‘waiting to be discovered’. Moffitt argues instead that one has to build on the most promising approaches that exist, while acknowledging that populism may have evolved and altered over time. If populism is not quite an ideology, strategy, discourse or political logic, Moffitt proposes to view populism as a *political style* (Moffitt, 2016, pp. 25-27). Moffitt refers to a number of authors who have used the term political style to describe the political communication of contemporary populist politicians. But a clear definition of the term is missing. Moffitt’s definition of the term is: ‘the repertoires of embodied, symbolically mediated performance made to audiences that are used to create and navigate the fields of power that comprise the political, stretching from the domain of government through everyday life’ (Moffitt, 2016, p. 7). By examining a number of political leaders, Moffitt has identified their common features with respect to political style. The three key features Moffitt has identified are: ‘appeal to *the people* versus *the elite*; *bad manners*; and *crisis, breakdown or threat*’ (Moffitt, 2016, pp. 28-29 emphasis in the original).

In the present study a political leader will be characterised as a populist if he conveys a populist style.

Moffitt refers to Margaret Canovan who writes that populists’ appeals to people are often ‘democratic’ in that they are aimed at ordinary people who often distrust the evasiveness and bureaucratic jargon of ordinary politicians. And the style is simple and direct, both in terms of the language used and in the solutions offered (Canovan, 1999, p. 5).

Moffitt explains that one of the difficulties of using the term *political style* is the word *style* that does not have a well-defined meaning. But Moffitt refers to Ackerman (Ackerman, 1962, p. 227) who writes about style in art history and who uses the term to denote works of art produced in the same time period or by the same person(s), and to Goodman who stated that ‘subject is what is said, style is how’ (Goodman, 1975, p. 799). Moffitt argues that both of these definitions of the term are valid and can serve as a reference to his own use, separating style and content (Moffitt, 2016, p. 33). Moffitt emphasises that his definition of political style includes both the rhetorical (spoken and written language, tone and body language), as well as aesthetics (fashion, self-presentation and ‘staging’), and underlines that political performances are constructed. The act of performance has become particularly important in our age of ‘communicative abundance’, Moffitt argues (Moffitt, 2016, p. 38).

Moffitt writes that scientific writers do not necessarily agree on what populism is, but there is more agreement on who the populists are. Moffitt has reviewed the literature on populism since 1990 and he has identified as populist leaders, leaders from around the world that 6 or

more authors labelled as populist. These leaders are examined with respect to political style⁵ (Moffitt, 2016, pp. 41 - 43).

‘The people’ is the most important audience for the populist. The people are the real holders of power and authority. The people can also take the form of ‘the mainstream’ and ‘the heartland’. Tied to the people are the separation of the society between ‘the people’ and ‘the elite’, which can also be ‘the establishment’ or ‘the system’. The populist will also be concerned with ‘the other’, which may be immigrants or asylum seekers, and these are tied to the system or the elite. The ‘liberal elite’ is responsible for the influx of asylum seekers. The populist leader often ‘knows’ what people are thinking, elevates the wisdom of ordinary citizens and promotes ‘common sense’ rather than expert advice from bureaucrats and technical experts (Moffitt, 2016, pp. 43-44). In order to appeal to the people, populist leaders often use ‘bad manners’, and disregard customary modes of behaviour on the political arena. This can include swearing and use of slang. What constitutes bad manners will depend on the culture (Moffitt, 2016, p. 44). Populism gets its energy from crises or threats, and the populist politician tends to induce crises through drama and performance. Such crises can be associated with immigration, economic difficulties, perceived injustice or military threat. The focus on crises relates to the distrust of the often complex decision machinery of the state and the populist’s favoured solution is often short-term and swift action (Moffitt, 2016, p. 45).

As a political style, Moffitt argues, it is easy to understand why populism can appear across the political spectrum, from left to right. It also does not attach populism to certain modes of organisation. The concept of political style also opens for a definition of political actors as more or less populist. For a given political actor the degree of populism can vary over time. But when one opens up for more or less populist, it becomes necessary to define what is on the other extreme. Moffitt refers to Mudde and Kaltwasser, who have argued that the opposite of populism is a pluralist and elitist ideology (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2013, p. 499), while Hawkins⁶ sees the opposite to the populist style as technocratic political style. Many non-populist politicians may on occasion borrow from the populist toolbox. Moffitt notes that critics of populism have often pointed to the apparent ‘emptiness’ of the phenomena – populists may have votes but no politics. The definition of populism as a ‘thin ideology’ does not explain why populists often attach themselves to ‘thicker ideologies’ like socialism. The definition developed by Moffitt emphasizes the style of populism and not its content (Moffitt, 2016, pp. 45-49).

Historian John Abromeit has commented on Moffitt’s book *The Global Rise of Populism*. He notes that Moffitt stakes out an innovative approach to populism as a political style. Abromeit provides a summary of Moffitt’s book in his article and characterises Moffitt’s description of the populist leader as insightful (Abromeit, 2017, pp. 179-180).

⁵ The list includes neither Trump nor Hitler.

⁶ Hawkins, Kirk A. 2012. ‘*Populism and Democracy in Latin America: New Data for Old Questions*’. Paper presented at the XXX Congress of the Latin American Studies Association, San Francisco, May 23 – 26, 2012.

An element of a political style is the telling of lies. In an article in *The Guardian* newspaper Catherine Fieschi, author of *Populocracy: The Tyranny of Authenticity and the Rise of Populism* discusses why Europe's new populists tell so many lies, and do it so shamelessly. Fieschi writes that her research on populism in Europe has confirmed that the telling of lies is a constant feature of populist politics. Many of the lies are shocking as the statements made are easy to verify. Fieschi writes: 'The blatant dishonesty leaves us speechless' (Fieschi, 2019). Politicians have always lied, Fieschi writes, but none wanted to be caught lying. For populists on the other hand, lying is a part of the performance. Its purpose is subversive and its intention is to demonstrate that the liar will stop at nothing to serve 'the people'. It demonstrates that this politician is not hindered by the usual norms of the opposition, the liberal elite. According to Fieschi, the idea of authenticity is central to the populist world view. In a liberal democracy it is taken for granted that a politician will respect the basic values of honesty, both publicly and privately – or pay the price in elections if failing. Populists use the value put on authenticity to their own advantage, not by trying to be truthful but by demonstrating that they are authentic and instinctively connected to 'the people', who are authentic. Catherine Fieschi writes: 'The populist authenticity is not so much about being as good as you claim to be, but about being as shamelessly bad as people might imagine you could be. Shamelessness is populism's debased form of authenticity' (Fieschi, 2019).

A way of lying is the populist claim that news reporting, which is not to their liking, is fake. In an article in the journal *Organization*, Christian De Cock, Sine N. Just and Emil Husted make the point when referring to president Trump, that while his claims that news reports are wrong may be factually incorrect, he is 'pointing to an effective truth that people instinctively "get"' (Cock, Just, & Husted, 2018, p. 674), which are the privileges of the press as part of the apparatus of state and its role as a supporter of the state. De Cock et al. refer to what they characterise as the trendy notions of 'post-factual' and 'post-fact' as problematic concepts, as they presume that there exist universally shared accepted 'truths'. In political rhetoric in the decades leading up to the current era the authors write neo-liberal capitalistic policies have been promoted as leading to 'prosperity for all'. But this has not been the case. The claims have not been true; the voters have been fed an illusion. Large groups have been marginalised, and the media have to a large extent been a mouthpiece of mainstream politicians. The authors view Trump as wake-up call: 'Trump is a symptom, not a cause, his value lies *not* in the alternatives he offers, but in the *desperate need* for real alternatives he reveals... Trump reminds us that change is possible – for better *and worse*' (Cock et al., 2018, p. 676 emphasis in the original). The authors write that Trump's ability to mobilise an otherwise irreconcilable constituency, his 'people' against a common enemy, is a basic populist feat; but Trump is instinctively aware that the masses are always precariously prone to break ranks and that their delight easily can turn into anger if they feel betrayed. This is the reason the authors point out, why Trump is more engaged in cultivating himself and his election promises than running a government (Cock et al., 2018, p. 676).

In their discussion of the style of right-wing populism in the USA, Berlet and Lyons refer in the book *Right-Wing Populism in America* to the following main features: *producerism*, *demonization*, *scapegoating* and *conspiracism*. Producerism is based upon a thinking that

champions the so-called ‘producers’ in the society against ‘unproductive’ elites and groups defined as lazy and immoral, and the authors write that they see this as the most common populist narrative on the right. Demonization is often associated with conspiratorial theories centred on Jewish world domination. The authors refer as an example to the extremist Christian Identity white supremacist ideology that argues that Jews are in league with Satan. They write that demonization of a group often starts with marginalization through political propaganda and continues with dehumanization by negative labelling. Scapegoating is associated with a social process whereby frustration is directed away from the real causes of a social problem to a targeted group. Conspiracism the authors write, is a particular narrative form of scapegoating that puts the enemy within a vast vicious plot (Berlet & Lyons, 2000, p. Introduction).

2.4 ‘The People’

One of the basic terms of populism is *the people*. ‘The people’ is a core term in populist ideology. It is a vague term, but it allows populists to define it as it suits them. ‘The people’ live in the core area or the heartland where the populist agitator gets his support. As the populist agitator can define ‘the people’, it can be defined in a way that appeals to different voters and their desires, and it can create unity across different groups. The term ‘the people’ is normally used in the context of *political power*, as *ordinary people* or as a *nation*. In a democracy the source of political power is the people, and this goes back to the French and the American revolutions. The reference to ordinary people goes back to the assumed conflict between the people and the elite, who do not respect the tastes and the way of life of ‘ordinary people’. The recognition raises the status of the way of life of ‘ordinary people’. The reference to ‘ordinary people’, who are the targeted electorate of the populist, serves to unite this group against the enemy who may be the elite, the big institutions of the state or the ‘establishment’. ‘The people’ may also be used to identify a nation or an ethnic group within a nation (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, pp. 30-34).

Ethnicity is also a part of the populist agenda. In Europe ethnicity is not as elsewhere part of the distinction between ‘the people’ and ‘the elite’, as both belong to the same ethnic group, but part of a distinction between the native population and foreigners or immigrants. The latter are part of neither the people nor the elite (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, p. 99). Political parties try to assemble people who subscribe to the same political ideas, develop political programmes for elections and provide training for politicians. Populists are often attacking political parties, sometimes calling them corrupt, which could be taken as an indication that populists are against political parties. But this is not the case, Mudde and Kaltwasser write. Populists want *their* representatives to be in power, to represent ‘the people’. As soon as they are a political force to be reckoned with, they will occupy a place in the political landscape (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, pp. 76-79).

Jan-Werner Müller refers to Nigel Farage, who claimed after the Brexit vote in the UK that it had been ‘a victory for real people’, implying that the 48% of the electorate who had voted against Brexit was no part of the population. In the same vain Donald Trump stated during his

presidential campaign that ‘the only important thing is the unification of the people – because the other people don’t mean anything’ (CBS, 2016). It is important here to note that for a political actor or a movement to be populist it must assert that only *a part* of the people *is* ‘the people’. What really distinguishes populist parties from other parties according to Müller is this excluding factor, which is based upon a basic rejection of pluralism. Not all citizens are part of the people. This is based upon an idea of a homogeneous people (Müller, 2016, pp. 21-22).

Populists are often criticised for oversimplification of political issues. Müller refers to Pierre Rosanvallon (Rosanvallon, 2011) who has stated that populism involves a triple simplification, first a political and sociological simplification based upon the homogenous people against the corrupt elites, secondly an institutional simplification towards the complicated world of intermediary state institutions yielding power, and thirdly a simplification of social relationships that boils down to a homogenous identity (Müller, 2016, p. 26). When populists run for political office, they represent in their own view the ‘real people’ and they therefore show no respect for the opposition. Likewise, when populists are in office there is no legitimate opposition. It is then reasonable to ask why populists are not already in power everywhere. Müller mentions Richard Nixon, who referred to the ‘silent majority’. If the majority had not been silent, they would have been in power already. On this basis populists may claim that elected governments are illegitimate (Müller, 2016, p. 27).

2.5 ‘The Elite’

The second basic term of populism is *the elite*. Mudde and Kaltwasser mention that many scientists have discussed the term ‘the people’, but few have theorised the meaning of the term ‘the elite’ as part of the research on populism. The central theme here is morality, as the populist distinguishes between the pure people and the corrupt elite. The elite are normally the political establishment, the cultural elite, the economic elite and the media elite, which are portrayed as a homogenous group working against the interests of the people. Due to the anti-establishment nature of populists, one could draw the conclusion that populists cannot stay in power over a long period as this would make them part of the establishment. But as the example of Hugo Chávez shows, populists have managed to stay in power by maintaining their anti-establishment rhetoric, and by re-definition of the elite. The core here is that the real power does not rest with the democratically elected populist, but by obscure forces trying to use power illegally to undermine the interests of the people. Both right-wing and left-wing populists often claim that the political elite is cooperating with the economic elite, and prioritises special interest groups to the disadvantage of ordinary people. This is for example the case with respect to the Tea Party movement in the USA, which supports the free market but believes that economic interest groups cooperate with congress to ensure that laws are introduced that limit competition to the disadvantage of small businesses. This is similar to a criticism made by populist parties within the European Union (EU), which claims that the EU is prioritising EU’s interests over the interests of its member countries. Particularly in Eastern Europe, populists have claimed that national elites have been agents for Jewish interests and

also that the national elites prioritise the interest of emigrants over the interests of local people (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, pp. 34-38).

2.6 The General Will

The term *the general will* is a legacy from the philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778) who distinguished between the general will (*volonté générale*) and the will of everyone (*volonté de tous*). The first expression refers to the ability of people to get together and to make laws to protect their common interest. The second expression is the sum of special interest at a given point in time, the popular will. The morally based separation between the pure people and the corrupt elite points to the idea of the general will, the general will of the pure people. Hugo Chávez expressed this understanding of the general will in his inauguration speech in 2007. He stated that he would seek the advice of the whole nation regarding the main points of his government's programme, as the people have a unique understanding of what is good for them and their independence. As a consequence of this understanding of the general will, populists often support taking decisions based upon a referendum. Populists often criticise the establishment for taking policy decisions without regard for the popular will. In this sense populism can be regarded as a reinforcement of the democratic system (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, pp. 38-40). Mudde and Kaltwasser quote the German political scientist Carl Schmitt (1888 – 1985) who stated that the existence of a homogeneous people is a very important basis for a democratic system. In such a state the general will is based upon the unity of the people and is clearly separated from those who do not belong in this category, and who cannot be treated as equal. In this way populism can legitimise authoritarianism and a front against those who do not belong, like immigrants (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, p. 41).

John Abromeit invokes Mudde and Kaltwasser's use of the term 'the general will' noting that here the authors allude to Rousseau and his critique of representative government. But he also notes that Mudde and Kaltwasser refer to the German political scientist Carl Schmitt, who was of the opinion that a homogenous people are a foundation for a democratic system. Abromeit also comments that the references to Rousseau and Schmitt raise the question of the historical transformation of populism from a left- to a right-wing movement between the French Revolution and the appearance of fascism and other right-wing movements of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century. He notes that the authors have not discussed these questions and refers to his own article (Abromeit, 2016) on this issue (Abromeit, 2017, p. 181).

Jan-Werner Müller also refers to Carl Schmitt who during the 1930s argued that fascism could better ensure that 'the will of the people' was represented, than democracy. The will of the people is in reality an illusion, Müller writes, as this is an entity in flux all the time that never can be measured (Müller, 2016, p. 28). But as populists claim to represent the will of the people, political debate is not really necessary, although in reality policies are based upon interpretations made by the populist politicians. As a consequence, if the policies are not successful the populist politician can try to escape responsibility by claiming that it was the fault of 'the people' (Müller, 2016, p. 31).

2.7 The Leader and the Media

Populism is often associated with a strong leader who has the ability to engage the masses based upon promises of radical reforms. Such populist leaders often present themselves as the ‘voice of the people’. The British political scientist Paul Taggart has expressed that populism ‘requires the most unusual leader to lead the most usual people’. The image presented by the populist leader is often meticulously constructed, and not natural. In some cultures, particularly in South America, the populist leaders are ‘strong’ men, often associated with authoritarian regimes. But many populist strong men take a further step. They portray themselves as men of action, able to take difficult decisions often without support from ‘the experts’. The populist leader often gives the impression that a decision is urgent, an urgency the leader has created himself. In the same vein vulgar language is also often used by the populist leader to present themselves as a ‘man of the people’ (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, pp. 89 -92).

Charisma is a much discussed quality of populist leaders. According to Max Weber (1864 – 1920) charismatic leadership is built upon the unique and exemplary personal qualities of the leader, and as such a gift of grace. Max Weber was of the opinion that charismatic leadership would flourish in times of crisis, when people seek the assistance of leaders with particular gifts of leadership, rather than the normal sources of authority, like laws and norms. In the way Weber explained charismatic leadership; it is based upon a particular tie between the leader and his supporters. Such a tie can be understood as the expectations and impressions the supports have of the leader. It is therefore not fruitful to look for particular universal traits in the charisma. The charismatic leader often has the ability to attract voters to his party and to get support. The supporters then become attracted to the leader’s party and the populist party can in this way survive even if the leader is changed (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, pp. 92-94).

Ernesto Laclau writes that whenever there is a need for a strong leader, such a leader will only be accepted if he presents features that he shares with those he is supposed to lead, and the leader becomes a *primus inter pares*. There has to be some positive features that the leader and his followers share, and for a leader to present such common features he cannot be a despot (Laclau, 2018, p. 59). And inherent in the formation of the ‘people’ is the symbolic identification of a group around a leader (Laclau, 2018, p. 100).

The foundation of populist politics is the conflict between ‘the pure people’ and ‘the corrupt elite’, and it is important for the populist leader to appear as the true voice of the people. In the same way as ‘the people’ and ‘the elite’ are constructions, ‘the voice of the people’ is also a construction. This last construction is based upon the leader’s separation from the elite and association with the people. The populist leader is therefore normally an outsider in the political establishment who manages to portray an impression of belonging to the people. The economic entrepreneur is a quite common populist leader. Examples are Silvio Berlusconi in Italy, Donald Trump in USA and Thaksin Shinawatra in Thailand. It can appear peculiar that billionaires can portray themselves as belonging to ‘the people’. But the separation between

‘the people’ and ‘the elite’ is basically not a socioeconomic separation, but a separation based upon morality. And the entrepreneurs can therefore portray themselves as political outsiders. They portray themselves as honest business people who have managed despite the obstacles established by the corrupt politicians. As they already are wealthy, they do not enter politics to become rich, like the corrupt politicians. They sacrifice themselves to put things right for ‘the pure people’ (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, pp. 95-98). The populist leader is normally the absolute focal point within a populist movement. The leader talks directly to the people, and normally has the answers the people expect. Examples include Donald Trump’s tweets and Beppe Grillo’s blog (Müller, 2016, pp. 34-35).

In their article *Right-wing populism in Europe & USA* Ruth Wodak and Michael Krzyzanowski write that populism, and particularly in its right-wing form is a very elusive phenomenon, which can have national and regional forms. But, nevertheless they write:

it is obvious that the affordances of mediatisation and self-mediation of right-wing populists are probably among the key reasons behind the upsurge and success of populist ideologies and views, and remain one of the stable factors for their longevity. Indeed the manifold patterns of mediated communication and the ubiquitous appropriation of dominant media agenda and frames by right-wing populists cannot be dismissed as a mere coincidence. ... Hence the disproportionate success of some right-wing populist parties can probably be partly explained by the excessive exposure that these parties receive in the media, despite their lack of what used to be regarded as required organisational and political structures (2017, pp. 474-475).

This excessive exposure the authors write, boils down to the intentional and excessive provocation of scandal, victimization and promotion of conspiracy theories these parties present (Wodak & Krzyzanowski, 2017, pp. 474-475).

2.8 Crises and Fear

We live at a time when many social developments are labelled ‘crises’, like the 2008 financial crisis and the 2015 refugee crisis. This often seems to set the stage for populists who speak to ‘the people’, criticises traditional politicians for letting the crises happen and present political solutions. Moffett, who has studied populism around the world, claims that crises do not always breed populism. His study indicates that rather than crises breeding populism, populism breeds crises. Crises are often the result of some failure. Populists then generate the perception that ‘the elite’ by its action or inaction has caused a crisis, further simplifying matters and demanding that strong action is taken to resolve the crisis. Moffitt therefore claim that crises, rather than always being an ‘external feature’ of populism, is often an ‘internal feature’ of populism (Moffitt, 2016, pp. 113-115). But all writers do not agree. Laclau writes:

Some degree of crisis in the old structure is a necessary precondition of populism for, as we have seen, popular identities require equivalential chains of unfulfilled demands. Without the slump of the 1930s, Hitler would have remained a vociferous fringe

ringleader. Without the crisis of the Fourth Republic around the Algerian war, De Gaulle's appeal would have remained as unheard as it had been in 1946 (Laclau, 2018, p. 177).

Moffitt refers to Mudde, who has stated the opinion that there may be a link between crises and populism, but is sceptical, as in the modern era almost every period has been claimed to be in some crisis (Mudde, 2007, pp. 205-207). Also Rovira Kaltwasser has expressed the same kind of reservation (Kaltwasser, 2012, p. 186). It is Moffitt's view that: 'the performance of crisis should be seen as *internal* to populism – not just an external cause or catalyst for populism, but also as a *central feature of the phenomenon itself*' (Moffitt, 2016, p. 118 emphasis in the original).

Moffitt provides the following 6 steps as an illustration of how the populist leader performs the crises scenario:

1. Identify failure
2. Elevate the failure to the level of crisis by linking it into a wider framework and adding a temporal dimension
3. Frame 'the people' versus the responsible for this crisis
4. Use media to propagate performance
5. Present simple solutions and strong leadership
6. Continue to propagate crisis (Moffitt, 2016, p. 121).

John B. Judis writes that a conflict is defined by a set of demands that the populists make to 'the elite'. These are not normal demands that the populists expect to be agreed in a negotiation. The populists give the impression that they think the demands are justified, but they have no illusion 'the elite' will satisfy these demands. Donald Trump's wall is a good example. If he had demanded more policing along the Mexican border to restrict immigration, this would not have led to a conflict. But asking for a wall to be paid by the Mexicans was a recipe for conflict between 'the people' and 'the elite', here represented by the Mexicans, the Democratic majority in the House of Representatives and the liberal press. Such unrealistic demands define the conflict between 'the people' and the establishment, Judis writes. Judis also notes that a second important aspect of populism is that it is often a warning of a crisis. This can be at times when politics, as defined by the political elite, are out of step with the opinion of large segments of society. An example of this is the influx of emigrants to Europe in 2015. Politicians of the ruling parties in many countries were positive to this immigration, while large portions of the people were against large scale immigration (Judis, 2016, pp. 16-17).

Ruth Wodak has analysed the rhetorical strategies used by right-wing populist politicians and parties. Wodak claims that all right-wing political parties define an ethnic, religious, linguistic or political minority as a scapegoat for all political and social problems and define the respective group as dangerous and a threat 'to us' or to the nation, and this according to Wodak is the basis for a 'politics of fear'. Also, Wodak notes that all right-wing political

parties seem to endorse an ‘arrogance of ignorance’; with references to common sense, anti-intellectual answers and pre-modern and pre-Enlightenment thinking (Wodak, 2015, p. 2). With respect to the fear right-wing populists generate, Wodak has included the following quote from David Altheide from his book *Creating Fear*:

Fear has become a dominant public perspective. Fear begins with things we fear, but over time, with enough repetition and expanded use, it becomes a way of looking at life. Therefore, it is not ‘fear of crime’, for instance, that is so interesting to me, but rather how fear has emerged as a framework for developing identities and for engaging in social life. Fear is one of the few perspectives that citizens share today, while liberals and conservatives may differ in their object of fear, all sides express many fears and point to ‘blameworthy’ sources – often each other! The fear ‘market’ has also spawned an extensive cottage industry that promotes new fears and an expanding array of ‘victims’(Altheide, 2002, p. 3).

Wodak notes that right-wing populist parties often create fear, often associated with immigration, and require security measures to be taken. In such situations media tend to reduce complex historical developments to simplistic snap-shots with friends and foes, perpetrators and victims (Wodak, 2015, p. 5).

2.9 Populism and Democracy

It is important in this context to define the term ‘democracy’, which commonly means a system of government based upon the principle that the authority of the state and its government are created and maintained by the consent of (the majority) of its people. This principle is called ‘popular sovereignty’. Democracy can be direct, indirect, liberal and illiberal. In a direct democracy, a head of state is elected directly by the people. In an indirect democracy representatives of the people are elected who in turn elect a head of state. In a liberal democracy the political regime not only respect the popular sovereignty, but independent institutions are established and respected that monitors and protect basic human rights like the freedom of expression and the rights of minorities. When we refer to ‘democracy’ it is most often ‘liberal democracy’ that is considered (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, p. 108). Liberal democracy is exposed to many challenges. It is, however, relevant in the context of populism to refer to the political theorist Robert Dahl who maintained that economic inequality has a negative impact on the functioning of liberal democracies. Even if people have the right to participate in elections and in the control the functioning of government, the political knowledge and skill will not be equally distributed in the population (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2012, p. 13).

The French intellectual Pierre Rosanvallon writes that the histories of democracies have involved tension and conflict. Two important attributes of democracy are legitimacy and trust, which are merged in the ballot box. Legitimacy is a legal aspect while trust is a moral aspect involving expectations about the future. Rosanvallon is concerned with political distrust that

he sees as being on the rise due to scientific, economic and sociological reasons. The economy, which has been globalised, has become more volatile and the political influence has been reduced. Socially people trust each other less because they have fewer personal ties. Diminished trust in others lead to diminished trust in government (Rosanvallon, 2008, pp. 2-10). The relationship between populism and democracy is debated, but the conventional view of authors is that populism constitutes a real danger to democracy. Pierre Rosanvallon is an outspoken champion of this view. He claims that: 'Populism is not just an ideology. It is a perverse inversion of the ideals and procedures of democracy'. In Rosanvallon's opinion populists have no interest in debating the usual political issues. They instead warn of decadence and pretend to be guardians of purity and protectors of the nation from political extremes, and have established the idea of the people as a judge (Rosanvallon, 2008, pp. 265-271). But over time others have claimed that populism is the only true form of democracy. One of the advocates of this view is Ernesto Laclau who was of the opinion that populism leads to a 'democratisation of democracy', particularly because the demands of marginalised groups gain visibility. Mudde and Kaltwasser are of the opinion that both views can be correct, depending on circumstances (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, p. 107).

Populism is basically democratic. Populist leaders are normally elected in free election, and respect that new elections will be conducted. But populist leaders are often in conflict with liberal democracy. They are of the opinion that nothing shall restrict the will of the people and reject the idea of pluralism, which includes the rights of minorities and the institutions that are established to protect such rights. The institutions that are most often attacked are the press and the courts. The populists will claim that the final decisions should rest with elected institutions, and not in the bureaucracy. Populism therefore has a tendency to limit public debate but may vitalise political participation. Parts of the electorate who do not feel represented by the political elite may be engaged by the populist, and the populist may bring up issues that the elite avoids (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, pp. 110-111). In an authoritarian regime, populists can contribute to the establishment of democracy by promoting elections. But in an established liberal democracy populists tend to limit democracy by attacking pluralistic institutions (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, p. 125).

In order for populist politicians to succeed, there has to be a demand for their message among the electorate. It is most often socioeconomic and socio-political crises that trigger this demand. In many cases political corruption within the established parties has demonstrated that the elite are corrupt, and this has been a trigger. The increasing disparity in wealth has led the traditional labour class towards populist policies, as there is a feeling that the traditional social democratic parties have not provided effective policies (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, pp. 130-131). Also, when the policies of the traditional parties become too similar, some issues will not be put on the political agenda, and populist politicians can see an opportunity to focus on such issues (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, p. 135).

Democracy has a different history in Europe and in the USA. In Europe the development took a long time, the political elites both on the right and on the left had a deep disrespect for the common people and their ability to take good decisions. This is why universal suffrage took a long time to be implemented. In the USA the situation is different. The country has a more

popular democratic history and American politics have been populist based upon a conflict between the people and the elite (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, p. 138).

Populism is a part of democracy, and can be viewed as the bad conscience of a liberal democracy. Populism has become an illiberal response to a non-democratic liberalism. Populists pose difficult questions about non-democratic aspects of liberal institutions and politics, as constitutional courts and international financial institutions, and they give illiberal answers that often are supported by the public. Due to extended introduction of new liberal reforms and introduction of programmes like New Public Management, national governments have been severely limited by private companies, transnational organisations and the markets (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, p. 149).

In our political climate, liberal politicians are concerned that a lot of people today discard liberalism and are attracted to populist politicians, who often have a nationalist agenda. Others see a danger in the appearance of very responsible elitist governments, often heavily influenced by technocrats, who are not very responsive to the needs and desires of ordinary people. Müller quotes Cas Mudde who has called populism ‘an illiberal democratic response to undemocratic liberalism’ (Müller, 2016, p. 8). Mudde sees populism as a danger to liberal democracy, but also as a possible corrective to a democracy that has developed to become alien to many people. In the United States populism is often used to describe an egalitarian left wing policy that for a period has been in conflict with the more elitist policies of the Democratic Party. The term ‘liberal populism’ is being used in the USA, a term that would be contradictory if it was used in Europe. But in the USA ‘liberal’ is often used to designate policies that will be called ‘social democratic’ in Europe. In Europe ‘liberal’ is used to describe a political vision with a respect for pluralism and a recognition that democracy relies on checks and balances (Müller, 2016, pp. 8-9). While Cas Mudde as illustrated above is of the opinion that populism can be a corrective to elite oriented democracy, Jan-Werner Müller disagrees with this opinion. He sees populism as a constant threat to democracy (Müller, 2016, pp. 10-11).

Ralf Dahrendorf writes that in Europe, populism is normally associated with irresponsible policies, and populist politicians are often called demagogues. ‘Populism is simple, democracy is complex’ he writes. Populism is based upon a conscious effort to simplify problems, and in this one finds its attraction and successful concept. But society is not so simple, and when populists gain power they often are bewildered by the complexity (2003, p. 159).

Jan-Werner Müller proposes that populism is a certain fictional ‘moralistic imagination of politics’, a political perception that sets the pure and united people against the elites, that are considered corrupt and morally weak. But it is not sufficient to be in opposition to the elites to be called a populist. Populists are always against pluralism, it is only they who represent the people. Müller refers to the French philosopher Claude Lefort who has stated that: ‘The supposedly real people first have to be extracted from the sum of actual citizens. This ideal people are then considered to be morally pure and unmistakable in its will.’⁷ This builds on an

⁷ Claude Lefort, *Democracy and Political Theory*, trans. David Macey (Cambridge UK: Polity, 1988), p. 79.

idea that the people can be one, and that this people can have one true representative. Populism therefore requires that someone is speaking on behalf of the whole people. To define who ‘the people’ is, who belongs and who do not belong is central to all populists (Müller, 2016, pp. 19-20).

The democratic regimes where the liberal institutions have been under attack have been named ‘illiberal democracies’. But Müller asserts that this is a deceptive term, as it is democracy itself the populists are destroying. He refers to an article by the American Journalist Fareed Zakaria where Zakaria maintained that populist governments regularly breached the principles of ‘constitutional liberalism’, which includes political rights, civil liberties and property rights (Zakaria, 1997). Liberalism was also challenged by Marxists and by Carl Schmitt in the 1920’s, who claimed that liberalism was an old-fashioned ideology and a façade for speculative agreements between special interest groups. The genuine popular will could be represented by a leader like Mussolini, according to Schmitt, who saw it as ‘the identity of governed and governing’ when the people applauded Mussolini’s speeches (Müller, 2016, pp. 51-52).

However, liberalism is in our time often taken to mean unchecked capitalism and a free, personal lifestyle. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries ‘liberalism’ was normally associated with individualism, a free press, materialism and often atheism. Being ‘anti-liberal’ then did not mean rejecting basic democratic rights, but was often meaning that one took issue with capitalism and supported traditional Christian values (Müller, 2016, pp. 53-54).

Müller also suggests that populism has been successful as promises of democracy have not been fulfilled. The promise that cannot be fulfilled is that people can rule. Populists on the other hand claim that the people as a whole have a common will and can rule through their right representatives. They speak as if such a promise can be fulfilled, and they speak as if the people are one (Müller, 2016, pp. 76-77). Müller notes that one of the reasons why populist movements have prevailed is that the traditional political party system has been weakened, and writes that populism is strong in places where the party system is weak. Müller refers to Hans Kelsen, who concluded that modern democracy inevitably has to be a party system.⁸ This means that modern democracy can only mean a party democracy, where political parties formulate policies, negotiate alliances and fight elections (Müller, 2016, pp. 78-79).

On the rise of the Tea Party and Trump in the US, Müller points to the fact that ‘anger’ played a role. The reason is a sense that the country has been shifting in ways that many people object to. Müller refers to an essay by Pippa Norris (Norris, 2016) where she explains the rise of authoritarian populism with a cultural backlash in Western societies against long-term, ongoing social change. Western societies have become more liberal, particularly among the young generation and the better educated that have led to a more secular society, LGBT rights and same sex marriage. This shift threatens many traditionalists’ cultural values. On this point Müller also refers to Martin Gilens (Gilens, 2014) (Müller, 2016, pp. 91-92).

⁸ Hans Kelsen, *Vom Wesen und Wert der Demokratie* (1929; repr., Aalen: Scientia, 1981).

In the article *A Critical Review of Recent Literature on Populism*, John Abromeit has commented on four recent books on populism, including Jan-Werner Müller's book. Abromeit notes that Müller's book stands out from the other three, in that Müller views populism as an 'exclusively negative' phenomenon, which always will be a threat to democracy. In order to do so, Abromeit notes, Müller must include in his definition of 'democracy', that liberal safeguards to individuals and minority rights are included in the definition of this term. Mudde and Kaltwasser on the other hand distinguish between democracy and liberal democracy, he notes, and populism is a threat to liberal democracy. Müller are also of the opinion that populists in power are not true democrats, and he introduces the term 'defective democracies'. Abromeit also notes that Müller views populists in power differently from the other authors, who tend to be of the opinion that populists are most successful in opposition and tend to collapse once in power. Müller is much more concerned with what populists do when they are in power. Müller also points to the similarities between fascist and populist ideology, a view not shared by many other scholars, Abromeit notes. Abromeit writes that Müller's analysis is informed and illuminating and refers to Müller's earlier work on Carl Schmitt. For Müller, the basis for populism rests on the self-righteous assumption by populist leaders and followers that they are the 100 %. Abromeit writes that Müller's approach has the advantage that his approach includes an important point that many commentators have overlooked, namely its tendency to depoliticise the followers and to reduce democracy to a spectacle where the passive followers watch and follow the leaders. In that sense, populism can be as much about demobilising as about mobilising the electorate, as Schmitt and the Nazis knew all too well, Abromeit writes (Abromeit, 2017, pp. 182-183).

Benjamin Moffitt comments on the discussion on whether populism is good or bad for democracy or not, and is of the opinion that the question is more complicated than any of these simple answers. Moffitt sees democracy as a political system of free and fair elections, and a system where institutions of power are exposed to public restraint and where there is a commitment to and recognition of contingency, pluralism and equality. This definition does not promote a particular form of democracy, like liberal, progressive or conservative (Moffitt, 2016, pp. 133-134). Moffitt notes that many of the writers who view populism as a negative force for democracy favours liberal democracy. The negative attitude towards populism stems from the tensions that characterise liberal democracy today. This is the tension between the democratic values of participation, majority rule and the rights of 'the people' against the liberal values of the rights of the individual and the law as the ultimate authority of the state (Moffitt, 2016, p. 136). Moffitt quotes Chantal Mouffe who has named this 'the Democratic Paradox' (Mouffe, 2000, pp. 2-4). Based upon his own analysis, Moffitt is of the opinion that populism can have both positive and negative effects for democracy. It makes democracy more comprehensible and understandable for people as it eliminates the convoluted technocratic language that characterise politics today. It also has the potential to focus on dysfunctional aspects of contemporary democracy like corruption and collusion among the elite (Moffitt, 2016, pp. 142-144). But populism also has strong anti-democratic elements. These include its often extreme focus on personalities, the oversimplification of political

issues and the rift it establishes between ‘the people’ and ‘the other’ or ‘the elite’ (Moffitt, 2016, p. 145).

In their article *What Makes Democracies Endure?* Adam Przeworski, Michael Alvarez, José Antonio Cheibub and Fernando Limongi ask what it would take for a randomly selected democratic country to have a democratic regime next year. And their answer is: ‘affluence, growth with moderate inflation, declining inequality, a favourable international climate and (effective) parliamentary institutions’ (1996, p. 39). The authors have a minimalistic definition of democracy requiring only that elections are held and that the opposition has an opportunity to win and take office. Their analysis concludes that presidential democracies are less durable than parliamentary democracies as they are ‘more likely to generate legislative paralysis’, when the legislative assembly are controlled by a party which is hostile to the president (1996, p. 45).

2.10 Populism and Fascism

Historian Andrea D’Onofrio published in 2012 the article *Nationalsozialismus und Populismus* in which he discusses the populist aspect of the German *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiter Partei*, (NSDAP) or the Nazi Party, during the Weimar period (D’Onofrio, 2012). D’Onofrio writes that during the different development phases of the NSDAP it is possible to identify populist characteristics of a right wing movement. The party started as a revolutionary party intent on a coup d’état, then tactically adjusted to the parliamentary rules of the Weimar Republic that they ‘hated’, and finally assumed power in a one-party dictatorship. In this development D’Onofrio sees a transition from a protest-populism to a governmental-populism (D’Onofrio, 2012, pp. 257-263).

Mudde and Kaltwasser write in their book *Populisme* that both communism and fascism in Europe flirted with populism in the periods when they were political movements and tried to win support from the masses. But according to the authors and in contradiction to Andrea D’Onofrio, these movements should be considered as ideologies as they were more elitist than populist. This is mostly so for fascism that elevated the leader (*der Führer*) or the race (National Socialism) or the state (fascism) rather than the people. Also Marxism-Leninism has a strong elitist core the authors write (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2019, p. 58).

In the article *A Critical Review of Recent Literature on Populism*, John Abromeit has commented Mudde and Kaltwasser’s book (English title: *Populism: A very short introduction* from 2017) (Abromeit, 2017). Abromeit sees it as problematic that Mudde and Kaltwasser ‘erect a firewall’ between fascism and populism, by stating simply that fascism was an elitist movement. In Abromeit’s opinion they overlook the important anti-elitist elements of the fascist ideology. These anti-elitist elements made it different from traditional European conservatism and made the ideology appealing to the new radical nationalist movements that appeared in France, Germany and other European countries. According to Abromeit these nationalist movements should be regarded as important foundations for European populism, as well as the Russian *narodniki* movement that Mudde and Kaltwasser also refer to

(Abromeit, 2017, p. 181). Jan-Werner Müller writes that as a consequence of the definition he has given of populism, both National Socialism and Italian fascism must be understood as populist movements. These movements were not just popular movements, they were racist, glorified violence and had a very radical ‘leadership principle’ (Müller, 2016, p. 93).

Ruth Wodak writes in her book: *The Politics of Fear, What Right-Wing Populist Discourses Mean* that some scholars have claimed that populist elements have always appealed to and appeared in far-right or fascist movements. For sure, Wodak writes, national socialist populism interacted with and facilitated fascism in interwar Germany and Austria. Wodak refers to Anton Pelinka who has noted that the German right-wing philosopher Carl Schmitt⁹, active both in the Weimar Republic and later, maintained that the *Führer*-state represented the ‘people’s will’ more efficiently and truthfully than the liberal parliamentarianism of Weimar or Westminster (Pelinka, 2013, p. 5). Therefore the national-socialist *Führer* all the time emphasized and therefore legitimized that they acted on behalf of ‘the people’, as saviours sent as messenger by some mythical, often religious character. This meant in reality that the people should applaud the actions of the leader, and in so doing legitimize him. Legitimation by authority also played an important role in this ideology (Wodak, 2015, p. 10).

In her book *Fascism: A Warning* Madeleine Albright, Secretary of State under President Clinton and currently Professor in the Practice of Diplomacy at Georgetown University, writes that there is a growing tendency today ‘to portray fascism as a logical outgrowth of populism and to attribute both allegiances to an unhappy middle class’. Albright refers to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary that defines populism as ‘a believer in the rights, wisdom and virtues of the common people’. Albright writes that from its earliest days candidates who were up for election in the United States had a deep belief in the rights, wisdom and virtues of the common people, because the common people are the majority and being on the side of the majority is a good strategy when trying to win an election. Albright does not, however, subscribe to the thought that the populists as she sees them are the source of fascism. She writes that ‘to create tyranny out of fears and hopes of average people, money is required, and so, too, ambition and twisted ideas. It is the combination that kills’ (Albright, 2018, pp. Loc 3206-3241).

In her article: *Populismus und Faschismus in Europa – Wahlverwandtschaft oder Mesalliance?* Karin Priester writes that fascism is a child of the First World War while populism is a child of the fast moving modernisation of the society after the end of the nineteenth century. Populism was a protest movement politically against the elite and culturally against anti-modernism. These movements moved towards each other in the twentieth century. But when fascism established itself as regimes in Germany and in Italy, the populists became marginalized and sometimes were in opposition to fascism. Populists wanted a state ‘of the people’, but Mussolini’s appeal to the people turned out to be only a temporary move to gain the support of the masses. The populist movements in both Italy and Germany, Priester argues, were ambivalent towards modernization and promoted an ‘organic’

⁹ Schmidt, C (2007) *The Concept of the Political: Expanded Edition*. Chicago, IL, University of Chicago Press (pp. 80–96)

and not a technocratic development towards modernization. And also, the populists expected fascism to bring about a circulation of the elite, putting ‘sons of the people’ into leading positions in a fascist governed state. Priester writes that she first and foremost counts as populists politically ambivalent middle class people who were critical of the elites. Many within this group were after the First World War attracted by the fascist movements (Priester, 2012, p. 213). Priester compares the populists within the fascist movement with the Trotskyists within the communist movement, who both criticised the bureaucracy and had thoughts of a ‘permanent’ revolution. The populists within the fascist movement are also called ‘left wing fascists’ or fascist heretics, which they in reality were not as there existed no fascist orthodoxies. But they had the typical Janus face of populists: reactionary backward looking, conservative traditionalism and anti-Semitic coloured criticism of everything modern, and at the same time striving after upward social mobility (Priester, 2012, p. 215). In Priester’s opinion, populism has to do with politically not firmly rooted protests that quickly disappears or becomes absorbed in a political movement with the ability to establish itself as a political force. The protest is based upon being against something, which is not democracy or capitalism, but what populists define as inefficiency, isolation, narrowmindedness or something they feel are presumptuous and arrogant by the elites (Priester, 2012, p. 216).

When discussing both Hitler and Trump it will be shown that they both are antagonists, and their policies are dominated by protests against the established policies and existing norms.

Priester writes that the appearance of fascism can only be understood within the context of the destructions of the First World War and the fear of communism following the Russian revolution of 1917. Populism on the other hand, is a cyclically reappearing phenomenon that acts as a chameleon, deeply structural but always focusing on the downsides of the modern world: the idea that technology can solve all problems, the accelerating production processes, the increasing influence of technological experts and a tendency to focus narrowly on the positive sides of science (Priester, 2012, p. 225). Nationalism, allegedly the core of fascist ideology, was present in Germany long before the appearance of fascism. Also, what is termed ‘fascist ideology’ has roots back to the writing of Nietzsche among others (Priester, 2012, p. 218).

In his book *The Nature of Fascism*, Roger Griffin writes that the raw material of fascism was: ‘such forces as militarism, racism, charismatic leadership, populist nationalism and fears that the nation or civilization as a whole was being undermined by the forces of decadence....’ The reason why such forces could be forged together in the inter-war period, and for fascism and Nazism to establish single party states was the extraordinary conditions of the socio-political tensions after the First World War and the Russian Revolution (Griffin, 1993, p. viii). Griffin gives the following definition of fascism: ‘Fascism is a genus of political ideology whose mythic core in its various permutations is a palingenetic¹⁰ form of populist ultra-nationalism.’ Griffin uses the term populist as a generic term for political forces that, even if

¹⁰ Griffin provides a thorough discussion of this definition in his book. He explains that the term ‘palingenesis’ is derived from *palin* (again, anew) and *genesis* (creation, birth) and refers to the start of regeneration after a phase of crisis or decline. The term palingenetic myth thus denotes a vision of a revolutionary new order.

led by a small elite of self-appointed leaders in practice or in principle depend on 'people power' as the basis for their legitimacy (Griffin, 1993, pp. 26-36).

Many Germans at the time of the Weimar Republic were attracted by nationalism. This nationalistic ideology is called the '*Völkisch*' ideology. The start of the twentieth century saw a break with the traditional, family and village oriented society towards a modern society without any family or common belief system holding the society together. The new glue was the subjective interests of the individuals. The needs for an organised community were met by a number of organisations or '*Bundt*' of people sharing common interests. Inspired by Charles Darwin's evolutionary theory and an idea of '*the right of the strongest*', Social Darwinism appears with its idea of a collective struggle between states, nations or races. Within Social Darwinism the fundamental rights of human life is discarded and racial hygiene or '*Rassenhygiene*' is introduced as a biological way of thought. The ideas of racial hygiene and nationalism were adopted by many of Germany's public organisations at the time (Frøland, 2018, pp. 99-109).

3 The Weimar Republic

3.1 Establishment of the new Republic and Hitler's *Mein Kampf*

Political Background

In October 1918, when defeat in the First World War was becoming evident for the German high command, *Kaiser* Wilhelm II stepped down on advice from the army and a new government was formed by the majority parties of the *Reichstag* headed by a *Reichskanzler*. The *Kaiser* assumed a position of constitutional monarch. The country became a parliamentary democracy (White, 1997, p. 7). The armistice signed 11 November 1918 ended the fighting. The defeat in the war came as a surprise to many Germans who had been fed propaganda during the war. The German press was censored and negative tidings were not printed. The country was not invaded by foreign troops and the population expected victory. Also due to the weapons available at the time, there was no damage to German towns and villages (Hett, 2018, pp. 19-22). The Treaty of Versailles, signed 28 June 1919, ended the war.

The main points of the Treaty of Versailles were that it gave border territory to Denmark, Belgium and France, limited the size of the German army, forbade the country to have an air force and forbade a union with Austria. It also excluded Germany from the newly established League of Nations. Germany had to assume the guilt for the war, and the country had to pay war reparations to the Allies. The economist John Maynard Keynes was temporarily engaged by the British Treasury and was their official representative at the Paris Peace Conference. Keynes did not agree with the peace terms and resigned from his positions at the conference. In his view the treaty included no provisions for the economic and political rehabilitation of Europe after the war. Keynes published his arguments in the book: *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* (Keynes, 1920). The book became a best seller and made the author famous.

The dominating political party in the *Reichstag* was the Social Democrats (SPD). In the elections that were held in 1919 the SPD became the largest party with 37.9% of the votes and 163 of the 421 seats, but the party did not command a majority. Anti-socialist parties representing mainly the middle class held the majority. Much of the political instability of the following years was due to the large number of political parties and their varying strength (Dederke, 1968, p. 280). Due to unrest in Berlin, the elected national assembly met in Weimar (thereby the *Weimar Republik*), south of Berlin. The assembly decided to establish a parliamentary democracy with a President with emergency powers and a government responsible to the national assembly headed by a *Kanzler*. Friedrich Ebert was elected the first President and Philipp Scheidemann from SPD became the first *Kanzler*. A federal system of government was established with limited power delegated to the individual states (*Länder*). Article 48, giving the president emergency powers to suspend individual rights and to take

whatever measures deemed necessary to restore order, should later be crucial for the history (White, 1997, pp. 11-12).

The Jews in Germany had got normal German citizenship in the nineteenth century, and many Jews served in the army during the First World War. After the war the conditions for further assimilation of the Jews were good. But due to pogroms in Eastern-Europe, many poor Jews particularly from Poland fled to Germany. Due to their orthodox beliefs and traditional dress code they were not well received by assimilated German Jews and by Germans in general, and became a target for new anti-Semitism (Dederke, 1968, p. 111).

The Establishment of the Nazi Party

As noted by Mudde and Kaltwasser, populism is often associated with a strong leader who has the ability to engage the masses based upon promises of radical reforms, and the authors quote the British social scientist Paul Taggart who has expressed that populism ‘requires the most unusual leader to lead the most usual people’. The authors refer to Max Weber who was of the opinion that charismatic leadership would flourish in times of crisis, when people are attracted to leaders with a particular gift of leadership. Hitler was a strong, an unusual and a charismatic leader, he promised radical reforms and he thrived under the crises that engulfed the Weimar Republic. This is illustrated during the first years of the Nazi party, but also later. The *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiter Partei* (NSDAP) or the Nazi party was established in 1919. The idea behind the party was to transform the strongly nationalistic and racially oriented ideology in the *völkisch* undercurrent of German society into a political movement. In 1920 the party established a 25 point programme signed by Adolf Hitler. In short, the main points of the programme are: A requirement for new land for German settlements, only Germans of ‘German blood’ can be citizens, Jews cannot be citizens, only citizens can hold public office, citizens shall be prioritised with respect to food and work, non-citizens can be deported, all non-Germans that have immigrated after 2 August 1914 shall be deported, abolishment of work- and effortless income, nationalisation of all limited companies, profit sharing in big companies, land reform prioritising public interests and abolishing land lease costs, expansion of the school system and payment by the state of education for gifted children from poor families, child labour to be forbidden and legal battle against deliberate lies and their dissemination by the press (Hitler, 2004).

The radical reform program must be judged as a propaganda tool to address the grievances of the part of the population the Nazis intended to target. Adolf Hitler became the chairman of the party in 1921 and he gained total control over policy and tactics. The strategy initially was not to win elections but to build a strong organization, a propaganda machine and a paramilitary force in order to seize power in a coup d’état. The paramilitary force became known as the *Sturmabteilung* (SA) (Griffin, 1993, pp. 94-95). Hitler’s plan was to seize power at first in Bavaria, through a coup in Munich. The coup failed on 9 November 1923. The state of Bavaria was not interested in a thorough investigation as the support of too many important people would be exposed. Only Hitler, his accomplice general Ludendorff and some of their supporters were in 1924 charged with high treason (Dederke, 1968, p. 80).

Leo Lania reported from court for the magazine *Die Weltbühne*. On 6 March 1924 he published an article titled: *Hitler-Prozess*. He writes that as one enters the court hall one gets the impression that this is not court, but a closed group who discusses a couple of serious and interesting political questions. The discussions are very cultivated and academic. The accused are sitting relaxed at small tables. There is no bench that could lead to bad feelings for the accused. 'A court case? No, this is a seminar on high treason.' Leo Lania continues:

Hitler is perhaps the only one who in the first days showed a certain nervousness and disquiet. With him it is evident that he tries to show a good posture. ...As Hitler rose for his great speech there was silence. At first one is surprised. One does not understand at first from where his impact as speaker comes. He speaks like being accustomed to speaking. The voice masters effortlessly the hall and has an attractive ring to it. Scant gestures. But the speech is incoherent and without emphasis, and one wonders that the pathos that is common for speakers to large crowds, is missing.

Hitler spoke for four hours. During these four hours he said little, really nothing new. Those who expected revelations, those who had expected that Hitler would give a great political speech, present his programme, were disappointed. But still, one followed without tiring Hitler's speech. The inner warmth, the eloquence, the perfection of the metaphors and comparisons gets one little by little to sympathise with the speaker, and one understands that particularly the broad masses will lend their ear to such a flat, primitive argumentation, and a demagoguery that has its strength in not being defied by simple thoughts.

A nationalistic newspaper has called Hitler a possessed, a person possessed by an idea. Without doubt: Hitler gives the impression of an absolute honest person. But his obsession, his fanaticism is not based on the belief in an idea, but from the belief in his personal greatness. His vanity is boundless. Just the way in which he shows his modesty demonstrates this. For four hours – during his whole speech – Hitler stood in a stiff military posture with his coat buttoned high (Lania, 1924, pp. 298-299).

Leo Lania is obviously impressed with Hitler's ability as an orator, but less impressed with the substance of his speech. Lania provides a very interesting character portrayal of Hitler as a seemingly honest and proud person with charisma and great self-esteem. Mudde and Kaltwasser write that charismatic leadership is a much discussed quality of populist leaders, and they refer to Max Weber who stated that charismatic leadership is built upon the unique and exemplary personal qualities of the leader, and as such a gift of grace. Hitler was sentenced to five years in Landsberg fortress with a probation period of six months, and the Nazi party was outlawed. Ludendorff was spoken free (Dederke, 1968, p. 80). While Hitler was in jail his right wing political movement withered lacking his extraordinary organizational and demagogical powers. During his time in Landsberg fortress Hitler enjoyed great freedom and worked on his book *Mein Kampf*. Hitler was prematurely released from jail after serving less than a year, and the first part of *Mein Kampf* was published in 1925. When Hitler was out of prison he became the undisputed leader of the Nazi movement, which came to consist of three integrated components: a private, terrorist army necessary to grab power

and maintain order, a shadow state apparatus ready to take over government functions and a mass political and social movement (Griffin, 1993, pp. 95-96).

Mein Kampf and Hitler's Views on the Jews

When reading *Mein Kampf* it comes through that Hitler's overall aim was to gain power and his tool was propaganda. In his propaganda he used populist strategies. Benjamin Muffett refers to Weyland who has defined populism as 'a political strategy through which a personalistic leader seeks or exercises government power based on direct, unmediated, uninstitutionalized support from a large number of mostly unorganized followers.' For Hitler the objective was to gain power. But as Muffett writes, Weyland's definition is incomplete. It is also required to bring in the elements of 'the people'. When interpreting 'the people' in Hitler's and the Nazi's propaganda it is relevant that Mudde and Kaltwasser has pointed to that this term may also be used to identify a nation or an ethnic group within a nation. Hitler defined his 'people' as Germans of German blood and excluded the Jews, who became the scapegoats for many of the deficiencies Hitler saw in the German society. It is also evident in *Mein Kampf* that Hitler has no respect for the common German, but he was very aware that he needed his support in gaining power.

Hitler starts *Mein Kampf* with a description of his childhood and youth in Austria. He was born in 1889. When he was in his early 20s he lived in Vienna and it was here he writes that his strong anti-Semitism and hate of Jews were born. He explains that he earlier had seen the Jews as a religious community, but now became convinced that they were not German but a separate race. He started to view Zionism, the Jewish desire to return to live in Israel, as their national character. He writes:

Nothing had in a short while made me as thoughtful as the knowledge I gradually acquired as to how the Jews behaved within certain areas. Did any form of filth, shamelessness – particularly within the cultural field - exist that not at least one Jew was involved in? If one did cut very carefully in such a cancer, one often found one small Jew, often blinded by the sudden light as a worm in a carcass (Hitler, 2019, p. 114).

Here Hitler's characterization of the Jews 'a worm in a carcass' is what Berlet and Lyons termed *demonization*, to equate the Jews to something evil.

Hitler writes that when he came to Vienna he got to know the Christian Democratic Major Karl Lueger. At first he was hostile both towards Lueger and his party, but his usual fairness made him reconsider. At the time of writing he looks upon Lueger as the most important German Major ever (Hitler, 2019, p. 111). In the notes to the current version of *Mein Kampf* an explanation of Hitler's admiration of dr. Lueger is provided. Lueger was a populist who liked to present himself as a champion of the rights of the small people's social rights against the elites. Hitler learned from Lueger how it was possible to win the support of people as long as a political vision is presented that people can identify with (Hitler, 2019, p. 111).

During his time in Vienna, Hitler worked together with working class people who belonged to the Austrian Social Democratic Party (SPD). He discussed political issues with his workmates, but could not agree with them. He writes:

One thing was quite clear to me: The party I for months have fought the hardest battles with through their private members, was almost totally led by foreign people. The fact that the Jew is no German I had to my great satisfaction finally established. But it was firstly now I got to know the people who seduced our people (Hitler, 2019, p. 118).

During this time Hitler also became convinced that Jews were behind Marxism. He writes:

The Jewish Marxist doctrine rejects the aristocratic principle of nature and gives instead eternal preference to the power and strength that the common people's numbers and deadweight represent. Thereby the value of the individual human being is suppressed, the importance of nation and race is denied and in the same vain humanity is deprived of the basis for its existence and culture (Hitler, 2019, p. 121).

In this excerpt Hitler's disrespect for the common Germans comes through. Hitler explains that for him and the National Socialists there are only one doctrine:

What we have to fight for, is to ensure that our race and our people exist and reproduce, that our children can make a living and keep the blood clean, and furthermore: freedom and independence of the motherland, such that our people can carry out the task it has been given by the Creator and by the universe. ... Any thought and any idea, any teaching and all knowledge has to serve this doctrine (Hitler, 2019, p. 290).

Hitler explains that it was after having attended lectures of Gottfried Feder¹¹ he came to understand the thinking behind the Jew Karl Marx's work. Now he understood his book *Das Kapital* and also the Social Democrat's fight against the national business community, which should only pave the way for the domination of the international finance- and stock exchange community (Hitler, 2019, p. 290).

The Jewish community in Germany at the time included wealthy bankers and intellectuals who in terms of populist theory belong to 'the elite' and as such were not 'ordinary people'. In Mudde and Kaltwasser's discussion of 'the people' they point to the assumed conflict 'between ordinary' people and 'the elite', who do not respect the tastes and the way of life of 'ordinary people'. The recognition of this conflict raises the status and the way of life of 'ordinary people' they write.

¹¹ Gottfried Feder was an engineer who was interested in economics and at the time he met Hitler he was obsessed with the idea of getting rid of the slavery of interest on capital; investing money to earn interest was an activity many Jewish capitalists were engaged in. Feder had great influence on Hitler, who had an ambivalent relationship to capitalism. Hitler and the Nazis saw two forms of capitalism, a German/Aryan part based on labour, building factories and creating jobs, and a Jewish part moving money around and making money from other people's labour. (Hitler, 2019, pp. 285, in the notes)

Mein Kampf and Hitler's Views on Democracy

Depending on the situation that is studied, there are different views among scholars on populism's relationship to democracy. Jan-Werner Müller on his part sees populism as a constant threat to democracy. Müller proposes that populism is a kind of fictional moralistic imagination of politics, a political perception that sets the pure and united people against the elites. But it is according to Müller not sufficient to be against the elites to be called a populist. Populists are always against pluralism, it is only they who represent the people. John Abromeit has commented on Müller's definition of populism, and supports his views on the relationship between populism and democracy if we by populism mean liberal democracy. Hitler was very hostile to pluralism and democracy in any form. During his stay in Vienna, Hitler developed a strong disrespect towards the Austrian-Hungarian democracy and its parliament, which he viewed as very inefficient. But he says that he started out with an admiration for parliamentary democracy and for the British parliament, an admiration which he had some difficulty in letting go. This was due, he writes, to the fact that he in his youth had been an avid reader of newspapers, and the dignity that the House of Commons showed when solving its tasks impressed him tremendously. One of the reasons why Hitler had no respect for the Austrian parliament was that it in his opinion did not live up to its great British ideal. The other aspect of parliamentary democracy in Vienna that he took issue with, was that he felt that the Social Democratic Party in parliament did not always promote German interests (Hitler, 2019, p. 135).

Hitler developed the idea of the great leader. He writes: 'It is anyway totally wrong to believe that theoretical knowledge is equivalent to the ability to lead. To lead means to move the masses' (Hitler, 2019, p. 698). And furthermore:

Is a leader unsuitable when he is unsuccessful to secure a majority for a certain idea in a more or less randomly collected flock? Yes, have this flock at any time understood an idea before the success witnessed its greatness? Is not every ingenious deed on this earth the obvious protest of the genius against the slowness of the general public (Hitler, 2019, p. 139)

Hitler's disrespect of the Austrian parliament is very clear from his opinion that they were 'a more or less randomly collected flock'. Hitler makes it clear that even if his movement takes part in the work in a parliamentary institution, the objective of such participation can only be to destroy the institution. Such an institution, he continues, must be considered as one of the greatest sign of decay of humanity (Hitler, 2019, p. 433).

Jan-Werner Müller sees populism is a certain fictional 'moralistic imagination of politics', a political perception that sets the pure and united people against the elites, that are considered corrupt and morally weak. Populists are as exemplified by Hitler always against pluralism; it is only they who represent the people. Müller refers to the French philosopher Claude Lefort who has stated that: 'The supposedly real people first have to be extracted from the sum of actual citizens. This ideal people are then considered to be morally pure and unmistakable in its

will'. Hitler deducted the political elite and the Jews to arrive at the real people. Müller are very concerned with what populists do once in power.

Mein Kampf and Propaganda

Ruth Wodak has analysed the rhetorical strategies used by right-wing populist politicians, and writes that they define an ethnic, religious, linguistic or political scapegoat for all political and social problems, and this is the basis for a 'politics of fear'. Hitler's demonization of the Jews certainly created a 'politics of fear' among the Jewish communities in Germany. In an article in *The New York Times* titled: *How Hitler Pioneered 'Fake News'* Timothy Snyder writes that during Hitler's service in the army after the First World War he became a propagandist, and this would be his chief occupation for the rest of his life. 'He fictionalized a globalist world into simple slogans, and repeated this until his enemies were exterminated'(Snyder, 2019). Snyder quotes Hitler's own statement in *Mein Kampf*: 'The correct use of propaganda is true art'(Hitler, 2019, p. 243). Hitler's undisputed skill in both the formulation and the delivery of propaganda for his political movement in public meetings brings up Benjamin Moffitt's view of populism as a political style. Moffitt views the leader as the performer, 'the people' as the audience and crisis and media the stage. Hitler was a performer, the people he addressed were Germans of German origin and the political and economic difficulties of Weimar Germany were the crises he used in his propaganda.

Hitler was engaged in a pan-Germanic movement in Austria at the time when he lived in Vienna. This movement failed and Hitler concluded that the failure was due to a lack of understanding of what drives great upheavals: the movement underestimated the importance of the general public. The movement showed little interest in social questions and neglected to enlist people from the lower echelons of society. They underestimated the value of the common people. He writes: 'When a superior brain starts to lead them in a particular direction, they will almost as a flywheel give the attack an even and lasting strength' (Hitler, 2019, pp. 166-167). Here Hitler refers to an important part of Nazi thinking, the importance of winning the support of the lower classes of society. This part of the population represented a large part of the voters, and the way to win them over was to promise to improve their social conditions. In an extension of this thinking, the Nazi's promoted a classless society where nationality should be the social glue. The Nazi ideology was also based upon the importance of the great leader who would be necessary to transform society.

Hitler gives us more insight into how he sees the tactics of the great leader by writing:

On the whole the really great demagogue has always understood the art of concentrating on one opponent so as to not split people's attention. ...It belongs to a great leader's geniality always to treat the opponents – irrespective of points of view – as one, because confronted with more enemies weak and unsecure persons can easily start to doubt if they are right (Hitler, 2019, p. 176).

So here we probably have one of the reasons why Hitler often focused his hostility towards the Jews and saw them everywhere where he identified a problem in the German society. By

concentrating on the Jews he made use of and exacerbated old anti-Semitic tendencies in European social life (Eriksen, Harket, & Lorenz, 2006). The new element that Hitler brought to anti-Semitism was to consider the Jews as a separate people and not as a religious community. They were in his view not part of the German people, even if many Jews were secular or had taken the Christian faith, had lived in Germany for generations and were well integrated there.

We can assume that when Hitler writes about ‘the really great demagogue’ he considers himself in this role. And as a demagogue Hitler knew he needed one enemy, someone he could blame for the ills he saw in German society. And it fell upon the Jews to have this role in Hitler’s and the Nazi’s propaganda, with the enormous consequences we now know this had. Hitler writes in *Mein Kampf* that he became convinced about the importance of propaganda during his military service during the First World War. In Hitler’s opinion the English mastered the art of propaganda better than the Germans, and this was one of the reasons why the German side lost the war (Hitler, 2019, p. 243). Hitler meant that the propaganda always has to be directed towards the lower echelons of society. Propaganda does not influence the intelligentsia as they will require scientific proof. ‘Propaganda is as unscientific as an art poster’, he writes. Propaganda has to appeal to feelings, not to the intellect. The wider the population the propaganda is aimed to reach, the simpler the message has to be. In Hitler’s opinion the comprehension of ordinary people is quite limited and the intelligence is low, but the forgetfulness is large. So his conclusion is that effective propaganda has to be limited to a few points and these have to be presented as slogans, and the slogans have to be used until you are sure the message has reached the last man. It is also important not to ridicule the opposition because this will be seen through (Hitler, 2019, pp. 246-247).

On the objective of propaganda he writes:

It is for example not the task of the propaganda to weigh different rights up against each other, but only to promote the right that one self represents. It shall not explore the objective truth in a way that is beneficial to the opposition, and then be presented to the general public with doctrinal honesty, but unstoppable serve its own interests (Hitler, 2019, p. 249).

But Hitler also points out that it is not sufficient that the propaganda is ingenious, it has to be limited to a few points that have to be repeated infinitely. Tenacity is here as in many other aspects of life the first and most important condition for success (Hitler, 2019, p. 251). Hitler and the Nazis used propaganda effectively when they mobilised support for the Nazi party, particularly in 1932 when public support for the party increased to 37 % of the votes in the election to the *Reichstag* in July. This shows that Hitler’s understanding of how to formulate and use propaganda was working well under the conditions that existed in the Weimar Republic. Hitler claims that he had gained this knowledge from observing the effectiveness of the British propaganda during the war, which in Hitler’s opinion prepared the British soldiers well for the horrors of the front, while the German propaganda ridiculed the British. The German soldiers quickly realised that this was not the case. So in Hitler’s opinion it was

important that the propaganda was truthful to the extent that false claims were not discovered before the objective of the propaganda had been met.

Hitler describes how he visited the meetings of the non-socialist political parties, and got to understand why these parties did not focus on the spoken word. The participants at the meetings were all supporters, and the speeches were read from manuscripts often by professors or other distinguished gentlemen (Hitler, 2019, p. 593). Hitler was obviously more ambitious on behalf of his Nazi party and spoke to attract new members. The Nazi party's main fishing ground for new members was the Social Democratic Party. In Hitler's opinion the members of this party, which was a governing party in the *Reichstag* through much of the Weimar period, were proper Germans that had been led astray by communists and Jews.

The Nazi party was not too concerned with disturbances at their meeting as they had the SA thugs in their brown shirts to maintain order. This was a time when people attended political meetings in great numbers. There were no TV and public meetings were the arena where the political parties could present their program and political ambitions. The frequency and size of such meetings was large. During the time that Hitler describes in *Mein Kampf*, the Nazi party was active in Munich. He writes that in 1921 he increased the frequency of meetings from one per week to two or more. The meetings were held in Zirkus Krone, an assembly hall he at one point mentions took 6.500 persons (Hitler, 2019, pp. 614-615). It is possible that such numbers, which Hitler presents himself, are inflated. Due to the political tensions during the Weimar period, the political meetings were often violent as political adversaries attended meetings to argue and fight. Hitler refers to how the NSDAP organised its paramilitary forces to maintain order: '...during the spring of 1921 it was gradually organised in groups of a hundred, which were subdivided in smaller groups' (Hitler, 2019, p. 604).

Hitler was also conscious of the importance of being mentioned in the press of the opposition Social Democrats. He writes that the press mostly more or less every day mentioned the NSDAP to ridicule them, but this made many of the readers curious as to why their paper spent so much space on something that was ridiculous, and became curious (Hitler, 2019, p. 598). Hitler's appreciation of being mentioned in the press even if the idea was to ridicule the party shows that he was aware of the effect of the affordances of mediatisation and self-mediatisation as pointed out by Wodak and Krzyzanowski. The effectiveness of Nazi propaganda was to a large extent also the result of Hitler's own abilities as a public speaker. This is highlighted in the notes provided with the reviewed issue of *Mein Kampf*: 'Hitler was without doubt a good speaker and his ability to sense the mood in a crowd and then to speak to them according to their desires, was legendary' (Hitler, 2019, p. 417). Hitler himself was of the opinion that the spoken word had a lot more impact on people's opinions than the written word. He writes that the speaker by reading the facial expressions of the audience continuously gets feedback to his speech, while the writer gets no feedback (Hitler, 2019, p. 579). Hitler also noted that it was more effective to convince people of his message with a speech in the evening than earlier in the day. In the evening people are more tired and do not have the same will to oppose new ideas (Hitler, 2019, p. 585). Hitler was conscious of the importance and effectiveness of popular meetings. He writes:

Popular meetings are also necessary because the individual prospective follower of a new movement who feels isolated and perhaps is afraid of standing alone, here for the first time can experience a great community, something that will have a strengthening and encouraging effect on most listeners (Hitler, 2019, p. 588).

‘The foremost role of the propaganda is to win people for the later organization; and the foremost task for the organization is to win people who can continue the propaganda’ (Hitler, 2019, p. 700). This last statement underlines the importance Hitler gave propaganda in his effort to win support in Germany.

Benjamin Muffett writes that we have to move from viewing populism as an entity towards viewing it a *political style*, which is used in many cultural and political contexts. Hitler had developed his own political style that relied on cleverly designed propaganda and stage performance. Muffett defines political style as ‘the repertoire of embodied, symbolically mediated performance made to audiences, that are used to navigate the fields of power that comprise the political, stretches from the domain of government through everyday life’. In his performances, Hitler emerged as the embodiment of his political movement; the Nazi movement and Hitler were inseparable. As his speeches demonstrate, his topics spanned from the major political issues to the misery of the jobless workers.

***Mein Kampf* and Nazism as a Fascist Belief System**

Roger Griffin defines fascism as a ‘genus of political ideology whose mythic core in its various permutations is a palingenetic form of populist ultra-nationalism that may appear at the start of regeneration after a phase of crises or decline’. Karin Priester writes that the appearance of fascism can only be understood within the context of the destructions after the First World War and the fear of communism following the Russian revolution. Nationalism, the core of fascist ideology was present in Germany long before the appearance of fascism and is rooted in writings of Nietzsche and others, she writes. Hitler saw his political ideology as a belief system, and found inspiration in the Catholic Church, which through history had fought wars against heretics to bolster its own position and doctrine. He writes: ‘Political parties will easily compromise, but faiths never do. Political parties admit objections; faiths declare that they are infallible’ (Hitler, 2019, p. 561). Hitler’s belief system was incompatible with the policies of the competing political parties and compromise was not an option. Participation in the *Reichstag* and political compromise was only possible in order to gain absolute power.

Hitler saw his Nazi movement as a revolutionary belief system. He writes:

The most deciding progress for a belief system revolution is when the largest possible number of people, preferably all, has got to know the new belief system and if necessary later are forced to accept it, while the organization behind the belief system, the movement, only shall be sufficiently large to man the nerve centres of the state (Hitler, 2019, p. 701).

This statement contains significant information about Hitler's plans. He makes it clear the Nazi belief system will not be a voluntary belief system. When the Nazis have gained power, their belief system will be forced upon the rest of the population. Also the movement is revolutionary in the sense that a shadow organisation was foreseen that would be ready to take over the main functions of the state in a coup d'état. Bearing in mind that this was written around 1925, prior to the release of the second volume of *Mein Kampf* in 1926, when Hitler's movement had a few thousand supporters in Bavaria, and knowing what was to come, Hitler's single minded tenacity is frightening. It is an example, thankfully rare, of what evil a single-minded dedicated person with the right talents can achieve.

Jan-Werner Müller writes that based upon the definition he has given to populism both the Nazi movement and Italian fascism must be understood as populist movements. These movements were not just popular movements, he writes, they were racist, glorified violence and had a very radical 'leadership principle'.

3.2 1923; French Occupation of the Ruhr and Hitler's Speech 4 May

Political Background

The Ruhr, Germany's most industrialised area was in January 1923 occupied by the French. The French were dissatisfied with Germany's fulfilment of the Versailles Treaty. They had wished for the establishment of a separate state in *Rheinland* to permanently weaken Germany, something the USA and Britain did not agree to. A minor German default on the reparation payments in January 1923 led to the occupation (White, 1997, p. 20).

Germany did not have the military means to resist the occupation of the Ruhr, but the government asked the workers in Ruhr to oppose the occupation by going on strike. The government compensated the striking workers. But the extra expense at a time when the tax income from the Ruhr industry was lacking contributed significantly to the government deficit, which also suffered from public borrowing to cover costs during the First World War. The government covered the deficit by printing money, which led to hyperinflation. Workers who were compensated for inflation in their wages and landowners who owned property did not suffer significantly, but many in the middle class who had their values as bank savings suffered. Savings were completely wiped out. Towards the end of 1923 a new coalition government under Gustav Stresemann called an end to the passive resistance against the French occupiers in the Ruhr (White, 1997, p. 21).

Hitler's Speech 4 May 1923

In this speech Hitler attacks German parliamentarians, a part of 'the elite' and brings up the choice of 'a leader', both important populist terms. Mudde and Kaltwasser point to that the central theme with respect to 'the elite' is morality, as the populist distinguishes between the pure people and the corrupt elite. The authors also write that the foundation of populist

politics is the conflict between the pure people and the corrupt elite. It is important that the leader shall appear as the true voice of the people, and this is based upon the leader's separation from the elite and association with the people.

The French occupation of the Ruhr was one of the Weimar Republic's first crises, and on 4 May 1923 Hitler gave a speech in which he attacked the Treaty of Versailles and the government's handling of the French invasion. He is particularly aggressive towards the German government's compliance with the Versailles Treaty:

If you want to free yourselves from the obligations to provide reparations, you cannot do this by endless compliance. The only way is to have the strength of will to one day tear up the Treaty of Versailles and to develop instead the ability to defend our nation and ultimately to attack its enemies (Ganapathi, 2009, p. 24).

He goes on to attack the parliamentarians: 'Today the German parliamentarians are bringing about the destruction, the end of the German nation. They no longer recognize the creative power of the individual. What outstanding personalities has the Republic produced' (Ganapathi, 2009, p. 25), Hitler asks.

This goes back to Hitler's general disrespect for the Reichstag. He continues: 'They would not even permit a strong willed individual to exist. They do not want anything superior to their own mediocracy' (Ganapathi, 2009, p. 25).

Hitler continues his attack by stating:

In the course of history German parliamentarians have incurred an enormous burden of guilt for failing the German people. Once before, they dug the nation's grave. When the German nation last set out to accomplish great deeds, who prepared Germany then? The Reichstag? God knows, in those days even the state legislature did whatever they could to ruin Germany. It was one man alone who created the Reich: Bismarck (Ganapathi, 2009, p. 26).

Hitler has faith in the great leader, and we can assume that he has himself in mind as he speaks. He goes on to end his speech by saying:

People ask: is there someone fit to be our leader? Our task is not to search for that person. Either God will give him to us or he will not come. Our task is to shape the sword that he will need when he comes. Our task is to provide the leader with a nation that is ready for him when he comes! My fellow Germans, awaken! The new day is dawning (Ganapathi, 2009, p. 26)!

Here Hitler's rhetoric reaches Biblical proportions. The task of the German people was not to search for the new leader. This was unnecessary as God would find him. And in Hitler's mind we can assume he expected God to point to him.

As Benjamin Moffett points out, a crisis often sets the stage for populists who speak to 'the people', criticising traditional politicians for letting the crisis happen and present political

solutions. Hitler's solution was to tear up the Versailles Treaty and to attack Germany's enemies. Hitler's speech was very well received by his audience, and he received 'thunderous applause'(Ganapathi, 2009, p. 26).

3.3 1924 – 1929; The Golden Years

Political Background

The years between 1924 and 1929 have been called the 'golden years' of the Weimar Republic. For a period of 103 days in the autumn of 1923 Gustav Stresemann served as *Kanzler*. He terminated the passive resistance against the French in the Ruhr, stabilised the currency by introducing a new currency, the *Rentenmark* that was issued in limited quantities, and he managed to prevent a communist revolt in Saxony. But Stresemann gained many political enemies and had to retire as *Kanzler*. Stresemann continued as foreign minister until 1929, when he died. During Stresemann's time as foreign minister he pursued an *Erfüllungspolitik* by complying with the Versailles Treaty and to improve the country's relationship with France and Great Britain. This led to the withdrawal of French troops from the Ruhr in 1924 under the Dawes Plan, annual reparation payments were reduced, the payment period prolonged and Germany received a large loan of 200 million USD to strengthen its finances. In 1925 the Locarno Pact was agreed between Germany, Belgium and France under which Germany abandoned its claim to Alsace-Lorraine and France agreed not again to occupy the Ruhr. Gustav Stresemann and the French foreign minister Aristide Briand received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1926 for the Locarno Pact. In 1926 Germany became a member of the League of Nations with a seat on its council. Germany was no longer a pariah among the nations. In 1929 Germany agreed to the Young Plan, which severely reduced Germany's war reparations obligations but extended the payment period until 1988 (White, 1997, pp. 24-26).

During the golden years the German economy grew and also the working class benefitted through a state-sponsored compulsory arbitration scheme, which secured the trade unions significant increases in real wages. The working class also benefitted from increased social welfare spending. But the wage increases had the negative effect of an increase in unemployment. The high cost of labour meant the employers tried to reduce labour costs by laying people off. In agriculture the farmers fared less well. Agricultural prices fell and the farmers had to increase their debts. Also the middle class, who had taken the brunt of the economic pain of hyperinflation, fared less well in the golden years. Economically they lost their previous superior position relative to the working class, and resented the strength of the trade unions (White, 1997, pp. 27-28). In the elections to the *Reichstag* in May 1924 the NSDAP received 6.5% of the votes, in December the same year 2.9%, and in May 1928 2.6% (Dederke, 1968, p. 280). Consequently, the NSDAP was a party with very little public support in this period when Germany did quite well both domestically and internationally.

Despite Hitler's mass meetings and propaganda in this period, this appears not to have made much impact nationally in Germany. Hitler and his Nazi party are rarely mentioned during the golden years in *Die Weltbühne*, which published political articles every week. But even though their support was low among the general public, the Nazis were able to attract wealthy sponsors. Paul von Schoenaich published an article in *Die Weltbühne* 2 April 1929 with the title: *Wer bezahlt die Judenhetze?* Von Schoenaich writes that he takes part in sixty to eighty public events each year, and he is constantly confronted with anti-Semitism, in public speeches and in conversations, and he would like to pinpoint the responsible instigators. He mentions a number of groups that promote anti-Semitism, but: 'All these groups are today relatively unimportant compared to Hitler's National Socialists'. Von Schoenaich believes that he has seen proof of this. In all of his meetings National Socialists stand up to speak, and whenever there is violence, they are behind it. For the great Hitler rally in Berlin they had assembled unemployed from all over Germany. 'This costs a lot of money, which cannot originate from the visible organisation', von Schoenaich writes. He continues:

Which donors have the interest to sponsor the National Socialists? Based upon their speeches, they are as anti-capitalistic as the communists. ...The supporter must believe that there is a long way between speech and action. ...Where can we search for the sponsors? Perhaps the National Socialists in their speeches give us a clue. The red thread in their speeches is always something like this: 'We do not fight the capital in industry and in farming, only the mortgage capital', in my mind meaning the capital in the stock market, and that is Jewish capital. ... The fact that capital in the banks, industry, farming and housing markets, and in the stock exchange is the same capital that flows among these sectors is above their horizon. ... I am of the firm belief that the majority of the National Socialists do not understand for what objective they are misused (Schoenaich, 1929, pp. 507-509).

On 16 July 1929 the lead article in *Die Weltbühne* is titled: *Die Nationalsozialisten*, and is written by journalist and author Heinz Pol. In the article he mentions the financing of the movement. He notes that the financing of the movement goes very well. The storm troops are very well equipped with their brown shirts of the best materials. During elections last year it had been claimed but later denied that these brown shirts to a great extent had been delivered free of charge from a large clothing store in Berlin.

All the political leaders have private cars that they use to drive around the country; Pol writes that Hitler's car is surely a gift from the grand piano producer Bechstein. Pol continues:

Hitler, who appears in the parlours of the upper classes and behaves like a man of the world, has among his personal admirers and financial sponsors a long list of partly landed gentry and partly wealthy ladies (Pol, 1929, pp. 77-81).

Pol's article provides support for Madeline Albright's statement that 'to create tyranny out of fears and hopes of average people, money is required, and so too, ambition and twisted ideas. It is the combination which kills.' Hitler had charisma and inspired trust and admiration, and was able to collect the money required for his movement.

Between 24 and 29 October 1929 the stock exchange crashed in New York. It was the start of a severe economic recession that also reached Europe. In the penultimate issue of *Die Weltbühne* this year, 17 December, there is an article written by Gerhard Donath discussing this situation. The title of this article is: *Amerikanische Krise – deutsche Wirtschaft*. The article starts by stating that the American economy has taken a big hit, but it is completely wrong to believe that the crash of the Stock Exchange was the start of the problems. Already in the year 1928 he writes, there were signs of crisis. Donath continues:

Professors told an eagerly listening world, that American capitalism through the Central Bank and the credit institutions had made it possible to find the Philosopher's Stone, meaning the mechanism to control the business cycles. ... The effect of the crisis will naturally not be limited to the USA (Donath, 1929, pp. 901-904).

Donath's prophecy was correct. The economic recession to follow would turn out to be very serious for Germany. It created an environment in which the Nazi movement could thrive, and as Laclau has written, 'crisis is a pre-condition for populism.'

Hitler's Speech 18 January 1927

On 18 January 1927 Adolf Hitler gave a speech in Schleiz in Thüringen, close to the Czech Republic. In this speech Hitler focused on the need for a strong leader, and indirectly portrayed himself as such. As Jan-Werner Müller writes, the populist leader is normally the absolute focal point within a populist movement. Hitler explained the need for a strong leader by referring to the political crisis, or 'sickness' the country was in. Hitler also used this speech to point out that people were not content with the politicians, who did not manage to satisfy the 'will of the people'. Jan-Werner Müller refers to Carl Schmitt who in the same manner argued that fascism could better ensure that the 'will of the people was represented', than democracy. The primary opponents, 'the elite' in this speech are the ineffective politicians of the ruling parties, which in Hitler's opinion do not even try to bring Germany out of the ties imposed by the Versailles Treaty. But Hitler also used this speech to attack his eternal enemy, the Jews who in his opinion did not contribute to society.

Hitler started his speech by noticing that many people had come to the meeting and reminded the listeners that elections were held, but these were never completely satisfactory. People do not believe in the promises of the politicians, there is no real change. The coalitions that politicians form make sure that middle of the road politics is continued. The Reichstag is not a free institution; it can do no other than what is prescribed in the peace treaties. To Hitler the nation is like a sick person. He mentions that he some days earlier had been in Eisenach, and he tells the audience:

A few days ago I was in Eisenach and stood on top of the Wartburg where a great German once translated the Bible. At that time the world was also sick, sick for centuries. Many people tried to apply remedy – in vain. Until finally a powerful figure came along, a great man who attacked the root cause of the sickness of his time. He

initiated a movement which would not have removed human suffering but that pointed the way to a new direction that was decisive.

It is precisely the same today. No one will claim that the German nation is healthy. It is sick and this feeling of sickness [de]motivates our whole nation today. Some people, it is true, feel well. There are individuals who thrive precisely when the nation is sick, people whose well-being is an indirect proof of the general crisis. ... This is the reason why you have come here. In this room there are supporters and opponents of our movement. The supporters came here to hear their leader; the opponents came in order to hear just for once the leader of this movement (Ganapathi, 2009, p. 35).

Here Hitler reminds the audience of Martin Luther, another great German leader. It is clear that Hitler believes that another great leader is required, and he is the leader of the new movement. It is interesting that Hitler points to the suffering of the religious wars that followed the Reformation. He does not promise an end to suffering but a new direction.

Towards the end of a long speech Hitler comes to the topic of internationalism, race and the Jews:

You know, it is really unbelievable that it was possible to preach this insanity of internationalism to millions of people and people believed this idea; incredible that the Jews who has been in our midst for thousands of years and yet remained a Jew, has managed to persuade millions of us that race is completely unimportant, and yet for him race is all-important. ... The reason why he today has no culture of his own, no state of his own, has to do with the fact that for thousands of years he has avoided any productive work. He has not been persecuted because he did not perform productive work, but because he demanded unproductive interest charges. He always only bought, sold and sold again, and our ancestors forbade that: You do not work our soil, therefore you have no right to buy it either (Ganapathi, 2009, pp. 42-44).

In this speech Hitler gives us his historical narrative that shall explain why Jews are a foreign element in German society, but he does not make any overt threats here regarding their future in Germany under a Nazi rule. In stating that Jews 'did not perform productive work' Hitler refers to the *producerism* that Berlet and Lyons defined as one of the characteristics of the right-wing populist narrative. Hitler fails to mention the great cultural and scientific contributions Jews had made in German history, but then his objective was to demonise the Jews. Hitler emphasises national pride, race and a classless society as foundations of a National-Socialist state.

Laclau has written that 'populism is a particular structuring logic of political life, evident wherever equivalence triumphs over difference'. Laclau was of the opinion that this is the logic of the political, because any political project is premised on the difference between two antagonistic groups. The Nazi movement was premised on the latent anti-Semitism in the German society that Hitler and his supporters nurtured intensely, and critique of the ruling elite.

3.4 1930- 1931; The Years of Recession

Political Background

Germany's economy, which was dependent on foreign investments, loans and credits, was particularly hard hit by the recession which followed the stock exchange crash in New York. American investors were quick to get their investments out of Germany, leading to closures and mass unemployment (White, 1997, p. 33). Unemployment rose from 1.892 million in 1929, to 3.076 million in 1930, to 4.887 million in 1931 and to 6.042 million in 1932 (Dederke, 1968, p. 193). During the spring of 1930 the coalition between Social Democrats and Liberals in the *Reichstag* broke up over the financing of unemployment benefits, and Hermann Müller from the SPD resigned as *Kanzler*. As there was no majority for a new government, Hindenburg used his emergency powers under the Constitution and installed 30 March 1930 the conservative Heinrich Brüning as new *Kanzler*. Brüning hoped to establish a parliamentary majority for his government, and called a new election for 14 September 1930. His hopes were crushed. In the elections to the Reichstag in September 1930 the NSDAP received 18.3% of the votes (Dederke, 1968, p. 192 and 280). The economic downturn and the significant increase in unemployment had a substantial effect on the public support for the NSDAP. Much of the success of the NSDAP came from their effective use of propaganda.

In *Die Weltbühne* 15 April 1930 Heinz Pol has an article titled: *Gregor der Große*. The article is about the one time Chemist and currently representative in the Reichstag Gregor Strasser from the National Socialists. Pol describes him as one of Hitler's compatriots from Munich who has a world record in insults and abuses. Pol explains that he during the last two to three years quietly has established a newspaper and magazine publishing company that today almost have the same role for the National Socialists as Alfred Hugenberg's¹² publishing company has for the National Peoples party. The undertaking is ingenious:

around the country one claims that democracy in Germany is so powerful because it is protected by huge opinion-factories, the great Hitler will after establishment of the Third Reich destroy the editorial offices and the printing presses, only then can the spiritual rejuvenation of Germany start – and at the same time, to make people aware of this knowledge one gets oneself a publishing company (Pol, 1930, pp. 563-566).

Wodak and Krzyzanowski state that 'it is obvious that the affordances of mediatization and self-mediation of right-wing populists are probably among the key reasons behind the upsurge and success of populist ideologies and views', and this was something Hitler knew and used effectively.

In the 12 August 1930 issue of *Die Weltbühne* there is an article in the magazine by Morus titled: *Auf in den Kampf*. Morus was a pseudonym for the journalist Richard Lewinsohn. The article is written prior to the upcoming elections to the Reichstag 14 September. The article

¹² Alfred Hugenberg, leader of the DNVP (German National Peoples Party) and newspaper owner.

has the subtitle: *Mehr Bankiers in den Reichstag*. Morus writes that this election campaign will more than earlier be a battle of money. 'The collection bucket goes around and circles who earlier gave little, this time they give with full hands'. Morus writes:

The losses that Hugenberg has experienced through the defection of some industrialists in the steel industry, is being compensated by Hitler's inroad in the Ruhr area. As sponsor is particularly important the old man from Gelsenberge, who now has lost his eighty-three year old hart to the Nazis. Emil Kirdorf and his friends and acquaintances from the mining industry in Gelsenkirchen will ensure that the National-Socialism will protect private ownership of property. ...

With the black diamond breaker Kirdorf the National Socialists have gained access to new printing shops in Essen and Cologne, where they in the autumn will print propaganda material for Aachen, Düsseldorf and Koblenz (Morus, 1930, pp. 244-247).

Based upon the NSDAP's programme from 1920 where nationalisation of limited companies and the abolishment of income on land lease were established, it is not easy to understand how the party would protect private ownership of property. This must have been seen as a problem by the Nazis, who needed support by capitalists. Prior to the elections to the *Reichstag* in 1930 the party made an amendment to its political programme where it is stated that the party 'stands on the ground of private property' (Hitler, 2004).

This shows that the Nazi party programme was changed to attract capitalist sponsors, and is an illustration of Andrea D'Onofridio's definition of populism as a 'thin ideology', a political movement that changes its ideology in an opportunistic manner like a chameleon. And consequently, as pointed out in Morus' article, the National Socialists were able to attract industrial sponsor, in this case from the coal industry in the Ruhr and at the same time gain access to more printing facilities for their propaganda. In a political environment dominated by socialists, there could have been a concern among industrialists that industry might be nationalised.

Hitler's Speech in Munich 16 September 1930

In the elections held 14 September 1930 the NSDAP became the second largest party with 107 of the 577 seats in the *Reichstag* (Dederke, 1968, p. 280). Two days later Hitler gave a speech in Munich. Here Hitler tells his audience that his fight is a fight for an idea, a different world view where 'the people' is in focus. As Cas Mudde and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser points out, 'the people' is the core term in populist ideology. The term is vague, which can be useful for the populist demagogue. Hitler had established a racial criterion as to who belonged to 'the people'. Hitler tells his audience that the state shall serve 'the people' and not the other way around. Hitler also used the speech to remind his listeners that his party was not supporting parliamentary democracy and the Constitution; the Nazis wanted to liberate 'the people' from the shackles of the Constitution.

As presented here Hitler does not provide any details as to how his ideology of the state serving 'the people' shall be implemented, except that he opposes the Constitution. He does not refer to the NSDAP programme or any specific policy that he plans to replace the Constitution with if he gains power, but it comes through that he has in mind an upheaval of the German society. It is therefore relevant again to refer to Andrea D'Onofrido's definition of populism as a 'thin ideology'. Cas Mudde and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser points out that populists' 'thin ideology' are normally always coupled with other ideas like socialism. In the case of the Nazis they coupled the 'thin ideology' that they presented with their own set of ideas centred on nationalism, expansionism, race, propaganda and the principle of the all empowered *Führer*.

The following is an excerpt from Hitler's speech:

. . . This election means that the circle is now complete. And the question at this time is: what are the aims of this opposition and its leaders?

It is a fight for an idea - a *Weltanschauung*: and in the forefront stands a fundamental principle: Men do not exist for the State, the State exists for men. First and far above all else stands the idea of the people: the State is a form of organization of this people, and the meaning and the purpose of the State are through this form of organization to assure the life of the people. And from this there arises a new mode of thought and thus necessarily a new political method.

We say: a new mode of thought. Today our whole official political outlook is rooted in the view that the State must be maintained because the State in itself is the essential thing; we, on the other hand, maintain that the State in its form has a definite purpose to fulfil and the moment that it fails to fulfil its purpose the form stands condemned. Above everything stands the purpose to maintain the nation's life - that is the essential thing and one should not speak of a law for the protection of the State but for the protection of the nation: it is of this protection that one must think. ... In the place of this rigid formal organization - the State - must be set the living organism - the people (Nomme Raadio, 2008, p. 71).

In the following part of the speech Hitler makes it clear that his party is not supporting German parliamentary democracy and the Constitution. Jan-Werner Müller raises the question as to why populists who gain constitutional power do not abolish democracy altogether, and Müller speculates that such a move would result in an enormous loss of international reputation. To Hitler international reputation was no concern; he had no respect for the international community. His speech continues:

If today our action employs among its different weapons that of Parliament that is not to say that parliamentary parties exist only for parliamentary ends. For us Parliament is not an end in itself, but merely a means to an end . . . we are not in principle a parliamentary party - that would be a contradiction of our whole outlook – *we are a parliamentary party by compulsion, under constraint, and that compulsion is the*

Constitution. The Constitution compels us to use these means. It does not compel us to wish for a particular goal, it only prescribes a way - a method, and, I repeat, we follow this way legally, in accordance with the Constitution: by the way laid down through the Constitution we advance towards the purposes that we have set before us. ... And so this victory that we have just won is nothing else than the winning of a new weapon for our fight. ... It is not for seats in Parliament that we fight, but we win seats in Parliament in order that one day we may be able to liberate the German people. ... (Nomme Raadio, 2008, p. 71).

Here Hitler demonstrated clearly that his Nazi party planned if gaining power to implement a different form of government serving 'the people' in Germany, but the specifics are lacking. Hitler was true to his idea of only presenting one simple message in his propaganda, in order not to confuse his listeners. And here it is the need for the protection of the nation and its 'people'.

3.5 1932; An Election Year

Political Background

1932 was a defining year in German history. The communist leader Leo Trotsky had an article in the 1 March issue of *Die Weltbühne* where he asks what the current regime is a preparation for. He answers the question by predicting that it is either a victory for the fascists or for the communists, and the reason is that both these fractions are preparing for the deciding battle (Trotzki, 1932, p. 326).

In 1932 the legal scholar Carl Schmitt published the book: *Der Begriff des Politischen* (Schmitt, 2015). Schmitt became in 1933 a member of the Nazi party and was an important legal advisor to the party. Reading between the lines of Schmitt's 1932 book gives an impression of a society in internal and external conflict. The book has a chapter with the title: *Die Unterscheidung von Freund und Feind als Kriterium des Politischen*. Here Schmitt writes that: 'The specific political difference that political actions and motives can be related to, is the difference between friend and enemy' (Schmitt, 2015, p. 25). In Schmitt's view, and we can assume this may have been the opinion in the Weimar Republic at the time, when political parties were unable to cooperate and make compromises, politicians with other political opinions than your own were your enemies. In the chapter with the title: *Krieg als Erscheinungsform der Feindschaft*. Schmitt writes:

One can share any hopes and educational efforts or not; that people will group themselves according to the difference between friend and enemy, that this difference also in our time is real and exists and is a real possibility, we can reasonably not deny (Schmitt, 2015, p. 27).

So in the same way as internal political differences are defined as conflicts between enemies, in Schmitt's view also relationships between people of different countries are as either friends or enemies.

The *Reichstag* was split in a number of political fractions that could not cooperate and compromise to find solutions to the country's severe economic problems, including six to seven million unemployed. This heated political situation generated a crisis with friends and enemies in the political landscape as Schmitt and Trotsky describe. Benjamin Moffitt refers to Ernesto Laclau who was of the opinion that crisis is a necessary pre-condition for populism. Laclau also wrote that 'without the slump of the 1930s, Hitler would have remained a vociferous fringe ringleader'.

Up to May 1932 the *Kanzler* was the right-wing member of the Centre Party Heinrich Brüning who had a background in finance and from the military. Brüning introduced an austerity policy by cutting costs to improve the competitiveness of industry, reduced taxes and unemployment benefits and reduced the salaries of public employees. But his policies did not bring down the high unemployment (White, 1997, pp. 35-36). Franz von Papen took over the post of *Kanzler* in May 1932, and formed a conservative government with no majority support in the *Reichstag*. In an understanding with Hitler the *Reichstag* was dissolved and new elections scheduled, and an order to dissolve the SS and the SA that had been issued earlier in the year was revoked. This resulted in an increase in political terror (Dederke, 1968, pp. 244-247). Two elections were held to the *Reichstag* in 1932, in July when the NSDAP received 37.2 % of the votes and in November when they received 33 % of the votes. Hitler, who earlier had been a revolutionary, understood that the path to power in the Republic was through elections to the presidency and the *Reichstag*, was a candidate in the presidential elections that were also held this year.

Hitler's Speech 27 January 1932

On 27 January 1932 Adolf Hitler gave a long address to the members of the *Industrieclub* in the ballroom of the Park Hotel in Düsseldorf, Germany's industrial heartland. The speech was interrupted several times with cheers from the audience and at the end Hitler was greeted with a stormy, long applause. This indicates that the speech was received very positively by what we must assume was an intelligent audience consisting of leaders of industry. Hitler came through as a charismatic leader who appealed to German nationalism. Max Weber was of the opinion that charismatic leadership would flourish in time of crisis, when people seek the gift of leadership, rather than normal sources of authority, and this situation appears to be an example illustrating this. Charisma is a gift for the populist leader who is depending on direct support from the electorate. In this speech Hitler refers to his own leadership qualities having established the NSDAP. As Jan-Werner Müller points out the populist leader is normally the absolute focal point within a populist movement, and this was certainly the case for Hitler.

In summary, in this speech Hitler explained that he did not believe the economic difficulties in the country was caused only by the world economic crises, and the more this was seen as a

reason the more difficult it would be to be to make corrections in the country. Even the Treaty of Versailles that many gave as a reason was a work of men, and a work of men can be undone by men. Hitler discusses what politics are and quotes Clausewitz¹³ who shall have said that war is a continuation of politics, although by different means. Hitler stated that foreign policy is not the most important, but the German people with their intrinsic, inner values are.

Here Hitler appeals to ‘the people’, a central populist term, and he continues with political overtures with very little substance in terms of solutions. Hitler promoted establishing a strong State and to re-build the Army and he promoted the ‘authority of the individual’ – the strong leader – to replace democracy.

Hitler goes on to say:

I am often told that I merely beat the drum of German nationalism. Well, what if I were only a drummer! It would be a great act of statesmanship in these times to drum into our German people a new faith rather than slowly squandering their present one.

Hitler promotes his own leadership qualities by reminding the listeners of the enthusiasm and faith he as a leader of the Nazis have given to the thousands of SA and SS men who are buying their uniforms, dressing up, roaming the streets and protesting day after day. ‘Believe me that show the strength of an ideal, a great ideal!’

Hitler ends his speech by saying:

I believe that the most important thing is to make our nation healthy, genuinely national and capable of defending itself...intolerant of anyone who will not recognize or opposes their vital interests or opposes them, intolerant and unyielding towards anyone who attempts to destroy and subvert this nation and otherwise open to friendship and peace with anyone who wants friendship and peace (*Zeitung für Deutsche Geschichte und Kultur*, 1950)!

The central populist topic of ‘the leader’ is an important theme in this speech. Germany can only recover through a strong State that requires a leader with Hitler’s qualities. As Mudde and Kaltwasser point out, populism is often associated with a strong leader who has the ability to engage the masses based upon promises of radical reform. That is what Hitler promises in this speech.

Even though the speech is very long and Hitler covered many subjects, it is not altogether clear how Hitler proposes to rebuild the German economy, except for his wish to rebuild the Army and discard democracy. So it can be said that listeners to this speech were presented with a ‘thin ideology’ where the idea was to let the outstanding individual take the reins to ensure new economic prosperity. ‘The enemy’, which is a part of populist rhetoric as presented here, was the inefficient democracy and domestic and foreign political adversaries.

¹³ Carl Philipp Gottlieb von Clausewitz (1780 – 1831) was a Prussian Major General and military scholar.

D'Onofrido calls this 'protest-populism'. The rhetoric is populist in that very simple solutions are given to complicated problems, and a derogative and aggressive attitude is shown towards political enemies, who in this case are not as 'outstanding' as Hitler sees himself.

Other enemies mentioned in Hitler's speech are: 'anyone who will not recognize or opposes Germany's vital interests or opposes them, intolerant and unyielding towards anyone who attempts to destroy and subvert this nation.'

The Political Situation in the Spring of 1932

In the 8 March 1932 issue of *Die Weltbühne*, just prior to the first round of presidential elections 13 March, Hanns-Erich Kaminski has an article titled *Wofür - ?* He starts the article with the following sentence: 'Germany lives already in the atmosphere of a civil war, in the air are panic, morning and evening the reader of newspapers will find the newest battle descriptions'. The opening words of the article give an impression of the severe internal conflicts in the country at the time. Kaminski expresses his opinion about the Nazis in the article:

The National Socialism represents in no way an ideal, but its supporter sees it this way. They believe even in its program, which it does not have: each one of them is convinced, in the Third Reich it will be better for him, as each of them believe he belongs to the elite, which will rule over the humble people (Hanns-Erich Kaminski, 1932, p. 354).

Here Kaminski point to the thinking of the Nazis that they represented a German elite destined to rule over others. The Nazis had their main following in the middle class, and at this time also among the farming community. The desire to rule is referred to by Karin Priester. She notes that populists expected fascism to bring about a circulation of the elite, putting the 'sons of the people' in in leading positions in a fascist governed state.

In the first round of the presidential elections, which was held on 13 March, no candidate received a majority of the votes. The sitting president Hindenburg gained the highest number of votes. A new round of elections was scheduled for 10 April. The candidates were Paul von Hindenburg, Adolf Hitler (NSDAP) and Ernst Thälmann (KDP)¹⁴.

Hans-Erich Kaminsky has a characterization of the Nazis in the *Weltbühne* in the issue 22 March 1932. He writes:

National Socialism is born in Munich. Lion Feuchtwanger has in his book '*Erfolg*' described this better than any. We can read in this fantastic book how the first successes of Hitler was the result of the inflation, but also how it was built on the characteristics of the Sub-Alpine Bavaria, their primitive resentments, their pleasure in

¹⁴ Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands.

fighting, their strange pleasure in any type of hunting and magnificent parades. This is the way National Socialism has stayed until this day.

This movement, which equals the Germanic race and the German nation, is born in a land that belongs to the Latin-catholic cultural area. ...National Socialism in in no way itself, it appears under strikingly false flags (Hans-Erich Kaminski, 1932, p. 432).

Here Kaminsky refers to the Janus face, and also to the conservative backward looking aspects of populism, as referred to by Karin Priester.

On 10 April the second round of presidential elections were held. Hindenburg won and could continue as president.

Hitler's Speech Prior to the *Reichstag* Election 31 July 1932

Later in the year, on 31 July 1932, there were elections to the *Reichstag* and Hitler held an election speech in July, which was recorded by the National Socialist newspaper *Völkischer Beobachter* and made available on 5 July. Making such recordings was not common at the time and shows the efficiency of the Nazi propaganda machine (Ganapathi, 2009, p. 51). This illustrates that the person Hitler and his speeches were centrepieces in the Nazi propaganda effort. As described in *Mein Kampf* Hitler's speeches were cleverly constructed. In the opinion of Ruth Wodak and Michael Krzyzanowski 'it is obvious that the affordances of mediatisation and self-mediation of right-wing populists are probably among the key reasons behind the upsurge and success of populist ideologies and views, and remain one of the stable factors for their longevity'. Hitler's presentations are illustrations of what Benjamin Moffitt has termed 'political style', where one finds appeal to the people versus the elite; bad manners; and crisis, breakdown and threat.

The following are excerpts from the speech. Hitler stated the following:

The German farmer is in dire straits, the middle class is ruined, the hopes of millions of people that social conditions would improve have been dashed; a third of the workforce, male and female, is unemployed and thus without livelihood. The national government (*Das Reich*), the local authorities and the individual German states are overburdened with debt, everywhere finances are in disarray and the public purse is empty. How much more could they have destroyed? But the worst thing is that they have destroyed the Nation's faith, leaving it utterly without hope and confidence. In thirteen years they have not succeeded in mobilizing the forces dormant within our nation. On the contrary! ...Slowly the destruction of Germany has progressed and only a maniac could hope that the forces that caused this decline could now achieve the nation's regeneration (Ganapathi, 2009, pp. 51-52).

In the statement: 'how much more could they have destroyed?' Hitler makes the national- and local governments the *scapegoats* for the nation's ills, a form of characterization that Berlet and Lyons have identified as typical for right-wing populists.

Hitler goes on to describe how he and seven supporters had started the National Socialist Party, which now has 13 million members:

And this has been achieved when everything else in Germany has been falling apart. But it is not the number [of members] that matters; what matters is the kind of persons they are! Thirteen million persons from all walks of life, thirteen million workers, farmers and intellectuals, thirteen million Catholics and Protestants from all the German regions and tribes have formed an inseparable alliance. ...A community of believers have come into being that will slowly overcome the absurd prejudices of class and social status (Ganapathi, 2009, pp. 52-54).

Hitler was a great public speaker, and he spellbound his audiences. He gave long speeches, spoke intensely and gesticulated showing that he was emotionally and physically fully behind his words, as illustrated by a short film clip from his speech in July 1932 (Oicalypse, 2010).

One of the main messages in this election speech in July 1932 is to bring the German nation together, classes, estates, professions and confessions (Catholics and Protestants). This sounded very attractive and was received positively with many people. In this speech Hitler speaks warmly of his 'people': 'what matters is the kind of persons they are!' and derogatively of the 'elite': 'The national government (Das Reich), the local authorities and the individual German states are overburdened with debt, everywhere finances are in disarray and the public purse is empty. How much more could they have destroyed?' As noted by Benjamin Muffett, for the populist the real holder of power and authority are 'the people'. Tied to the people are the separation of the society between the people and 'the elite', which can also be 'the establishment' or 'the system', and 'the elite' was in this instance the national and local governments. As an election speech this speech does not contain a political programme or any information about what Hitler intended to do to put the economy right. This is what also Kaminsky noted in his 8 March article in *Die Weltbuhne* referred to above. The Nazis had no programme, they were a protest organisation.

The credentials Hitler referred to in his speech were his success in establishing the Nazi party, and to grow its membership to 13 million people. This success demonstrated that he was a good political strategist and demagogue, but says nothing about his ability to reform the economy that was the main challenge to be dealt with in Germany. The complicated question of how the economy was going to be improved was dramatically simplified, also a populist trait as referred to by Andrea D'Onofrio. Hitler's characterization of his political adversaries as maniacs is clearly derogatory, another populist trait referred to by D'Onofrio.

The Political Situation in the Autumn of 1932

With 37.2 % of the votes in the elections in July 1932 the NSDAP got 230 of the 577 representatives in the *Reichstag*. The party was with this result by far the largest party in the *Reichstag* (Dederke, 1968, p. 280). In a meeting with President Hindenburg 13 August Hitler was invited to take part in von Papen's government as *Vizekanzler*, but he declined. Hitler

explained that he would only take part if he was asked to lead the government and got full control (Dederke, 1968, p. 252).

On 6 November 1932 there were new elections to the *Reichstag*. This was the fifth election this year, and the enthusiasm for a new election was low. The Nazis lost some support and obtained 33 % of the votes, but were still the largest party (Dederke, 1968, p. 280). President Hindenburg asked von Papen to continue as *Kanzler*, but in a cabinet meeting 1 December the other members of the government refused to continue in a von Papen government. General Kurt von Schleicher was appointed as the new *Kanzler*.

During the last part of 1932 the economy started to grow in Germany and the unemployment figures did not rise. Consequently there was a hope that the bottom of the crisis was over. There had also been an easing of political tensions, as the NSDAP had been less aggressive. The party had big debts from its intense propaganda activity and the contributions from employers decreased due to the state of the economy. There was a conflict within the party between legal and non-legal assumption of power, and nothing happened. The SA was demoralised and many deserted. Many leaders in the party were upset over Hitler's decision 13 August not to join the government. Towards the end of November 1932 the party was paralysed, and many were afraid of another election that could decimate their numbers in the *Reichstag* (Dederke, 1968, p. 262). The following excerpt from Joseph Goebbels¹⁵ entry in his diary 23 December 1932 illustrates the situation:

The year 1932 has been an infinite misery. One must hit it to pieces. Outside goes the peace of Christmas through the streets. I am sitting alone at home and am pondering over so many things. The past was difficult, and the future is dark and murky; all prospects and hopes have faded away¹⁶ (Dederke, 1968, p. 262).

Goebbels note is a further illustration of the precariousness of the Nazi movement as the year 1932 was coming to an end, and is indicating that at this time the movement could have collapsed. This concurs with Karin Priester's view that populism has to do with politically not firmly rooted protests that may quickly disappear.

Hitler Speech on New Year's Day 1933

In this rather difficult situation for the Nazis Hitler gave the following speech in Munich on New Year's Day 1933. Mudde and Kaltwasser writes that populism is often associated with a strong leader. Hitler was a very strong and wilful leader as this speech shows. He had been criticised for not accepting a role in government in August. He had insisted on being given all the powers of state, or nothing. Hitler was playing a high political game, and even his close associate Goebbels did not play along. It is quite possible that Hitler had a well-developed political intuition, and if he had known he might have subscribed to the saying of a later populist leader, Jean-Marie Le Pen: 'They are less political than me, less intuitive than me.'

¹⁵ Joseph Goebbels was at the time leader of the Nazi party's national propaganda efforts.

¹⁶ Goebbels, J.: Vom Kaiserhof zur Reichskanzlei. München 1934, from p. 200.

In this speech Hitler demonstrates that he understands that the strength of his movement is dependent on being a protest organization. The following is an excerpt from the speech:

Today, more than ever, I am determined to the utmost not to sell out our Movement's right of the firstborn for the cheap substitute of a participation in a government devoid of power. That protest of the astute that we should come from inside and through the back door and gain gradual success is nothing but the same protest that bade us, in 1917 and 1918, to reach an understanding with irreconcilable opponents and then to debate with them peacefully in a League of Nations. Thanks to the traitors from within, the German Volk surrendered itself to this advice. The Kaiser's lamentable advisors believed that they should not oppose him. But as long as the Almighty gives me life and health, I will defend myself to my last breath against any such attempt and I know that, in this resolve, I have the millions of zealous supporters and fighters of our Movement behind me who did not hope, argue and suffer with the intention of allowing the proudest and greatest uprising of the German Volk to sell its mission for a few ministerial posts! If our opponents invite us to take part in a government like this, they are not doing it with the intention of slowly but surely putting us in power, but rather in the conviction that they are thus wresting it from us forever! Great are the tasks of our Movement for the coming year. But the greatest task of all will be to make it as clear as possible to our fighters, members, and followers that this Party is not an end in itself, but merely a means to an end. ... We shall be willing to sacrifice and fight, and would rather pass away ourselves than allow that Movement to pass away that is Germany's last strength, last hope, and last future. We salute the National Socialist Movement, its dead martyrs and its living fighters! Long live Germany, the Volk and the Reich (Nomme Raadio, 2008, p. 100)!

In this speech Hitler reminds his audience of everything he and his movement is against, among these 'the traitors within' and 'the Kaiser's lamentable advisors'. Karin Priester writes that the populist protest is based upon being against something. In Hitler's case he was against the policies of the German government. Hitler was fundamentally antagonistic against all authorities other than his own authority over his movement.

3.6 1933; The Final Year of the Weimar Republic

Political Background

Reichskanzler von Schleichen did not have the confidence of Hindenburg and within the *Reichswehr*, his Chancellorship was unsuccessful and he resigned 28 January 1933. Hindenburg, who disliked Hitler but realised that some cooperation with him, as the leader of the largest party in the *Reichstag* might be needed, asked von Papen to form a new government. Franz von Papen was prepared to share power with Hitler, and many in the hierarchy supported him. The next day negotiations started through intermediaries with Hitler, who insisted on being given the chancellorship, the ministries of the interior (control of the

police), justice, industry and farming and that new elections to the *Reichstag* should be held. The outgoing *Kanzler* von Schleichen on the other hand, was very much against giving Hitler a role in government, and considered a coup with the help of the *Reichswehr*. As described by Dederke, this came to Hindenburg's ear, and made him decide to offer Hitler to form a new government as *Kanzler*. On 30 January Hitler was appointed *Reichskanzler* and his other demands were granted. Franz von Papen became *Vizekanzler* (Dederke, 1968, pp. 266-268).

Hitler's Proclamation on 30 January 1933

After being installed as *Reichskanzler* Hitler made the following announcement to his party comrades, his 'people'. It is worth noticing that Hitler had no message to the more than 50% of the population who were not his followers. Jan-Werner Müller refers to another populist, Nigel Farage, who claimed after the Brexit vote in the UK that it had been a 'victory for real people', implying that the 48% of the electorate who had voted against Brexit was no part of the population.

National Socialists! My Party Comrades!

A fourteen-year-long struggle, unparalleled in German history, has now culminated in a great political triumph. The Reich President von Hindenburg has appointed me, the Führer of the National Socialist Movement, as Chancellor of the German Reich. National leagues and parties have united in a joint fight for the resurrection of Germany. The honour witnessed by German history of now being able to take a leading part in fulfilling this task I owe, next to the generous resolve of the Field Marshal, to your loyalty and devotion, my party comrades. You followed me on cloudy days as unerringly as in the days of good fortune and remained true even after the most crushing defeats, and it is to that fact alone we owe this success. Enormous is the task that lies before us. We must accomplish it, and we shall accomplish it. Of you, my party comrades, I have only one major request: give me your confidence and your devotion in this new and great struggle, just as in the past, than the Almighty as well will not deny us His blessings toward re-establishing a German Reich of honour, freedom and domestic peace (Nomme Raadio, 2008, p. 102).

The Political Situation in the Spring of 1933

In *Die Weltbühne* 14 February Hellmut von Gerlach has an article titled: *Vorspiel zum Dritten Reich*. In this article von Gerlach refers to a speech 5 February by the leader of the *Stahlhelm* paramilitary group Theodor Duesterberg, who stated:

The government will very soon announce a law for protection of the German nation. It is no longer acceptable that national traitors like Hello von Gerlach, who praises the shameful agreement from Versailles as a primary tool to render Germany unable to defend itself, is allowed to run freely around. ... We require the death penalty for

national traitors and people who despise true German folkways like Hello von Gerlach...

Hellmut von Gerlach writes also that he on 9 February received a letter from the police dated 7 February announcing that his passport had been withdrawn (Hellmut von Gerlach, 1933).

But two weeks later, 28 February von Gerlach has another article in the magazine with the title: *Hitlers Außenpolitik*. Gerlach refers to a French journalist who had interviewed a Nazi leader about the Danzig corridor, and had been told that Poland will be given a part of the Ukraine to allow for a German corridor to Danzig. ... 'How simply can an almost unsolvable problem be seen by a person with no understanding of foreign affairs', Gerlach comments. The small experience of the journalist is typical, Gerlach writes: 'What *Der Führer* say is for them absolutely binding. Only for what he has said can they be made responsible'. Gerlach refers to orthodox Christians who read the Bible literally. He writes:

The Bible for the NSDAP is Hitler's book *Mein Kampf*. His writing is not quite easy for a non-party member. He will not understand everything. But this has of course nothing to do with the book, but that the reader does not belong to the party (Helmut von Gerlach, 1933).

After four weeks of Hitler's chancellorship, in the night from 27 to 28 February 1933 the *Reichstag* was put on fire. The perpetrators of the arson were not identified, but even as the fire raged many people, Communists, pacifists, and others likely to be in opposition to the Nazis were arrested based upon lists prepared by the police and by the SA. The day can be considered the last day of the Weimar Republic (Hett, 2018, p. 2).

Among the people arrested were Carl von Ossietzky and other journalists writing for *Die Weltbühne*. Hellmut von Gerlach had been warned, he fled to Austria and later to France. The last issue of the magazine was issued 7 March 1933.

Pierre-André Taguieff's characteristic of populism as a disease that hit western democracies is very telling about Hitler, who with populist rhetoric gained power and subsequently used democratic legality to abolish democracy.

Considering the above it is difficult not to think that if the Golden Years with economic growth had been allowed to continue, without being ruined by the American financial crisis of 1929, Hitler would have been relegated to a parenthesis of history, where he rightly belonged and the world would have been a much different place. But, to use the words of Gerhard Donath, American capitalists had not found the Philosophers Stone of economics.

James Sheehan touches on the same thought in a Stanford University lecture, but he discusses the political decisions in Germany after 1929 that brought Hitler to power, which could have played out differently (Sheehan, 2013).

3.7 Hitler's Populist Hallmarks in the Weimar Period

Political Style

Benjamin Moffitt recommends viewing populism as a political style where the leader is seen as a performer, 'the people' is the audience and crises and media are the stage. The key features of populism viewed in this perspective are an appeal to 'the people' versus 'the elite', bad manners and crises, breakdown and threat. The other concepts that according to Moffitt can be used to view populism are as an ideology, a strategy, a discourse or a political logic. It is possible to find arguments for applying several of these concepts on Hitler and the Nazis. The Nazi ideology was based upon nationalism, racism and socialism, and the political program was centred on restoring the economy, territory and national prestige. All these aspects of the political message had wide popular support. Hitler's strategy was initially to seize power in a coup, later through elections to establish a Nazi dictatorship. It is difficult to think that this strategy, if it had been openly presented in Hitler's speeches would have gained popular support. Hitler's discourse was very well considered in order to gain popular support, something his success in attracting voters for the NSDAP shows. Hitler's discourse was aimed at establishing a confrontation between the 'people' and the 'elite', as described by Kirk Hawkins.

Hitler's political logic was very cynical and self-willed, as his decision not to assume the post of *Vizekanzler* in November 1932, but to wait until the situation had further deteriorated and he was offered the position as *Kanzler*, shows. His political decision at the time had not support in the party and also probably not among his voters.

As Moffitt mentions, it is also here possible to view this populist performer through different perspectives. But Moffitt's recommendation to use the perspective of political style is appropriate, as a particular style is something that can be associated with Hitler.

The People Versus the Elite

The People and the Elite are basic terms of populism, as Mudde and Kaltwasser explain. They write that 'the people' is a vague term, which allows the populist leader to define it as he or she pleases. The central theme in defining 'the elite' is morality, as the populist leader distinguishes between the pure people and the corrupt, self-serving elite. The elite are normally the political establishment.

Hitler's political doctrine, as explained in *Mein Kampf* was to ensure that the German race and the German people thrived and reproduced, that children could grow up and make a living and keep the blood clean, and freedom and independence for the motherland. The 'people' in Hitler's rhetoric was 'the German people', as in his speech in May 1923; 'My fellow Germans, awaken!' In this term he excluded his domestic enemies and the Jews. In his speeches Hitler mentions the Jews as a foreign element, and in the NSDAP programme it was

stated that Jews could not be citizens, and those who had immigrated to Germany after 1914 would be expelled. In singling out the Jews as a group not belonging in Germany, Hitler was stirring in murky water. This reverberated probably positively with many of his 'people'. As Mudde and Kaltwasser write, ethnicity is known also in our time in Europe to be part of the distinction between 'the people' and the 'elite'. The authors also write that the populist agitator defines 'the people' such that it has an appeal to different voters and their desires. Many Germans at the time probably had grievances against the politicians who had to take the blame for the Versailles Treaty, high unemployment and Jews in their different roles as bankers, merchants and competitors in the workplace. The people who Hitler spoke to, his 'people' were German citizens in all walks of life. His message had great impact among the many unemployed workers, but the Nazis also gained support from farmers who were affected by low prices and large debt, people from the middle classes who had lost their savings in the hyper-inflation, and landed gentry and other capitalists who were afraid of the threats of expropriation if the Socialists or the Marxists should gain power.

Jan-Werner Müller writes that when populists run for political office, they represent in their own view 'the real people', and therefore they show no respect for the opposition. There are many examples of this in Hitler's speeches, like New Year's Day 1933 when he refers to 'the Kaiser's lamentable advisors'. When studying Hitler in the Weimar period, the first object of study is his two volume book *Mein Kampf*. Here Hitler lays out his social and political objectives and his beliefs. As Hitler explains himself, Dr. Lueger opened his eyes to the rights of the small people's social rights against the elites. Lueger taught Hitler how it was possible to win the support of people as long as a political vision is presented that people can identify with. Throughout *Mein Kampf* the reader is confronted with Hitler's view on the Jews, whom he after some consideration decides are a separate race and not a religious community. Hitler's main political enemies were the Marxists and the Social Democrats, and Hitler decides that both these two political movements are led by Jews. His conviction on this point was influenced by attending lectures by Gottfried Feder, as he explains in *Mein Kampf*. Hitler was a nationalist, and he saw Marxists and Social Democrats as internationalists paving the way for self-serving Jewish capitalists.

Other enemies referred to by Hitler in his speeches are the members of the social elites who in his view were bringing about the destruction of the German nation, and politicians who did not manage to revive the German economy and create new jobs. In his speech in May 1923 he claims that: 'the German parliamentarians are bringing about the destruction, the end of the German nation'. Also in the same speech he refers to tearing up the Versailles treaty, 'rebuild the military and ultimately attack our enemies'.

Consequently, the long list of enemies or 'elites' in Hitler's populist rhetoric were Jews in general and Jewish capitalists in particular, the 'Jewish' leadership in the Marxist and Social-Democratic political movements, German parliamentarians and social elites who supported other political parties and the foreign powers that had compelled Germany to sign the Versailles treaty.

Bad Manners

In his analysis of contemporary political populist leaders, Moffitt has identified an element of bad manners. Such manners are often used as a sign that the populist leader is part of ‘the people’ and in opposition to ‘the elite’. Catherine Fieschi writes that shamelessness is populism’s debased form of authenticity. In Hitler and the Nazi’s we find the bad manners and a complete lack of empathy particularly in their attacks on the Jews. Anti-Zionism and seeing Jews not as Germans but as a separate race became a central part of Nazi ideology and also a main constituent of the enemy or ‘the elite’ in their populist rhetoric. Hitler and the Nazis entered the bandwagon of simmering anti-Zionism in Germany that had grown worse with the influx of orthodox Jews. Paul von Schoenaich illustrates this in his article in *Die Weltbühne* in April 1929 titled *Wer bezahlt die Judenhetze?* After mentioning several groups that are anti-Semitic he writes that ‘all these groups are relatively unimportant compared to Hitler’s National Socialists’.

Another element of bad manners is the violence that the SA paramilitary forces of the Nazis employed during public events. This is also illustrated in Paul von Schoenaich’s article in 1929. In all of his meetings he writes, National Socialists stand up to speak, and whenever there is violence they are behind it.

Crises, Breakdown and Threat

Moffett writes that his studies indicate that rather than crises breeding populism, populism breeds crises. Crises are often the result of some failure, and populists generate the perception that ‘the elite’ by its action or inaction has caused the crises. Therefore crises are often an internal feature of populism. Moffett quotes Laclau who did not agree, and who was of the opinion that crisis is a necessary pre-condition for populism. Laclau refers to the German crisis in 1930, without which Hitler would have remained a ‘vociferous fringe ringleader’.

In the case of Hitler and the Nazis there may not be a conflict between these two points of view. It is true that Germany in the first years after the First World War went through a politically unstable period with French occupation of the Ruhr and hyperinflation. Hitler used these crises in his propaganda. But he also added his own constructed crisis of the Jews and race and made this an important rallying point for the Nazis.

But as Laclau also refers to, with the advent of the financial crisis in 1929 that hit Germany in 1930, Hitler and the Nazis got the external crisis in which they could thrive and expand their following.

As can be deduced from Carl Schmitt, Germany in 1932 was a society of sharp fronts between friends and enemies, and Leo Trotsky saw the country at this time as a battlefield between the fascists and the communists. The communist threat is an important aspect of the situation in 1932. The right-wing von Papen government was very anxious about the threat from the communists and deposed of the commander of the police and the state government

of Prussia based upon rumours of communist involvement in the state government there. For von Papen Hitler was more palatable.

Karin Priester is of the opinion that populism has to do with politically not firmly rooted protests that quickly disappear or are being absorbed in a political movement with the ability to establish itself as political force. In Hitler's case the protests were absorbed by the NSDAP that became a very strong political force that gave the inefficient German state and the political elite the blame for the country's severe economic difficulties.

The Leader and the Media

Mudde and Kaltwasser refer to the British political scientist Paul Taggart who has expressed that populism 'requires the most unusual leader to lead the most usual people'. This is a striking characteristic of Hitler. Hitler was an exceptionally strong and influential leader of the Nazi movement, as illustrated by the near collapse of the movement when he was imprisoned in Landsberg Fortress, by his rhetorical skills and his ability to hold his audience spellbound for hours as described by Leo Lania in *Die Weltbühne* in 1924, and by his strong willed ability to wait for the most opportune moment to enter government. Leo Lania's conclusion from observing Hitler in court in 1924 was that he was an obsessed man; and that his fanaticism was not tied to a belief in ideas but to a belief in his own personal greatness is particularly revealing. This observation goes well together with Hitler's own words 4 May 1923 when he asks if 'someone is fit to be our leader?', and he answers: 'either God will give him to us or he will not come'.

Hitler was also a charismatic leader, as witnessed by the large crowd he assembled at his public meeting and the pathos he displayed in such settings as he spoke with his whole body, signifying that his words came from an inner conviction. From Heinz Pol's article in *Die Weltbühne* 16 July 1929 we also learn that Hitler was able to seduce old ladies and the landed gentry to turn over money to his cause. Hitler understood the power of the media and established printing shops in different parts of the country to promulgate Nazi propaganda. Hitler's speeches are good examples of Paul Chilton's argument that populist discourse works by activating emotion-laden and value-laden concepts and emotions rather than using overt arguments and evidence. Hitler's claim that he could bring jobs and prosperity rested on his 'leadership qualities', rather than any clear political programme. Hitler's biographer Ian Kershaw write about Hitler, that he before 1918 was seen by people who knew him as an odd person, but from 1919 onwards this changed: 'He now became the object of increasing, ultimately boundless, mass adulation (as well as intense hatred from his political enemies)' (Kershaw, 2008, p. Loc 130).

In many ways the Nazi movement was Hitler's movement. Mudde and Kaltwasser refers to Max Weber who was of the opinion that charismatic leadership would flourish in time of crisis, when people seek the assistance of leaders with a particular gifts of leadership, rather than the normal sources of authority, like laws and norms. This is a fitting description of Hitler's situation. The Nazi movement also knew how to utilize the media of the day by

establishing printing shops in many parts of the country, and even by recording speeches by Hitler to make these available to a larger audience. It can be interpreted from Hitler's speeches that he saw himself as the one and only leader of the Nazi movement. Hitler became the leader of the Nazi party in 1921. In his speech in January 1927 he refers to himself as the leader: 'The supporters came here to hear their leader...' and he reminds the audience of Martin Luther, 'another great leader'.

The Nazi Movement and Democracy

Hitler made it very clear in *Mein Kampf* that he did not support democracy as a system of government. He had no tolerance for political views that he did not share, or for people he did not respect. For Hitler it was 'the ability to lead' that mattered. It is difficult to know how people in Hitler's own times who read *Mein Kampf* understood the text. Was it to be taken literally or not? Hellmut von Gerlach has an article in the penultimate issue of *Die Weltbühne* in February 1933 where he comments *Mein Kampf*. He says that the Bible for the NSDAP is Hitler's book *Mein Kampf*. 'His writing is not quite easy for a non-party member. He will not understand everything'. My hypothesis is that Helmut von Gerlach could not bring himself to take the many outrageous statements in *Mein Kampf* literally.

When reading Hitler's speeches from the Weimar period it is difficult to find mentioned or even hints to concrete political or economic initiatives the NSDAP would implement if winning a majority in the *Reichstag*. The 25 point political programme adopted by the NSDAP in 1920 was probably not well known. Hans-Erich Kaminsky in his 8 March 1932 article in *Die Weltbühne* noted that the Nazis had no programme, they were a protest organisation. But as Hitler was giving speeches in a period with very high unemployment, one could expect that he would refer to some of the economic initiatives of this programme. His speeches, like his long speech in Thüringen in January 1927, mainly focused on telling the audience how bad the conditions in the country were, and addressing blame mostly to the political leadership. In other situations he assigned blame to the Jews. Hitler was true to the philosophy explained in *Mein Kampf*, he kept the message simple.

The rallying point appears to be the society that the Nazis promised to build, a classless society where the value of the individuals would be based upon the contribution of the individual to society. The nation was promoted as the collective of all people who spoke the German language and had German blood. A nation in harmony where people are well fed must have sounded very attractive to a people who lived in violent times with much political strife, unemployment, hunger and economic misery. D'Onofrido writes that he in line with the opinion of many scholars views populism as a 'thin ideology', and the term is used to describe a political movement that changes its message in an opportunistic manner. Leo Lania points to the lack of substance in Hitler's four hour speech to the court in Munich in 1924, something that also points to the Nazi ideology as being a 'thin ideology'. The Nazis campaigned on a very limited political message. Hitler underlines this in *Mein Kampf*: 'The wider the population the propaganda is aimed to reach, the simpler the message has to be'.

Populism and Fascism

As discussed earlier, the majority of scholars that have been studied see fascism and its German version Nazism as a populist movements that glorified violence, and as Jan-Werner Müller writes had a very radical 'leadership culture'. However, Madeleine Albright's view that populism is not the sole source of fascism is also interesting. In her opinion: 'to create tyranny out of fears and hopes of average people, money is required, and so too, ambition and twisted ideas. It is the combination that kills'.

Albright's point of view is illustrated well by the Nazis. The Nazis employed populist propaganda to gain support from voters who hoped for a better future. But it was money from wealthy sponsors that facilitated the spread of propaganda, the transportation of protesters from one location to the other, the cars the leaders had to their disposal and the brown uniforms of the SA. Hitler and the Nazi leadership provided the ambitions and the twisted ideas. And as Madeline Albright aptly states, it is the combination that kills.

4 Populism in the USA

4.1 Historical Roots

Populism has long roots in the United States, stretching back to the People's Party, also called the Populist Party or the Populists. This was an agrarian left-wing party founded in 1892, and one of its policies was to restrict the power of the corporate and financial institutions. The party had strong views on immigration as stated in the party platform, which condemned an immigration policy that: 'open our ports to the pauper and criminal classes of the world and crowds out our wage-earners; and demand the further restriction of undesirable immigration' (McKean, 2016).

Chip Berlet and Matthew N. Lyons write in the book *Right-Wing Populism in America: Too Close for Comfort* (2000) that the most visible form of populist movement from the 1990s has been armed citizens' militias. The militias collect weapons, conduct paramilitary training and promote armed self-defence against what they claim is a repressive federal government. The authors state that historically right-wing populist movements in the United States have represented the interests of two different social groups, often in combination:

Middle-level groups in the social hierarchy, notable middle- and working class Whites, who have a stake in traditional social privilege but resent the power of upper-class elites over them, and

'Outsider' factions of the elite itself, who sometimes use distorted forms of anti-elitism as part of their own bid for greater power.

The members of right-wing populist movements, the authors write, are for the most part average people motivated by a combination of material and ideological grievances and aspirations (Berlet & Lyons, 2000, p. Introduction).

4.2 Socioeconomic Background for the Current Rise of Populism

In an article titled *Sacrifice zones in rural and non-metro USA: fertile ground for authoritarian populism*, Marc Edelman (2018) provides an overview of the socioeconomic changes in the USA over the last decades that have contributed to create fertile ground for the populist policies of Donald Trump. Edelman quotes David Graham who in 2017 wrote that 'The United States is coming to resemble two different countries, one rural and one urban' (Graham, 2017). The term 'sacrifice zones' is used to describe 'abandoned and economically shattered places, with growing social and health problems', and Edelman writes that many scholars use the term to describe sites where capital has degraded the physical environment. He quotes Chris Hedges who has described these as places where 'the marketplace rules without constraint, where human beings and the natural world are used and then discarded to maximise profit' (Hedges & Sacco, 2014, p. xi). Typically local companies have been purchased by large institutions that cut jobs and costs, load the companies with debt and sell

out, bringing the values upwards in terms of class and out in terms of geography. Shareholder value is the new priority. Many rural places with largely white inhabitants, and also parts of large cities in the USA with largely coloured inhabitants and immigrants, can be characterised as such sacrifice zones (Edelman, 2018, pp. 1 - 2).

Since the 1970s wages became decoupled from productivity gains and stagnated in the USA, and during Ronald Ragan's presidency in the 1980 the bargaining powers of organised labour were curtailed. In 2014 the median earnings gap between white and black men, which had narrowed sharply between 1940 and 1970 was larger than in 1950. The economic situation in low-income USA is now so precarious that the cost of a car repair may start a downward spiral that ends with job loss and homelessness. The economic 'sub-prime' crisis in 2008 was the biggest driver for homelessness, erasing whole communities. Family-owned stores and diners, which were places for human contact, have vanished. The empty storefronts are painful reminders of abandonment and a disintegrating social fabric. Also post offices, schools and hospitals are disappearing. The opioid crisis in the USA is another telling sign of social decline. Drug overdoses now claim more lives in the USA than gun violence and car accidents combined. In 2015 38% of U.S. adults used prescription opioids. 'Addicts – whether on meth or opioids – make unreliable family members, neighbours and employees, which further undermines households, society and economics in the sacrifice zones', Edelman writes (2018, pp. 2 - 6).

A part of this picture is also the cultural backlash referred to by Pippa Norris, which is a consequence of a society particularly in the big cities that have become gradually more liberal on social issues like same sex marriage and abortion, while the rural areas are more conservative, and as maintained by Robert Dahl economic inequality will have a negative impact on the functioning of liberal democracy. Robert F. Inglehart and Pippa Norris (2016) write that on the one side a part of the population is progressive and the authors describe their views for the future as: 'an intergenerational shift toward post-materialist values, such as cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism, generating rising support for left-libertarian parties such as the Greens and other progressive movements advocating environmental protection, human rights, and gender equality'. On the other side a part of the population is conservative. They see a:

retro backlash, especially among the older generation, white men, and less educated sectors, who sense decline and actively reject the rising tide of progressive values, resent the displacement of familiar traditional norms, and provide a pool of supporters potentially vulnerable to populist appeal.

Inglehart and Norris describe this as a 'Cultural cleavage between Populists and Cosmopolitan Liberalism' (Inglehart & Norris, 2016, p. 3).

In the election in 2016 Donald Trump won over 2,600 mostly rural counties while Hillary Clinton won less than 500. It is in primarily rural areas Trump has his 'base', his loyal supporters who are mostly white. But more surprisingly, Edelman writes that Trump's voters, who to a large extent were affluent with no college education, had a higher median income than Clinton's voters. The Obama presidency and deterioration in community life in the USA

contributed to an increase in racial tensions in the time leading up to the 2016 elections, and many studies Edelman writes, quoting German Lopez: ‘points to racial resentment as the strongest predictor of voting for Trump’ (Lopez, 2017, p. 1). Many whites worried that the accelerating decomposition of community life and livelihood could reduce them to what they saw as the levels of blacks and other minorities (Edelman, 2018, p. 2). Shannon M. Monnat studied the 2016 election and key findings are given in the research note titled *Deaths of Despair and Support for Trump in the 2016 Presidential Election*, are:

-Trump over-performed the most in counties with the highest drug, alcohol and suicide mortality rates, and performed best in counties with high economic distress and a large working class.

-Many of the counties with high mortality rates where Trump did the best have experienced significant employment losses in manufacturing over the past several decades (Monnat, 2016, p. 1).

Donald Trump portrays himself as a successful self-made businessman and millionaire, and is as such not a natural member of the distressed people to whom he appeals. But as Mudde and Kaltwasser explain the separation between ‘the people’ and ‘the elite’ is not a socioeconomic separation but a separation based upon morality. And Trump portrays himself as an entrepreneur who has been fighting the elite in Washington and has entered politics not to gain economically but to free people from the regulatory burdens of Washington. As Mudde and Kaltwasser also states, the economic entrepreneur is a quite common populist leader.

4.3 Donald Trump’s Election Campaign

Donald Trump Announces his Candidacy 16 June 2015

On 16 June 2015 Donald Trump announced his candidacy for the 2016 presidential elections. In his speech in New York Trump provided an illustration of Benjamin Moffett’s view that: ‘the performance of crisis should be seen as *internal* to populism – not just an external cause or catalyst for populism, but also as a *central feature of the phenomenon itself*.’ In the preceding paragraph it is described that also an external crisis was at play in the election of Trump. The internal crises Trump contributed to create in his speech 16 June 2015 was that the USA was in great trouble in the economic competition with the rest of the world and that the country was overwhelmed by criminal immigrants. The following are excerpts from his speech:

Our country is in serious trouble. We don't have victories anymore. We used to have victories, but we don't have them. When was the last time anybody saw us beating, let's say, China in a trade deal? They kill us. I beat China all the time. All the time. When did we beat Japan at anything? They send their cars over by the millions, and what do we do? When was the last time you saw a Chevrolet in Tokyo? It doesn't exist, folks. They beat us all the time. When do we beat Mexico at the border? They're laughing at us, at our stupidity. And now they are beating us economically. They are

not our friend, believe me. But they're killing us economically. The U.S. has become a dumping ground for everybody else's problems. ... When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best. They're not sending you. They're not sending you. They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people. But I speak to border guards and they tell us what we're getting. And it only makes common sense. It only makes common sense. They're sending us not the right people. It's coming from more than Mexico. It's coming from all over South and Latin America, and it's coming probably - probably - from the Middle East. But we don't know. Because we have no protection and we have no competence, we don't know what's happening. And it's got to stop and it's got to stop fast. ...

We have a disaster called the big lie: Obamacare. Obamacare. Yesterday, it came out that costs are going for people up 29, 39, 49, and even 55 percent, and deductibles are through the roof. You have to be hit by a tractor, literally, a tractor, to use it, because the deductibles are so high, it's virtually useless. It's virtually useless. It is a disaster. ...

I am officially running for president of the United States, and we are going to make this country great again (FactSquared Inc, 2019b).

Here Donald Trump lays out the main policies of his later presidency, nationalism and the fight against globalism, resistance against immigration and the opposition to policies introduced by Barak Obama. The message given by Trump is tailored to the part of the voters in the US whom Trump had established as 'his people', those voters who later would become his 'base'. As a populist Trump adopted a 'thin ideology' as described by Mudde and Kaltwasser that would appeal to his targeted voter base. Many of these voters were living in fear of losing their jobs and thereby their position in society, and immigration and cheap labour is a threat to job security. Globalism, whereby manufacturing is moved to countries with the cheapest labour is also a threat to job security, as witnessed by the 'rust belt' in the US consisting of closed heavy industry manufacturing plants. The policies Trump promotes in his speech are antagonistic; he is against the existing order. This is a populist trait referred to by Karin Priester when she writes that 'populism has to do with politically not firmly rooted protests', which in Trump's case 'became the basis for his political movement'. And as Laclau states, inherent in the formation of the 'people' is the symbolic identification of a group around a leader, in this case Trump.

Nationalism is a key ingredient in Donald Trump's political message. His slogan in the election campaign was 'America first!' As Mudde and Kaltwasser points out, for the conservative populist, nationalism is often part of the thin ideology, as it is often some social discontent that takes part in the definition of the overall ideology. And social discontent was the main force behind Trump's political support.

Trump's hostility towards the policies introduced by president Obama is widely reported. During the presidential campaign Donald Trump questioned the legitimacy of his presidency

by questioning his birth certificate, which states that Barack Obama is a natural borne citizen of the US born in Hawaii. In an article in *The New York Times* 28 November 2017 a senator who had taken part in private conversations with then president Trump is quoted as saying: 'The president has a hard time letting go of his claim that Mr. Obama was not born in the United States' (Haberman & Martin, 2017, p. 2). An article in *The Guardian* on 27 April 2011 referred to Donald Trump, the at this time 'maybe' presidential candidate who had been pestering president Obama for release of his birth certificate. The title of the article is: *Birthers and the persistence of racial paranoia*, and the subtitle: *The release of Barack Obama's birth certificate will not pacify the minority that cannot accept an African president* (Tomasky, 2011). With his attack on President Obama, Donald Trump played up to the racial bias that exists in the US and appealed to voters who were very hostile towards a president with African roots. As Benjamin L. McKean has stated, to want to be different and equal seems unfair to the populist mind-set, and African Americans and new immigrants are excluded from 'the people'.

Donald Trump's speech 8 November 2016

A few days prior to the presidential election on 8 November 2016, Donald Trump gave a speech in Lisbon, Maine. Here Trump attacks 'the elite' and as Mudde and Kaltwasser have described the central theme is morality, as the populist distinguishes between the pure people and the corrupt elite. This is an excerpt from Trump's speech:

If we win on November 8th, we are going to -- when. When we win on November 8th, we are going to Washington D.C. and we are going to drain the swamp. I tell people, I didn't like that expression, that phrase. But everybody else did in the whole world, it's all over the world now. It's trending. They come up, 'Mr. Trump, drain the swamp.' It's trending.

Drain that swamp. It's trending, I said, 'Really?' All of a sudden, you start to like it. You know, Frank Sinatra was really sort of a friend of mine in a sense, and he didn't like *My Way*, but he got to like it after singing it for about two times when it went to number one. You know, so you never know. But it certainly is a proper description, isn't it? My ethics reform and the plan include the following: a constitutional amendment that imposes term limits on all members of Congress, a five-year ban on White House and congressional officials becoming lobbyists, a complete ban on lobbyists raising money for American elections. ...

And remember -- and that's of the foreign variety. Do we want foreign lobbyists raising money? Tell me about that. No more. At the core of my contract is my plan to bring our jobs back home. OK? We're living through the greatest jobs theft in the history of the world, that really is, the greatest jobs theft in the history of the world (FactSquared Inc, 2019c).

The 'elite' attacked by Donald Trump in this speech is the established political elite in Washington that Trump names 'the swamp'. He tells the audience unpretentiously that at first he did not like the derogatory term, but when giving the speech he has come to like it. 'But it certainly is a proper description, isn't it?' he asks. Benjamin Moffitt states that 'the people' is the most important audience for the populist, and tied to 'the people' is the separation of the society between 'the people' and 'the elite', which can also be 'the establishment' or 'the system'. Here Trump specifically mentions Congress and White House and congressional officials that definitely form the establishment or the elite in Washington. The 'ethics plan' that is mentioned is most probably forgotten, but it illustrates Mudde and Kaltwasser's point that the central theme in the separation between the people and the elite is morality, as the populist distinguishes between the pure people and the corrupt elite.

Donald Trump's election campaign was successful, and he was elected president. David Smith refers to one of the voters who gave Trump his vote in the election in 2017 who said: 'He was the first person who cared about us. He's very much in touch with the ordinary neighborhood person that's trying to make a living' (D. Smith, 2017). Trump has managed to connect to his 'people' and during his presidency he has maintained this connection by frequent rallies. Max Weber explained charismatic leadership as a particular tie between the leader and his supporters, and such a tie can be understood as the expectations and impressions the supporters have to the leader. And to satisfy these expectations by fulfilling his election promises became a central part of Trump's presidency.

4.4 Donald Trump's Presidency

Press Conference 16 February 2017

Donald Trump was inaugurated as president 10 January 2017. In a press conference in the White House on 16 February 2017 Trump elaborated on his progress in fulfilling his election promises. Benjamin Muffitt's observation that the populist leader is viewed as the performer, the 'people' is the audience and crisis and media the stage is very telling for Trump's public performances. The crises that are referred to in these excerpts of Trump's speech are job losses due to globalism, immigration and Obamacare, a legacy of Barak Obama, a president not supported by the majority of Trump's 'people'.

I'm here today to update the American people on the incredible progress that has been made in the last four weeks since my inauguration. We have made incredible progress. I don't think there's ever been a president elected who in this short period of time has done what we've done. ...

Let me list to you some of the things that we've done in just a short period of time. I just got here. And I got here with no cabinet. Again, each of these actions is a promise I made to the American people.

I'll go over just some of them and we have a lot happening next week and in the weeks -- in the weeks coming. We've withdrawn from the job-killing disaster known as Trans Pacific Partnership. We're going to make trade deals but we're going to have one on one deals, bilateral. We're going to have one on one deals. ...

We want plants built and we want factories built and we want the jobs. We don't want the jobs going to other countries. ...

We've undertaken the most substantial border security measures in a generation to keep our nation and our tax dollars safe. And are now in the process of beginning to build a promised wall on the southern border, met with general -- now Secretary Kelly yesterday and we're starting that process. And the wall is going to be a great wall and it's going to be a wall negotiated by me. ...

The court system has not made it easy for us. And are even creating a new office in Homeland Security dedicated to the forgotten American victims of illegal immigrant violence, which there are many. We have taken decisive action to keep radical Islamic terrorists out of our country. ...

So we've begun preparing to repeal and replace Obamacare, and are deep in the midst of negotiations on a very historic tax reform to bring our jobs back, to bring our jobs back to this country. Big league. It's already happening. But big league (FactSquared Inc, 2019a).

Trump gave this press conference a little more than a month after his inauguration to describe the great progress he had made on his election promises. As De Cock et al. have noted, the diverse group of supporters whom he relies on to be re-elected are precariously prone to break ranks, and Trump is aware that their support for him easily can turn into anger if it turns out that he is not delivering on his election promises.

Trump's policies are nationalistic, as referred to in this speech he withdrew the US from the negotiations of the Trans Pacific Partnership and started to initiate negotiations of bi-lateral trade agreements. Cas Mudde and others see populism as a thin ideology that easily can be combined with other ideologies like nationalism. Mudde and Kaltwasser notes that it is often some social discontent that takes part in the formulation of the overall ideology. And in Trump's case he had made job promises to coal- and steel workers in the 'rust-belt' in the Mid-West, who have lost their jobs as coal and steel production moved overseas.

Another important election promise given by Trump was to build a wall along the border to Mexico to hinder immigration. Joshua Green writes that early on in the preparations for Trump's election campaign it was apparent for his advisors that 'the power of illegal immigration to manipulate popular sentiment was readily apparent, and his advisors brainstormed methods for keeping their attention-addled boss on message'. And they came up with the idea of the catch word 'the Wall' to make sure Trump would remember to talk about immigration (Green, 2018). So in this obscure way was apparently an important and expensive policy initiative of the Trump administration born. Ruth Wodak claims that right

wing political parties define an ethnic, religious, linguistic or political minority as a scapegoat for all political and social problems and as a danger to ‘us’, often associated with immigration. In Trump’s case it was the immigration over the border with Mexico and people of Muslim faith from the Middle East that became the targets to satisfy his ‘people’s’ fears and emotions.

Mudde and Kaltwasser write that one of the issues for a democratically elected populist is that there are powers in the state apparatus that he does not control, and such powers are in the populist mindset used to undermine the interests of ‘the people’. In Trump’s case this is the democrats in the US Congress and the courts, which Trump mentions in the above excerpts from his speech: ‘The court system has not made it easy for us.’ This means that Trump does not respect that the mission of the courts is to uphold the Law, and his countermove is to nominate more judges supporting his own understanding of how the law should be applied. To his defense can be added that the US has an openly politicized legal system and in doing what he does he is in good company.

Donald Trump gives a Speech at a Political Rally in Duluth, Minnesota 2 June 2018

In this speech to his ‘people’ Trump speaks again about his achievements in fulfilling his election promises and he presents himself as a great statesman. As Benjamin Moffitt points out, showing strong leadership qualities is important for the populist leader. This event was more than two years prior to the next election, but as De Cock et al. emphasize, it is important for the populist leader to maintain the support of his followers in order to ensure that they do not turn against him. Trump also uses the opportunity to attack the press that does not support him. These are excerpts from Trumps’ speech 2 June 2018:

So we've created 3.4 million new jobs since Election Day. 3.4. And I've said before, if I would have said that to you during the campaign, those very dishonest people back there, the fake news –

Audience: Booo –

Very dishonest. They would have said, ‘He's exaggerating.’

CNN sucks! CNN sucks! CNN sucks! [Applause]

These are very dishonest people. Many of them. And we have some people, too, doing that. But there's a lot of very dishonest people. For instance, I just got back, as you know, from Singapore, where I met -- [Applause] -- where I met Kim Jong Un. And we had a great meeting, great chemistry. We got along really well, which is very important. They didn't want us to. But, you know, it's like nice to do that. ...

But the beauty was this: So we had a meeting. It was an incredible success. And they said, ‘The President gave away so much. He met with them.’ I said, ‘What else?’ That was -- I met. What am I supposed to do? I had to meet. Right? ‘He met.’ Now,

sentence one says, a total denuclearization of North Korea. That's what it says. [Applause] . . .

And by the way, you're very good at real estate. Did you see the thousands and thousands of people outside? That will never be reported by the fake news. But the thousands of people that couldn't get in. [Applause] Many thousands. They're all over. The parking lots. They're all over. And it would be great if the cameras could take a shot of the arena. [Applause]. . .

So the Democrats want open borders. Let everybody come in. Let everybody pour in. We don't care. Let them come in from the Middle East; let them come in from all over the place. We don't care. We're not going to let it happen. And by the way, today, I signed an executive order. We're going to keep families together, but the border is going to be just as tough as it's been. [Applause]

Illegal immigration costs our country hundreds of billions of dollars. So imagine if we could spend that money to help bring opportunity to our inner cities and our rural communities and our roads and our highways and our schools. [Applause]

Audience: Build that wall! Build that wall! Build that wall (FactSquared Inc, 2019d)!

In this speech Donald Trump names CNN, which is critical to his presidency as fake news and he receives spontaneous support from the crowd for his claims. This is an illustration of the observation De Cock et al. have made that even if news reporting is factually correct Trump points to an 'effective truth that his followers instinctively get' that is that mainstream news outlets that are critical of Trump are part of the apparatus of state and therefore in the view of Trump's supporters part of the 'swamp', which Trump claims to be fighting against. In assessing the reaction of the supporters to Trump's speech, it is tempting to refer to Laclau's opinion that crowds have the effect of lowering the average intelligence of their members.

As noted above, Max Weber professed that charismatic leadership is based upon a particular tie between the leader and his supporters. Donald Trump has established such a tie to his supporters. Resident dramaturg at the Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington, Drew Lichtenberg has compared Trump's post-election rallies with a touring theatre company:

He obviously enjoyed running for president because of the adulation of the crowd. He enjoys playing the role of the president more than being president. He now wants to stage an encore performance of his campaign rallies. It's a very strange way to govern (D. Smith, 2017).

During the election campaign Donald Trump portrayed himself as the great dealmaker. He promised to make so many deals that everyone would become 'tired of winning' (NYT Editorial Board, 2017). In the speech in Duluth Trump referred to his meeting with Kim Jong Un in Singapore and gave the crowd the impression that he now has secured a total denuclearization of North Korea. Afterwards we know that this was not the case. But Trump has the need to promote his own abilities. In his discussion of political style, Benjamin Moffitt emphasises that his definition of political style includes both the rhetorical that Trump

masters well in his meetings with his supporters, as well as aesthetics including self-presentation, and this underlines according to Moffitt that political performances are constructed, as also noted by Drew Lichtenberg.

Trump uses this speech to maintain his supporters' engagement in his core election promises, and one of these is the building of a wall against Mexico to stop immigration. During his election campaign Trump said that Mexico would pay for the wall (Qiu, 2019). John B. Judis writes that a conflict is defined by a set of demands that the populists make to 'the elite'. These are not normal demands that the populist expects to be met. When demanding a wall to be paid for by the Mexicans, Trump used this unrealistic demand to create a crisis between his administration and the Mexicans, the Democrats in Congress and the press. The political debate about immigration became a crisis focused on an unrealistic wall, and by treating immigration as a threat and stopping immigrants by force at the border the crisis was for everyone to see (NYT Editorial Board, 2019). As Benjamin Muffett has argued, key features of populism are crisis, breakdown and threat.

Trump continued his rallies with his supporters shortly after his election. He may have several reasons for his frequent events with his supporters, but one reason is probably as described in *The Washington Post*: He 'luxuriates in [the] crowd's adoration' (Nakamura, 2019). From photos taken at such events it is obvious to see that he enjoys tremendously the adoration of his 'people'.

A Tweeting President

The social media platform Twitter has become very popular among politicians to stay connected with their electorate, but few if any uses Twitter more often than Donald Trump. Trump in many ways runs his government by Twitter messages, often to the consternation of his staff, with a total of over 11,000 tweets during the first three years of his presidency. The frequency of tweets reached over 250 messages in the second week of October 2019 during the impending impeachment hearings, with nearly 200 of these being attacks on something or someone. Most tweets are written between 6 a.m. and 10 a.m. (Shear et al., 2019). Twitter is the main media for Trump to report progress on his election promises to his 'people'. The following is an excerpt from his tweets on 16 December 2019:

... President Trump has managed to deliver not just promises, but a record which adds up to the most successful presidencies in history. Just in the last few days, incredible jobs numbers, giant trade deals, help for working families, and much more. Over the last 3 years, unemployment falling, earnings rising, criminal justice reform, the heartland revived, energy independence, manufacturing resilience, illegal immigration coming down, the Wall going up, China confronted, NAFTA renegotiated, our military rebuilt, NATO paying more, regulations costing less... and much more....(Trump, 2019)

The main emphasis of Trump's first term as president is to be re-elected in 2020, and to achieve this goal he needs to maintain the support of his 'base' supporters or his 'people'. In order to maintain this support Trump has a very strong focus on the fulfilment of his election promises. Therefore many of his tweets and speeches focus on his progress in fulfilling these promises. As De Cock et al. write, Trump is instinctively aware that the masses are always precariously prone to break ranks and that their delight easily can turn into anger if they feel betrayed. This is the reason the authors point out, why Trump is more engaged in cultivating himself and his election promises than running a government. Trump's constant communication with his 'people' is reminiscent of Kurt Weyland's definition of populism as: 'a political strategy through which a personalistic leader seeks or exercises government power based on direct, unmediated, uninstitutionalized support from a large number of mostly unorganized followers'. As also note by Weyland, this direct relationship between the leader and his followers bypasses established organizations, in the case of Trump the Republican Party and subordinates them to the leader's personal will. With his Tweets Trump has a unique opportunity to inform his followers on issues which he is occupied with, like his own intelligence. In Tweets on 6 January 2018 he states: 'my two greatest assets have been mental stability and being, like, really smart'(Trump, 2018a) and commenting on his election as president 'I think that would qualify as not smart, but genius...and a very stable genius at that'(Trump, 2018b)!

A President Providing 'Alternative Facts'

Catherine Fieschi writes that politicians have always lied, but none wanted to be caught lying. But for populists, lying is part of the performance. Its purpose is subversive and its intention is to demonstrate that the liar will stop at nothing to serve 'the people'. It is difficult to find a better example of this observation than President Trump, who is widely known for his lies and for his dishonest behavior. In the introduction to his book *The Making of Donald Trump*, the journalist David Cay Johnston who has covered Trump for years wrote after Trump's inauguration:

I knew Trump had spent a lifetime cheating and lying and displaying a remarkable success at getting away with it, whether he was shorting workers (illegal immigrants included), refusing to pay vendors after they delivered goods and services, swindling investors or bullying anyone who stood between him and his next pile of easy money (Johnston, 2017, p. ix).

The political fact checking site PolitiFact is fact checking and keeping track of Trump's statements as president, and is maintaining his scorecard. This shows that 50% of his statements are false, 35% of his statements are half true or mostly false, 10% are mostly true and only 5% are true (The Poynter Institute, 2019). Even though, as Catherine Fieschi have noted, politicians have always lied, president Trump's performance in this respect is astonishing.

An example of president Trump's disrespect for facts is illustrated by a statement he made in a meeting with prime minister May before talks on trade in London on 4 June 2019:

We are your largest partner. You're our largest partner. A lot of people don't know that. I was surprised. I made that statement yesterday, and a lot of people said, 'Gee, I didn't know that.' But that's the way it is (The White House, 2019).

But the UK is not the largest trading partner of the US. According to the United States Census Bureau, the latest figures for year to date trade for May 2019 rank the UK number seven in total trade, number five in export and number seven in imports (United States Census Bureau, 2019).

A question we may not have an answer to is whether Trump at this meeting 'lied' or if he wanted to believe or really believed that the UK was the largest trading partner of the US. It was anyway a convenient statement to make in the setting he was in; it was a convenient 'fact' to present. Such are many of Trump's statements that are labeled as false. We are in the era of 'post-truth' politics. De Cock et al. note that this is a problematic concept, as it presupposes the existence of a universally accepted truth. But on the issue referred to above and for many of the other untruths told by Trump, there exist factual truths. In the meeting with Theresa May referred to above Trump did not seek to please his 'people', so we are allowed to wonder why he needed to lie. A clue can be found in Bob Woodward's book *Fear: Trump in the White House* (2018). Woodward refers to a conversation between Trump's legal advisor from June 2017 to March 2018 John M. Dowd and special counsel Robert Mueller during the investigation of the Russia election interference in 2016. Dowd and Mueller were discussing having Trump as a witness in the investigation, and Dowd said according to Woodward the following: 'I have no secrets with you guys. I'm going to tell you about my conversation with the president of the United States on the subject of testimony.' Then Dowd referred to three questions he had taken to Trump. On the third question Trump had no idea: 'He just made something up. That is his nature' (Woodward, 2018, p. 345). So to make something up may be Trump's way of presenting the 'facts' that he requires in a conversation, in a meeting or in a briefing of reporters. Referring to Quentin Skinner: 'However bizarre the beliefs we are studying may seem to be, we must begin by trying to make the agents who accepted them as rational as possible' (Skinner, 2002, p. 40). This is like living in an imaginary world that you make up as you go along. After Trump's inauguration ceremony in 2017 Trump claimed that more people had attended his ceremony than that of Obama, which was untrue. His press secretary Kellyanne Conway at the time explained this by stating: 'He offered alternative facts' (Swaine, 2017). So then, in Trump parlance lies have become alternative facts.

Another worrisome aspect of president Trump's relation to the truth is his disrespect for the intelligence services and his attraction towards conspiracy theories that supports his world view. This is the underlying issue in the impeachment hearings conducted by the US Senate centered on his efforts to pressure the Ukraine to conducting criminal investigations into alleged Ukrainian intervention in the US elections in 2016. The US intelligence services have confirmed that it was Russia, not the Ukraine that interfered in support of his victory in the

election, but this is not to the president's liking. He does not appreciate that Russia actually interfered on his part (Cohen & Mang, 2019). Berlet and Lyons refer to conspiracism as one of the main features of right-wing populism in the USA.

President Trump's relationship with the truth is problematic, and it appears to go further than Catherine Fieschi observation that lying is part of the populist performance. To claim that someone is lying implies that the person knows what is right, but chooses to tell something that is not true. In the case of Trump it appears that he in many instances does not know, or does not desire to know the truth. He then makes up something or bases himself upon a story that appeals to his opinion of how things ought to be. He has adopted a world view that he describes to his followers in public meetings, in press conferences and on Twitter. In this world view whether it is trade negotiations or peace negotiations with North Korea he is the hero, and it is very important to Trump that his followers see him in this light. As De Cock et al. have explained Trump is very conscious of fulfilling his election promises to avoid disappointing his supporters. Therefore many of his policy decisions can be traced back to these promises and the expectations of his 'people'.

4.5 Trump's Populist Hallmarks during his First Three Years in Office

Political Style

Benjamin Moffitt defines political style as 'the repertoire of embodied, symbolically mediated performance made to audiences that are used to navigate the field of power that comprise the political, stretching from the domain of government through to everyday life.' Donald Trump has a political style that breaks fundamentally with the norm established by his predecessors and other statesmen. There is nothing in his style that points to a dignified statesman, and there is nothing to uphold the respect of his position. He comes across as 'a man of the people' and his navigation in the field of power has on occasion 'born several striking parallels to how the mafia operates' when he demands that officials who investigate him should be tried for treason and calls witnesses who testify against him rats (Sheth, 2019, p. 2). It is reasonable to assume that such utterings from Trump are aimed primarily at his 'people' and that he uses a language that he believes wins sympathy with them. Ernesto Laclau expressed the opinion that whenever there is a need for a strong leader, such a leader will only be accepted if he presents features that he shares with those he is supposed to lead, and the leader becomes a *primus inter pares*. Margaret Canovan writes that populist's appeal to the people characteristically are made in a simple and direct language, but Trump often goes beyond this norm with his derogatory utterings.

The People Versus the Elite

Moffitt sees populism as a political style where the leader is seen a performer and 'the people' the audience. This is a fitting description of Donald Trump, who has a background from the

TV show *The Apprentice* where he assessed the business skills of contestants competing for a well-paying job. It is, however, also possible to view Trump's populism as a populist discourse as described by Hawkins. Trump's speeches and tweets are aimed at establishing a confrontation between the 'people' and the 'elite'. The 'elite' or the enemies in Trump's rhetoric are the Democrats in Congress, the courts, the press which do not support him and foreign powers and institutions with whom he has established a conflict. Hawkins states that an ideology has a normative programme for political action, while a discourse has not. Trump's ideology in terms of beliefs and values is not populism but a mix of capitalism and nationalism. The main aim of Trump's presidency appears to be to satisfy his base in order to stay in power. Shortly after being elected Trump continued his election rallies with his supporters around the country. In these events he meets his supporters, attacks 'the elite' and 'luxuriates in crowd's adoration' as an article in *The Washington Post* puts it (Nakamura, 2019). Trump, who seems to wish building a personality cult around him, takes pride from the attendance on his public performances, and his claims that more people attended his inauguration ceremony than that of Obama, although false, are well known.

Bad Manners

In order to appeal to the people Muffett writes, populist leaders often use 'bad manners' and disregard customary behaviour on the political arena. As also noted above, this is a very fitting description of many of the public appearances of president Trump. Calling political opponents rats, corrupt and treasonable (Sheth, 2019) are definitely bad manners. Also Trump's characteristic of foreign leaders, like calling the Danish Prime Minister Mette Fredriksen 'nasty' when she refused his request to buy Greenland (Baker & Haberman, 2019), is not accepted diplomatic language in the public domain.

As noted by Bill Maher in an interview with Fareed Zakaria, Trump's behaviour comes across as, crude, vulgar and horrible. But when this behaviour is shown often enough, it become normalised. 'In an age that is absent of facts authenticity rules the day, and Trump is authentic, he does not pretend, he shows real feelings, and that is appreciated by his followers' (Zakaria, 2020a).

In the words of Peter Wehner, 'Trump is a transgressive personality. He thrives on creating disorder, in violating rules, in provoking outrage.... He is unlikely to be contained by norms and customs, or even by laws and the Constitution. For Mr. Trump nothing is sacred' (Wehner, 2017). Trump's conduct and comments on many issues are discussed by David Cay Johnston, who writes that Trump is 'appallingly ignorant' (Johnston, 2017, p. xiv). If this is the case it can explain his penchant for lying and for presenting 'alternative facts' when the situation calls for some insight. A disturbing aspect of Trump's 'anti-civil' behaviour is that his position gives this form of behaviour a stamp of acceptability. As Wehner writes, Trumps behaviour may have been acceptable when he was a TV star, although culturally coarsening, but it is quite unacceptable for a president (Wehner, 2017).

The United States is a country of immigrants, and racial tensions have always been a social issue (Leonhardt, 2019). As presidents are elected to be president for all citizens, they are

expected to ease such tensions and promote a community for all. But president Trump allows his own, personal racial biases to come to the surface. As Thomas B. Edsall writes in *The New York Times*, ‘Donald Trump has done everything within his power to activate racial and ethnic animosity in this country’ (Edsall, 2019b). Giani and Méon (2019) have studied the effects of the election of president Trump on racial bias and occurrence of racially motivated crimes in Europe. With respect to the situation in the USA, they refer to other studies that show that the election of Donald Trump was followed by an increase in the occurrence of hate crime and online harassment directed against minorities in the USA, and one explanation given is that these occurrences reflected a shift in public norms: ‘Donald Trump’s win signalled that social norms had shifted towards a greater acceptance of racial attitudes.’ The authors found in their study, which was based upon the European Social Survey conducted since 2002, a statistically significant increase in the probability of self-reporting of racial bias in Europe immediately after the election of Trump. The election of president Obama had the opposite effect. The authors refer to this as ‘contagion from abroad’ (Giani & Méon, 2019).

Crises, Breakdown and Threat

Benjamin Moffett sees crises as internal to populism in the sense that the populist leader elevates failures or shortcomings in the society to a crisis level, frames ‘the people’ versus ‘the elite’ as responsible and uses the media to propagate how his strong leadership handles the situation. It is not difficult to see Donald Trump in each of the steps of this process. The shortcomings in the society that Trump and his team chose to raise to a crisis level are issues of concern for his ‘people’, the voters he and his team decided to attract. As noted above these are not necessarily the most destitute part of the population – who it may be difficult to bring to the voting booth – but more prosperous voters who are afraid to end up in destitution. Some of the issues Trump has defined as crises are illegal immigration from Mexico that leads to competition on the job market, entry to the country of Muslims who are disliked by his mostly evangelical Christian base, economic globalisation and the competitiveness of US industry particularly in the competition with China that is a threat to jobs in the US, and the insufficient economic contribution of the European NATO members to defence, an issue on which he can display strong international leadership to his base.

President Trump’s presidency has been marked by such crises and the media attention that results. Media loyal to Trump propagates the issues and gives him credit, helping to maintain the strong relations between Trump and his base. Ruth Wodak defines right-wing populism as ‘a political ideology that rejects existing political consensus and usually combines laissez-faire liberalism with anti-elitism’, a characterisation that describes Trump’s policies well.

The Leader and the Media

Mudde and Kaltwasser refer to Max Weber, who professed that charismatic leadership is based upon a particular tie between the leader and his supporters, and that such a tie can be understood as the expectations and impressions the supporters have of the leader. From the

ovations and adoration Donald Trump receives at his frequent election rallies with his ‘people’, it is clear that he appears to his ‘people’ as a charismatic leader. Trump has made a number of election promises to voters, and is using these rallies to report on his perceived progress in fulfilling the promises. As noted by Mudde and Kaltwasser the economic entrepreneur is a quite common populist leader. Donald Trump portrays himself as an economic entrepreneur, although he inherited much of his wealth from his father. But, as Mudde and Kaltwasser write, the separation between the ‘people’ and the ‘elite’ is basically not a socioeconomic separation, but a separation based upon morality. The entrepreneurs portray themselves as honest business people who have managed despite the obstacles established by the corrupt ‘elite’. With Donald Trump this is illustrated by the set of ethics reforms he announced in an election rally in 2016, that ‘would drain the swamp’ (Hughes, 2016). After his election his anti-corruption promises ‘seemed to be rapidly dissolving in the swamp itself’, according to an editorial in *The New York Times* (NYT Editorial Board, 2016).

Wodak and Krzyzanowski see it as ‘obvious that the affordances of mediatisation and self-mediation of right-wing populists are probably among the key reasons behind the upsurge of populist ideologies and views.’ In other words, the media shapes and frames the political discourse, and the advent of social media platforms like Twitter makes it possible for political leaders to communicate directly to their constituencies. Trump’s public appearances are often broadcast live, and together with newspaper and TV commentaries his populist view and policies are promulgated to a wide audience. One important element of the mediatisation is the prevalence of news outlets of different political inclinations, allowing the public to choose opinions and commentary of their liking, contributing to the polarisation of the electorate. Henry Giroux writes that truth is viewed by Trump as a corrupt tool that is used by the critical media to question his dismissal of legal checks on his power, and his insistence on complete and unchecked loyalty towards him personally from government employees and institutions (Giroux, 2018).

Donald Trump and Democracy

In the context of a discussion of Donald Trump and democracy it is important to state what kind of democracy we will use as a template. As discussed by Chantal Mouffe and Mudde and Kaltwasser, a system of government whereby the authority of the state is governed by the consent of the majority of the people can be called popular sovereignty. Disregarding a skewed election system in the US, Trump is basing his grip on power on winning popular majority in elections. In this sense Trump can be said to uphold democracy. A liberal democracy, however, which Western countries have spent a long time developing, is a political regime which not only respect popular sovereignty, but independent institutions that protect basic human rights like an independent judiciary, freedom of expression and the rights of minorities. If we use liberal democracy as a template, the assessment of Donald Trump as a democrat will be different.

Ernesto Laclau was of the opinion that populism leads to a ‘democratisation of democracy’ as the demands of marginalised groups gain visibility. Smith and Hanley (2018) have studied

who voted for Donald Trump in the 2016 election and they found that his supporters voted for him not for economic reasons but mainly because they share his prejudices. These prejudices the authors argue should be called authoritarian: ‘negatively, they target minorities and women; and positively, they favour domineering and intolerant leaders who are uninhibited about their biases’ (D. N. Smith & Hanley, 2018). As this is the case it is difficult to argue that the nomination of the populist Donald Trump as a presidential candidate and his later election represented a ‘democratisation of democracy’. As Smith and Hanley’s study points to, the prejudices shared by Trump and his ‘people’ should be called authoritarian, which does not bode well for the future of liberal democracy in the US under his tenure.

An independent judiciary is one of the central pillars of a liberal democracy. Perhaps one of the most long lasting effects of Donald Trump’s prejudices and conservative policies are his appointments of conservative jurists as life time judges. Besides being conservative, Trump favours judges who are loyal to him and his policies. The nomination of judges under Trump is performed by the White House Counsel’s Office. A leading conservative lawyer who requested anonymity for fear of reprisal when speaking to *The New York Times* said: ‘The White House is like a Dante’s ‘Inferno’ strange comedy, but the people in the counsel’s office is like the A-Team’ (Zengerle, 2018, pp. 1-2).

During the last month of Donald Trump’s first three years in office he was impeached by the House of Representatives for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress. Trump is the third president in the history of the US to be charged with committing ‘high crimes and misdemeanours’. The background for the charges is his abuse of power trying to make the Ukraine find information that can help Trump’s 2020 presidential campaign (Fandos & Shear, 2019). Trump is a legitimately elected president and his election was very much based upon the electorate’s diminished trust in the political elite and the government, a social process Pierre Rosanvallon calls political distrust. Trump’s impeachment is a consequence of the same political elite’s loss of trust in the populist Donald Trump’s conduct as president. The mutual political distrust is a prevalent feature of the polarised political situation in the US. Pierre Rosanvallon sees populism as a ‘perverse inversion of the ideals and procedures of democracy’. Donald Trump is a good example of this inversion of ideals and procedures with his lack of respect for anything but his own ego, his incompetence, his unwillingness to listen to advice from his staff and his belief in conspiracy theories (Krugman, 2019). But the loss of trust in politicians is not an issue which is new with Trump. In its annual rating of democracy in 167 countries in 2016, *The Economist* classified the United States as a ‘flawed democracy’ as opposed to a ‘full democracy’. The main reason was the diminishing trust in American political institutions (Lieberman, Mettler, Pepinsky, Roberts, & Valelly, 2019, p. 470).

Populism and Fascism

Roger Griffin defines fascism as: ‘a genus of political ideology whose mythic core in its various permutations is a palingenetic form of populist ultra-nationalism.’ He states that the roots of fascism in the twentieth century were militarism, racism, charismatic leadership, populist nationalism, and fears that decadence was threatening the nation. With his ‘America

first' slogan and his popularity among white supremacists in the US (Blow, 2017) Trump can be called a nationalistic populist. Blow writes that: 'Trump's central promise as a politician has been the elevation, protection and promotion of whiteness, particularly white men who fear demographic changes and loss of status and privilege'(Blow, 2019). Trump's mostly white supporters are his 'people', and others form parts of a large group of other people who receives various derogative portrayals by Trump. As stated by Ian López: 'this often means painting his antagonists in racist and anti-Semitic hues'(López, 2019). Trump has also been severely criticised for racial attacks on four newly elected Democratic female members of Congress, among them Somali born Ilhan Omar. At one of his rallies Trump's supporters chanted 'Send her back'(Omar, 2019). When one Trump supporter hit a young African American protester at a campaign rally in 2016, Trump offered to pay his legal expenses (Kellner, 2016, p. 3). The racist label can therefore be attached to Trump. His take on decadence in the US is illustrated by the set of ethics reforms he announced in an election rally in 2016 that would 'drain the swamp'. Trump is also seeing himself as a saviour of the nation. At the 2016 Republican National Convention Trump said without irony that only he could save a nation in crisis, and insisted that: 'I am your voice, I alone can fix it, I will restore law and order'(Giroux, 2018). So it can be concluded that Trump's rhetoric can be associated with many of the signposts of fascism referred to by Griffin. But during his first three years in the presidency he has shown no signs of being willing to use the military in conflict situations. In the conflicts with other nations that he to a large extent has instigated, he has used coarse language and economic sanctions as tools.

5 Conclusion

Populist Leadership and Democracy

It has been shown above that both Adolf Hitler and Donald Trump gained power by employing a populist style, by formulating and provoking a conflict between a part of the voters, their 'people', and the established political 'elite'. Laclau was of the opinion that a crisis is a precondition for populism, but Moffett writes that his studies indicate that rather than crisis breeding populism, populism breeds crises. In the two examples studied here, both points of view have merit. Germany experienced a severe economic crisis after 1929 with large unemployment, and in the USA the middle class have for several decades seen a fall in living standards. Both Hitler and Trump used the economic situation as a springboard for political agitation, and the agitation bred new crises.

In this study a modern understanding of populism has been applied also to the Weimar period. The main political drivers of populism in the West in the modern era are immigration, an increasing educational divide between large cities and the countryside, large disparity in income levels and very polarising information channels (Zakaria, 2020b). We can find these drivers in the crises which were the basis for Donald Trump's election campaign in 2016 and we can also find some of these drivers in Adolf Hitler's agitation for the Nazi party during the Weimar period. Jews who over time had immigrated to Germany were seen as foreign elements, Germany was a class society with large disparity of wealth and the country had a much polarised press.

As Jan-Werner Müller points out, the populist leader is normally the absolute focal point within a populist movement. The leader talks directly to the people, and normally has the answers expected by the people. Such charismatic authority is explained by Max Weber as being based upon unique and exemplary personal qualities of the leader, and as such a gift of grace. Weber believed that charismatic authority would flourish in times of crisis, when people seek the assistance of leaders with particular gifts of leadership, rather than the normal sources of authority, like laws and norms. Hitler was a charismatic leader as described by Leo Lania, who reported from court in 1924 when Hitler was charged with high treason. Lania followed Hitler's four-hour long speech without tiring. There was an 'inner warmth, eloquence and perfection in the metaphors' that made Lania sympathise with Hitler, and Lania saw Hitler as an honest person. Leo Lania was taken in by Hitler's outstanding rhetoric, but saw through it his boundless vanity.

We might be able to say something similar about Trump today. He is a charismatic speaker to the crowds that are assembled for his election rallies, and vanity is part of his character. His supporters sympathise with him and they probably see him as an honest person who will make good on his election promises. Ernesto Laclau writes that whenever there is a need for a strong leader, such a leader will only be accepted if he presents features that he shares with those he is supposed to lead, and the leader becomes a *primus inter pares*. This we can find in Trump's leadership of his political supporters as he portrays himself as 'one of them' with his

often crude utterings and his focus on policies supported by his 'base'. Hitler also focused in his speeches on the grievances of his supporters, and portrayed himself as a leader who could take his 'people' out of misery. During the three first years of Trump's presidency he has been an unchallenged leader of the Republican Party. Trump's leadership is based upon the authority he exercises over his 'base', his supporters. Other Republican politicians in the US who seek election or re-election will be dependent upon Trump's supporters to be elected and the cost to challenge Trump can therefore be a lost election. Hitler's biographer Ian Kershaw writes (2008) that his biography above all is intended to be a study of Hitler's power, and he found the answer partly in Hitler's personality. Hitler made decisions that other leaders would not have taken, and history without Hitler would have been different. But the other important factor Kershaw points to is the very special circumstances of the Weimar Republic with a population traumatized by a lost war, political instability and economic misery, and he writes that: 'At any other time, Hitler would surely have remained a nobody.' Kershaw refers to Weber's concept of charismatic authority, which does not necessarily require that the leader has outstanding leadership qualities, but that his leadership qualities are perceived as such by his followers. Such charismatic authority is according to Weber inherently unstable, and misfortune or failure can easily bring an end to such authority (Kershaw, 2008, pp. Loc 118-141). The concept of charismatic authority can also be applied to Donald Trump, who gets his authority from his 'base'. His 'people' see in Trump the leader who can satisfy their grievances. But as explained by Max Weber such authority is instable and can easily be lost, and this we can assume Trump understands and is a reason for his frequent election rallies with his supporters.

With the rise of populism in the Western world many are concerned about the consequences for our liberal democracies with its focus on individual liberties and the principles of human rights. Populism is thriving in the tension between popular sovereignty, where decisions are taken based upon the general will of the majority and liberal democracy where the popular will in the form of interests of minorities and the rule of law are also prioritised. Chantal Mouffe calls this tension between popular sovereignty and liberal democracy, in which populist politicians thrive for the Democratic Paradox. The Weimar Republic established a liberal democracy in Germany after the First World War, but many politicians in the *Reichstag* did not support this form of government. Referring to Przeworski, Alvarez, Cheibub, and Limongi, none of the criteria given by them for an enduring democracy was present. The communists fought for a communist revolution like in Russia and some conservatives wished for the return of the rule of *Der Kaiser*. Thus liberal democracy was not firmly established and universally accepted in the Weimar Republic when Hitler campaigned for his Nazi party. After his failed coup in 1923 Hitler accepted popular sovereignty as a means to gain power in an election, but he made it clear in *Mein Kampf* that he had no tolerance for political views that he did not share. For Hitler it was 'the ability to lead' that mattered. So with the election of Hitler as *Reichskanzler* in 1933 the first German experiment with a liberal democracy or any form of democracy was over.

Donald Trump gained power in an established liberal democracy, but he does not appear to respect basic democratic rules like the separation of power between Congress, the courts and the executive of which he is the leader, and he openly mocks important institutions in a liberal democracy like a free press and a political discourse based upon facts. To Trump the loyalty to him as a person seems to be more important than the integrity of state institutions and the rule of law. As described by Robert F. Inglehart and Pippa Norris there is a cultural rift in the United States between progressive and conservative groups, and Trump acts as if he is the president for the conservative part of the population, his ‘people’. Carl Schmitt was of the opinion that the existence of a homogeneous people is a very important basis for a democratic system. In such a state the general will is based upon the unity of the people and is clearly separated from those who do not belong to this category, and who cannot be treated as equal. In the United States the people are not homogeneous, and can as described by Inglehart and Norris be separated into Populists and Cosmopolitan Liberals. And when Donald Trump in his role of President makes no effort to unite these groups by treating citizens as equal, the rift only gets larger. In an article in *The New York Times* Thomas D. Edsall (2019a) quotes political scientist Alan Abramowitz, who expressed that: ‘Trump is the most polarizing president in the history of ANES¹⁷ polling and Gallup polling’, and as Edsall writes: ‘Not only is Trump the most polarizing president, he has monopolized public attention and managed to make himself the object of both loathing and adoration’ (Edsall, 2019a).

This severe cultural rift in the population is also reflected in a rift between the Republican Party and the Democratic Party which makes cooperation and compromise in the House of Representatives and the Senate very difficult. With the current composition of the Senate it makes any decision on restraint on President Trump virtually impossible. Lieberman, Mettler, Pepinsky, Roberts and Valelly (2019) have studied the current challenges to liberal democracy in the US in a historical context, and write that although liberal democracy in the country has been exposed to severe challenges before, this time it may be more severe. They observe that the election of Donald Trump and his governance comes at the same time as the two-party system has been much polarised, policy decisions are taken based upon party affiliation and there has been an erosion of democratic norms both among the elite and among the population. The authors see the danger to liberal democracy in the US as real as all these negative factors coexist (Lieberman et al., 2019, p. 471). Only two, affluence and growth with moderate inflation, of the five criteria established by Przeworski, Alvarez, Cheibub, and Limongi for an enduring democracy exist in the US today. Inequality is increasing, the international climate is not favourable much due to the confrontational foreign policy conducted by Donald Trump and Congress is not effective due to severe political polarisation. These conditions do not bode well for American liberal democracy, and corrosion of liberal democracy in the United States will make the world a very different and more dangerous place.

¹⁷ The American National Election Studies (ANES) are national surveys of voters in the United States, conducted before and after presidential elections conducted by academic institutions.

LITERATURE AND SOURCES

- Abromeit, J. (2016). Transformation of Producerist Populism in Western Europe. In B. M. C. J. Abromeit, G. Marotta, & Y. Norman (Eds.) (Ed.), *Transformation of populism in Europe and the Americas: History and recent tendencies* (pp. 231 – 264). London and New York, NY: Bloomsbury
- Abromeit, J. (2017). A Critical Review of Recent Literature on Populism. *Politics and Governance*, 5(4), 177-186.
- Ackerman, J. S. (1962). A Theory of Style. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 20(Spring 1962), 227 - 237. Retrieved from <https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.uis.no/stable/427321?seq=1>
- Albright, M. (2018). *Fascism: A Warning* (Kindle ed.). Retrieved from https://www.amazon.com/s?k=madeleine+albright&i=stripbooks-intl-ship&crd=2FQ798QCWQ9H0&sprefix=Madeleine%2Caps%2C252&ref=nb_sb_ss_i_1_9
- Altheide, D. L. (2002). *Creating Fear. News and the Construction of Crisis*. New York: Aline de Gruyter.
- Baker, P., & Haberman, M. (2019). Trump's Interest in Buying Greenland Seemed Like a Joke. Then It Got Ugly. *The New York Times* (21 August 2019). Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/21/us/politics/trump-greenland-prime-minister.html>
- Berlet, C., & Lyons, M. N. (2000). *Right-Wing Populism in America* [Kindle Edition]. Retrieved from https://www.amazon.com/s?k=Chip+Berlet%2C+Matthew+N.+Lyons+Right-Wing+Populism&i=stripbooks-intl-ship&ref=nb_sb_noss
- Blow, C. M. (2017). Is Trump a White Supremacist? *New York Times*, 18 September 2017. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/18/opinion/trump-white-supremacist.html?searchResultPosition=1>
- Blow, C. M. (2019). White Supremacy Beyond a White Majority. *New York Times*, 15 May 2019. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/15/opinion/race-government-politics.html?searchResultPosition=3>
- Brox, O. (1966). *Hva skjer i Nord-Norge? En studie i norsk utkantpolitikk* (3. ed.). Oslo: Pax Forlag A/S.
- Canovan, M. (1999). Trust the People! Populism and the Two Faces of Democracy. *Political Studies*, XLVII(1999), 2 - 16. Retrieved from <https://ams.hi.is/wp-content/uploads/old/Jungar%20-%20Trust%20the%20People.pdf>
- CBS. (2016). CBS Weekend News. (7 May 2016). Retrieved from https://archive.org/details/KPIX_20160508_003000_CBS_Weekend_News#start/540/end/600
- Cock, C. D., Just, S. N., & Husted, E. (2018). What's he building? Activating the utopian imagination with Trump. *Organization*, 25(5), 671 - 690. Retrieved from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1350508418784393>
- Cohen, M., & Mang, O. (2019). Debunking the Trump-backed conspiracy theory on Ukraine election meddling. Retrieved from <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/11/23/politics/ukraine-meddling-debunked-conspiracy-theory/index.html>
- D'Onofrio, A. (2012). Nationalsozialismus und Populismus. *Totalitarismus und Demokratie*, 9 (2012), 257 - 277. Retrieved from <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-384553>
- Dahrendorf, R. (2003). Acht Anmerkungen zum Populismus. *Transit: Europäische Revue*, No. 25(2003), 156 - 163. Retrieved from <https://www.ceeol.com/search/article-detail?id=415490>
- Dederke, K. (1968). *Reich und Republik Deutschland 1917 - 1933*. Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag.
- Donath, G. (1929). Amerikanische Krise - Deutsche Wirtschaft. [1978]. *Die Weltbühne*, No. 51, 1929(17 December 1929).
- Edelman, M. (2018). *Sacrifice Zones in Rural and Non-Metro USA: Fertile Soil for Authoritarian Populism*. Paper presented at the ERPI 2018 International Conference Authoritarian Populism and the Rural World, The Hague, Netherlands. https://www.tni.org/files/article-downloads/erpi_cp_33_edelman.pdf

- Edsall, T. B. (2019a). The Political Magic of Us vs. Them. *New York Times*(13 February 2019). Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/13/opinion/trump-2020-us-them.html?searchResultPosition=4>
- Edsall, T. B. (2019b). Trump Has a Gift for Tearing Us Apart. *New York Times*(11 December 2019). Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/11/opinion/trump-immigration.html?searchResultPosition=1>
- Ekern, S. (2017). *Folket det er meg; Den Europeiske Høyrepopulismens vekst og framtid*. Oslo: Spartacus Forlag AS.
- Eriksen, T. B., Harket, H., & Lorenz, E. (2006). *Jødehat, Antisemittismens historie fra antikken til i dag*. Oslo: N.W.DAMM & SØN AS.
- FactSquared Inc. (2019a). Press Conference: Donald Trump at The White House - February 16, 2017. Retrieved from <https://factba.se/transcript/donald-trump-press-conference-washington-dc-february-16-2017>
- FactSquared Inc. (2019b). Speech: Donald Trump Announces His Candidacy in New York, NY - June 16, 2015. Retrieved from <https://factba.se/transcript/donald-trump-announcement-speech-new-york-ny-june-16-2015>
- FactSquared Inc. (2019c). Speech: Donald Trump Delivers a Campaign Speech in Lisbon, ME - October 28, 2016. Retrieved from <https://factba.se/transcript/donald-trump-speech-lisbon-me-october-28-2016>
- FactSquared Inc. (2019d). Speech: Donald Trump Holds a Political Rally in Duluth, Minnesota - June 20, 2018. Retrieved from <https://factba.se/transcript/donald-trump-speech-political-rally-duluth-minnesota-june-20-2018>
- Fandos, N., & Shear, M. D. (2019). Trump Impeached for Abuse of Power and Obstruction of Congress. *New York Times*(18 December 2019). Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/18/us/politics/trump-impeached.html?searchResultPosition=1>
- Fieschi, C. (2019). Why Europe's new populists tell so many lies - and do it so shamelessly. *The Guardian, Online edition*(30 September 2019). Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/sep/30/europe-populist-lie-shamelessly-salvini-johnson?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other
- Frøland, C. M. (2018). *Nazismens idéunivers*. Riga: Vidarforlaget 2018.
- Ganapathi, N. S. (2009). *Hitler's Greatest Speeches* (A. Shepherd, Trans.). USA: Xlibris Corporation.
- Gerlach, H. v. (1933). Hitlers Außenpolitik. [1978]. *Die Weltbühne, No. 9, 1933*(26 February 1933).
- Gerlach, H. v. (1933). Vorspiel zum Dritten Reich. [1978]. *Die Weltbühne, No. 7, 1933*(14 February 1933).
- Giani, M., & Méon, P.-G. (2019). Globalist Racist Contagion Following Donald Trump's Election. *British Journal of Political Science, 2019*, 1 - 8. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123419000449>
- Gilens, A. (2014). *Affluence and Influence: Economic Inequality and Political Power in America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Giroux, H. (2018, 29 December 2019). Challenging Trump's Language of Fascism. *Truthout*. Retrieved from <http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/43159-challenging-trumps-language-of-fascism>
- Goodman, N. (1975). The Status of Style. *Critical Inquiry, Vol. 1*, 799 - 811. Retrieved from <https://www-journals-uchicago-edu.ezproxy.uis.no/doi/pdfplus/10.1086/447816>
- Graham, D. A. (2017). Red State, Blue City. *The Atlantic*(March 2017). Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/03/red-state-blue-city/513857/>
- Green, J. (2018). The Guy Who Thought Up 'the Wall' Says Trump Should Shut Government to Fund It. *Bloomberg Businessweek*(20 December 2018). Retrieved from <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-12-20/the-guy-who-thought-up-the-wall-says-trump-should-shut-government-to-fund-it>
- Griffin, R. (1993). *The Nature of Fascism*. London and New York: Routledge.

- Haberman, M., & Martin, J. (2017). Trump Once Said the 'Access Hollywood ' Tape Was Real. Now He's Not Sure. *New York Times*(28 November 2017). Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/28/us/politics/trump-access-hollywood-tape.html?_r=0
- Hawkins, K. A. (2009). Is Chavez Populist? Measuring Populist Discourse in Comparative Perspective. *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol 42 Number 8(August 2009), 1040 - 1067. Retrieved from <https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.uis.no/doi/pdf/10.1177/0010414009331721>
- Hawkins, K. A. (2014). *Venezuela's Chavismo and Populism in Comparative Perspective*(Kindle ed.). Retrieved from https://www.amazon.com/s?k=Kirk+A.+Hawkins+Venezuela%27s+Chavismo&i=stripbooks-intl-ship&ref=nb_sb_noss (2010).
- Hedges, C., & Sacco, J. (2014). *Days of Destruction, Days of Revolt*. New York: Nation Books.
- Hett, B. C. (2018). *The Death of Democracy: Hitler's Rise to Power and the Downfall of the Weimar Republic* (Kindle ed.). New York: St. Martins Griggin.
- Hitler, A. (2004). *25-Punkte-Programm der Nationalsozialistischen Deutschen Arbeiterpartei (24.02.1920)* (1930 ed. Vol. 2019). Germany: documentArchiv.de.
- Hitler, A. (2019). *Min Kamp* (D. Biseth, Trans. Vol. 1 and 2). Oslo: Literarum forlag as.
- Hughes, T. (2016). Trump calls to 'drain the swamp' of Washington. *USA Today*(18 October 2016). Retrieved from <https://eu.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/elections/2016/2016/10/18/donald-trump-rally-colorado-springs-ethics-lobbying-limitations/92377656/>
- Inglehart, R. F., & Norris, P. (2016). Trump, Brexit, and the Rise of Populism: Economic Have-Nots and Cultural Backlash. *Harvard Kennedy School, Faculty Research Working Paper*, 52. Retrieved from https://faculty.uml.edu/sgallagher/Trump_Populism_Norris.pdf
- Johnston, D. C. (2017). *The Making of Donald Trump* (Kindle ed.). New York and London: Melville House Publishing.
- Judis, J. B. (2016). *The Populist Explosion. How the Great Recession Transformed American and European Politics*. New York: Columbia Global Reports.
- Kaltwasser, C. R. (2012). The ambivalence of populism: threat and corrective for democracy. *Democratization*, 19:2. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2011.572619>
- Kaminski, H.-E. (1932). Vormarsch der Westkalmükcen. [1978]. *Die Weltbühne*, 12, 22 March 1932(12).
- Kaminski, H.-E. (1932). Wofür - ? [1978]. *Die Weltbühne*, Nr. 10, 8. March 1932(8. March 1932).
- Kellner, D. (2016). Donald Trump as Authoritarian Populist: A Frommian Ananlysis. *Logos. A journal of modern society & culture*, Vol 15(12 September 2016). Retrieved from https://scholar.google.com/scholar?hl=no&as_sdt=0%2C5&q=Donald+Trump+as+Authoritarian+Populist%3A+A+Frommian+Analysis&btnG=
- Kershaw, I. (2008). *Hitler A Biography*(Kindle ed.). Retrieved from https://www.amazon.com/s?k=ian+kershaw+hitler&i=stripbooks-intl-ship&crd=26P1U3SOYGT11&sprefix=ian+Ker%2Cstripbooks-intl-ship%2C266&ref=nb_sb_ss_i_2_7 (2008).
- Keynes, J. M. (1920, 15 July 2013). The Economic Consequences of the Peace. Retrieved from <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15776/15776-h/15776-h.htm>
- Krugman, P. (2019). Luckily, Trump Is an Unstable Non-Genius. *New York Times*(10 October 2019). Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/10/opinion/donald-trump.html>
- Laclau, E. (2018). *On Populist Reason* (3. ed.). London and New York: Verso.
- Lania, L. (1924). Hitler-Prozess. [1978]. *Die Weltbühne*, No. 10, 1924(6 March 1924).
- Leonhardt, D. (2019). The Hard Immigration Questions. *New York Times*(17 July 2019). Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/17/opinion/immigration-trump-racism.html?searchResultPosition=2>
- Lieberman, R. C., Mettler, S., Pepinsky, T. B., Roberts, K. M., & Valelly, R. (2019). The Trump Presidency and American Democracy: A Historical and Comparative Analysis. *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 17(Issue 2), 470 - 479. Retrieved from

- https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/E157E9BBA8D3E531A7DD4FD1A01E0478/S1537592718003286a.pdf/trump_presidency_and_american_democracy_a_historical_and_comparative_analysis.pdf
- Lopez, G. (2017). The past year of research has made it very clear: Trump won because of racial resentment. *VOX*. Retrieved from <https://www.vox.com/identities/2017/12/15/16781222/trump-racism-economic-anxiety-study>
- López, I. H. (2019). How to Beat Trump at His Own Game. *New York Times*, 15 October 2019. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/15/opinion/debate-dog-whistle.html?searchResultPosition=7>
- McKean, B. L. (2016). Is it possible to have populism without racism? *The Washington Post*(18 May 2016). Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/05/18/is-it-possible-to-have-populism-without-racism/>
- Moffitt, B. (2016). *The Global Rise of Populism. Performance, Political Style, and Representation*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Monnat, S. M. (2016). *Deaths of Despair and Support for Trump in the 2016 Presidential Election*. Retrieved from Pennsylvania: <https://aese.psu.edu/directory/smm67/Election16.pdf>
- Morus. (1930). Auf in den Kampf. [1978]. *Die Weltbühne*, No. 33, 1930(12 August 1930).
- Mouffe, C. (2000). *The Democratic Paradox*. New York: Verso.
- Mudde, C. (2004). The Populist Zeitgeist. *Government and Opposition Ltd. 2004, Blackwell Publishing, Oxford*, 542 - 563.
- Mudde, C. (2007). *Populist Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mudde, C., & Kaltwasser, C. R. (2012). Populism and (liberal) democracy: a framework for analysis. In C. Mudde & C. R. Kaltwasser (Eds.), *Populism in Europe and in the Americas: Threat or Corrective for Democracy?* New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Mudde, C., & Kaltwasser, C. R. (2013). Populism. In M. Freeden, M. Stears, & L. T. Sergeant (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of political ideologies* (pp. 493 - 512). Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Mudde, C., & Kaltwasser, C. R. (2019). *Populisme*. Oslo: Dreyers Forlag.
- Müller, J.-W. (2016). *What is Populism?* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Nakamura, D. (2019). 'Let's have a good time': Trump luxuriates in crowd's adoration while addressing his most rabid supporters. *The Washington Post*(24 July 2019). Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/lets-have-a-good-time-trump-luxuriates-in-crowds-adoration-while-addressing-his-most-rabid-supporters/2019/07/23/0720d42a-ad6e-11e9-a0c9-6d2d7818f3da_story.html
- Nomme Raadio. (2008). Adolf Hitler Collection of Speeches 1922 - 1945. Retrieved from <http://www.nommeraadio.ee/meedia/pdf/RRS/Adolf%20Hitler%20-%20Collection%20of%20Speeches%20-%201922-1945.pdf>
- Norris, P. (2016). It's not just Trump. Authoritarian popuism is rising across the West. Here's why. *The Washington Post*(11 March 2016). Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/03/11/its-not-just-trump-authoritarian-populism-is-rising-across-the-west-heres-why/>
- NYT Editorial Board. (2016). Donald Trump's Swamp Gets Murkier. *New York Times*(20 November 2016). Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/21/opinion/donald-trumps-swamp-gets-murkier.html?searchResultPosition=3>
- NYT Editorial Board. (2017). What's the Deal, Mr. Trump? *New York Times*(5 August 2017). Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/05/opinion/sunday/whats-the-deal-mr-trump.html?searchResultPosition=10>
- NYT Editorial Board. (2019). The Immigration Crisis Is Corrupting the Nation. *New York Times*(1 July 2019). Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/01/opinion/border-immigration.html?searchResultPosition=12>
- Oicalypse. (2010). Adolf Hitler 1932 Rede. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ayKa4wVj8E&feature=youtu.be>

- Omar, I. (2019). Ilhan Omar: It Is Not Enough to Condemn Trump's Racism. *New York Times*, 25 July 2019. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/25/opinion/ilhan-omar-trump-racism.html?searchResultPosition=10>
- Pelinka, A. (2013). Right-Wing Populism: Concept and Typology. In R. Wodak, M. KhosraviNik, & B. Mral (Eds.), *Right-Wing Populism in Europe: Politics and Discourse* (pp. 3 - 22). London: Bloomsbury.
- Pol, H. (1929). Die Nationalsozialisten. [1978]. *Die Weltbühne*, No. 29, 1939(16 July 1939).
- Pol, H. (1930). "Gregor der Große". [1978]. *Die Weltbühne*, No. 16, 1930(15 April 1930).
- Priester, K. (2012). Populismus und Faschismus in Europa: Wahlverwandtschaft oder Mesalliance? *Totalitarismus und Demokratie*, 9(2), 213 - 234. Retrieved from <https://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/handle/document/38453>
- Przeworski, A., Alvarez, M., Cheibub, J. A., & Limongi, F. (1996). What Makes Democracies Endure? *Journal of Democracy*, Vol 7, No. 1(1 January 1996). Retrieved from <https://muse-jhu-edu.ezproxy.uis.no/article/16730>
- Qiu, L. (2019, 11 January 2019). The Many Ways Trump Has Said Mexico Will Pay for the Wall. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/11/us/politics/trump-mexico-pay-wall.html?searchResultPosition=2>
- Rosanvallon, P. (2008). *Counter Democracy Politics in an Age of Distrust* (A. Goldhammer, Trans.). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Rosanvallon, P. (2011). A Reflection on Populism. *Collège de France*(27 September 2011). Retrieved from <http://www.laviedesidees.fr/Penser-le-populisme.html>
- Schmitt, C. (2015). *Der Begriff des Politischen* (9. ed.). Berlin: Duncjer & Hubblot.
- Schoenaich, P. v. (1929). Wer bezahlt die Judenhetze. [1978]. *Die Weltbühne*, No. 14, 1929(2 April 1929).
- Shear, M. D., Haberman, M., Confessore, N., Yourish, K., Buchanan, L., & Collins, K. (2019). How Trump Reshaped the Presidency in Over 11,000 Twets. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/11/02/us/politics/trump-twitter-presidency.html>
- Sheehan, J. (2013). How and Why Democracies fail: The fall of Weimar. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZ0IAkNeX64&feature=youtu.be>
- Sheth, S. (2019). Trump's approach to the impeachment inquiry bears a striking resemblance to how the mafia operates. *Business Insider*, 9 October 2019. Retrieved from <https://www.businessinsider.com/trump-impeachment-inquiry-mafia-comparisons-ukraine-russia-2019-10?r=US&IR=T>
- Skinner, Q. (2002). *Visions of Politics* (Vol. 1: Regarding Method). United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Smith, D. (2017). Why Trump still needs the love of the crowd. *The Guardian*(6 August 2017). Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/aug/05/donald-trump-rallies-supporters-west-virginia>
- Smith, D. N., & Hanley, E. (2018). The Anger Games: Who Voted for Donald Trump in the 2016 Election, and Why? *Critical Sociology*, 44(2), 195 - 212. Retrieved from <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0896920517740615>
- Snyder, T. (2019). How Hitler Pioneered 'Fake News'. *New York Times*(16 October 2019). Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/16/opinion/hitler-speech-1919.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share>
- Stabenow, M. (2010). Anlaufstelle für Merkel und Sarkozy. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*(9 April 2010). Retrieved from <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/europaeische-union/eu-ratspraesident-van-rompuy-anlaufstelle-fuer-merkel-und-sarkozy-1965888.html>
- Swaine, J. (2017). Donald Trump's team defends 'alternative facts' after widespread protests. *The Guardian*(23 January 2017). Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/jan/22/donald-trump-kellyanne-conway-inauguration-alternative-facts?CMP=share_btn_link

- Taguieff, P.-A. (1995). Political science confronts populism: From a conceptual mirage to a real problem. *Telos*, 103, 9 - 43.
- The Poynter Institute. (2019). Donald Trump's file. 2019(28 November 2019). Retrieved from <https://www.politifact.com/personalities/donald-trump/>
- The White House. (2019). Remarks by President Trump and Prime Minister May Before a Business Roundtable. London, United Kingdom. 2019(28 November 2019). Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-prime-minister-may-business-roundtable-london-united-kingdom/>
- Tomasky, M. (2011). Birthers and the Persistence of Racial paranoia. *The Guardian*(27 April 2011). Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/michaeltomasky/2011/apr/27/barack-obama-obama-administration>
- Trotzki, L. (1932). Diktatur Brüning. [1978]. *Die Weltbühne, Nr 9, 1 March 1932*.
- Trump, D. J. (2018a, 6 January 2018). Actually, throughout my life, my two greatest assets..... [Twitter]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/949618475877765120>
- Trump, D. J. (2018b, 6 January 2018). ...to President of the United States (on my first try). [Twitter]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/949619270631256064>
- Trump, D. J. (2019, 16 December 2019). They hate the fact, above all, that this president is delivering [Twitter]. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1206445927021662208>
- United States Census Bureau. (2019). Top Trading Partners - May 2019. Retrieved from <https://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/statistics/highlights/top/top1905yr.html>
- Wehner, P. (2017). Why I Cannot Fall in Line Behind Trump. *New York Times*(21 January 2017). Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/21/opinion/sunday/why-i-cannot-fall-in-line-behind-trump.html>
- Weyland, K. (2001). Clarifying a Contested Concept, Populism in the Study of Latin American Politics. *Comparative Politics. Ph.D. Programs in Political Science, City University of New York, No. 34, No. 1*(October 2001), 1 - 22. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor-org.ezproxy.uis.no/stable/422412>
- White, A. (1997). *The Weimar Republic*. London: Collins Educational.
- Wodak, R. (2015). *The Politics of Fear; What Right-Wing Populist Discourses Mean*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Wodak, R., & Krzyzanowski, M. (2017). Right-wing populism in Europe and USA. *Journal of language and politics*, 16/4(2017), 471 - 484.
- Woodward, B. (2018). *Fear: Trump in the White House* [Kindle]. Retrieved from https://www.amazon.com/Fear-Trump-White-Bob-Woodward-ebook/dp/B075RV48W3/ref=sr_1_1?crd=3URTW2OIZJAJ5&keywords=bob+woodward+fear&qid=1575122023&s=books&sprefix=Bob+Woodward%2Cstripbooks-intl-ship%2C265&sr=1-1
- Zakaria, F. (1997). The Rise of Illiberal Democracy. *Foreign Affairs, Nov/Dec 1997*. Retrieved from <https://www.scasd.org/cms/lib5/PA01000006/Centricity/Domain/1198/FZakariaIlliberalDemocracy1997.pdf>
- Zakaria, F. (2020a). *Bill Maher on Donald Trump*. Retrieved from CNN Website: <https://edition.cnn.com/videos/tv/2020/02/09/gps-0209-bill-maher-on-donald-trump.cnn>
- Zakaria, F. (2020b). Fared Zakaria Full Address and Q&A. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/uj3sByRA1Co>
- Zeitung für Deutsche Geschichte und Kultur. (1950). Extrablatt Die Rede Adolf Hitlers vor dem Industrie-Club in Düsseldorf am 27. Januar 1932. Retrieved from <http://deutscher-historischer-jahrweiser.de/dokumente/dateien/1932-01-27%20-%20Rede%20Adolf%20Hitlers%20vor%20dem%20Industrie-Club%20in%20Duesseldorf.pdf>

Zengerle, J. (2018). How the Trump Administration Is Remaking the Courts. *New York Times Magazine*(22 August 2018). Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/22/magazine/trump-remaking-courts-judiciary.html>