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LEFT VS. RIGHT: THE FACES OF POPULISM IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPE AND LATIN AMERICA

ЛІВІ ПРОТИ ПРАВИХ: ОБЛИЧЧЯ ПОПУЛІЗМУ В СУЧАСНІЙ ЄВРОПІ ТА ЛАТИНСЬКІЙ АМЕРИЦІ

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This study presents a detailed comparative analysis of left-wing populism in Latin America, with a specific focus on Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, Brazil and Argentina, and right-wing populism in Europe, centering particularly on the United Kingdom, Italy, Hungary, Poland, and Austria. It explores the nuanced socio-political, economic, and cultural dimensions of these movements, highlighting how they diverge and converge in various aspects. In Latin America, countries like Venezuela under Hugo Chávez and Bolivia under Evo Morales have witnessed populist policies centered around social equity and wealth redistribution, driven by ideologies that challenge traditional power structures and neoliberal economics. These policies have significantly reshaped the political and social landscape, aiming to empower marginalized groups and address deep-rooted inequalities. In contrast, the rise of right-wing populism in Europe, exemplified by the Brexit movement in the UK, reveals a different set of priorities and concerns. Here, the focus shifts to national sovereignty, cultural identity, and skepticism towards supranational entities like the European Union. Economic policies in this context tend to emphasize protectionism and prioritizing the native population, reflecting concerns about globalization's impact on national economies and cultures. The study also scrutinizes the varied approaches to immigration policies, the impacts on democratic institutions and the rule of law, and the foreign policy orientations of these populist movements. Furthermore, it delves into the distinct populist rhetoric and communication styles employed in Latin America and Europe, highlighting how they resonate with their respective publics. The social policies of these regions are also compared, showing the contrast between Latin America's focus on social justice and Europe's conservative, nationalistic agenda. This comprehensive exploration aims to deepen the understanding of the multifaceted nature of populism in the contemporary global political landscape, contributing to the discourse on populism's influence and challenges. The study provides insights into the enduring impact of populism and potential pathways for addressing its underlying causes, offering a valuable resource for policymakers, scholars, and those interested in the dynamics of global politics.

Key words: left-wing populism, right-wing populism, Latin America, Europe, populism's comparative analysis.

У цьому дослідженні представлено детальний порівняльний аналіз лівого популізму в Латинській Америці, з особливим акцентом на Венесуелі, Болівії, Еквадорі, Бразилії та Аргентині, а також правого популізму в Європі, зокрема у Великій Британії, Італії, Угорщині, Польщі та Австрії. У ньому досліджуються тонкі соціально-політичні, економічні та культурні виміри цих рухів, підкреслюється, як вони відрізняються і збігаються в різних аспектах. У Латинській Америці такі країни, як Венесуела за часів Уго Чавеса та Болівія за часів Ево Моралеса, стали свідками популістської політики, зосередженої на соціальній справедливості та перерозподілі багатства, рушійною силою якої стали ідеології, що кидають виклик традиційним структурам влади та неоліберальній економіці. Ця політика суттєво змінила політичний і соціальний ландшафт, спрямована на розширення прав і можливостей маргіналізованих груп та подолання глибоко вкоріненої нерівності. На противагу цьому, зростання правого популізму в Європі, прикладом якого є рух "Brexit" у Великій Британії, виявляє інший набір пріоритетів і проблем. Тут фокус зміщується на національний суверенітет, культурну ідентичність і скептичне ставлення до наднаціональних утворень на кшталт Європейського Союзу. Економічна політика в цьому контексті має тенденцію наголошувати на протекціонізмі та наданні пріоритету корінному населенню, що відображає занепокоєння щодо впливу глобалізації на національні економіки та культури. У дослідженні також розглядаються різні підходи до імміграційної політики, вплив на демократичні інститути та верховенство права, а також зовнішньополітичні орієнтації цих популістських рухів. Крім того, у дослідженні розглядається особлива популістська риторика та стилі комунікації, що застосовуються в Латинській Америці та Європі, і підкреслюється, як вони знаходять відгук у суспільстві. Також порівнюються соціальні політичні стратегії цих регіонів, що демонструє контраст між зосередженістю Латинської Америки на соціальній справедливості та консервативним, націоналістичним порядком денним Європи. Це комплексне дослідження має на меті поглибити розуміння багатогранної природи популізму в сучасному глобальному політичному ландшафті, сприяючи дискусії про вплив популізму та його виклики. Дослідження дає уявлення про тривалий вплив популізму та потенційні шляхи усунення його першопричин, пропонуючи цінний ресурс для політиків, науковців та тих, хто цікавиться динамікою глобальної політики.

Ключові слова: лівий популізм, правий популізм, Латинська Америка, Європа, порівняльний аналіз популізму.

Introduction. Populism has emerged as a significant political force in the 21st century, gaining momentum in both Europe and America. The rise of populist movements has sparked intense debates about the causes and consequences of this phenomenon. Populism has often been associated with disillusionment and discontent among segments of the population that feel marginalized or left behind by political and economic systems. The appeal of populist rhetoric lies in its promise to address the grievances of these individuals and restore power to the «voice of the people.» This trend has led to the rise of charismatic leaders who capitalize on anti-establishment sentiments and employ polarizing rhetoric to rally support [1].

By analyzing the impact of populism on political landscapes and societies, we aim to gain a comprehensive understanding of this divisive force shaping the contemporary world. As we navigate through the intricacies of populism in the 21st century, it becomes imperative to consider the implications for democratic institutions, international relations, and the global order. By critically analyzing the multifaceted nature of populism, we can gain insights into its enduring influence and the potential pathways for addressing its underlying causes [2].

This examination of populism also confronts the challenge of maintaining democratic norms and social stability in an era of rapid change, a concern crucial for both political theorists and policymakers. Furthermore, understanding populism's rise and its socio-economic underpinnings is essential for developing effective strategies to mitigate its divisive effects and to reinforce democratic resilience in diverse societies.

Latest research and publications. The study of left-wing populism in Latin America has been addressed by several scholars who have explored a range of topics and ideas. Carlos de la Torre and Andrés Ortiz Lemos have focused on the effects of populist polarization on democracy, particularly in the Ecuadorian context. Torquato Di Tella has examined the relationship between populism and broader socio-economic reforms, highlighting the emergence of new social classes and industrialization impacts. Sebastian Edwards has critically assessed the economic outcomes of populist policies, while María Pilar García-Guadilla has delved into grassroots political participation and empowerment through urban land committees. Gino Germani's work sheds light on the interplay between politics and society during periods of significant transition. Richard Gott's contributions provide an in-depth look at the Venezuelan case, exploring ideological shifts and political impacts. Kirk A. Hawkins offers a comparative perspective of Chávez's regime, placing it within an international framework. Gabriel Hetland's analysis tracks the evolution from populist mobilization to participatory

democracy in Venezuela, offering insights into the changing nature of political engagement under Chavez.

The research on right-wing populism in Europe has been advanced by scholars who have explored a variety of themes. Matthijs Rooduijn's work focuses on the commonalities among the voter bases of populist parties, analyzing what unites them across different countries. Leonce Röth, Alexandre Afonso, and Dennis C. Spies have examined the socio-economic policy impacts of electing populist right-wing parties. Eva Anduiza, Marc Guinjoan, and Guillem Rico have suggested that populist parties may increase political participation, impacting political equality. Further studies by Bruno Castanho Silva and Elina Kestilä-Kekkonen, along with Peter Söderlund, delve into the specifics of populist radical right parties and their effects on mass polarization in European countries. These scholarly contributions provide a comprehensive view of the multifaceted nature of right-wing populism in Europe, from voter dynamics to policy implications and political participation effects.

Purpose of the study. The purpose of this study is to identify and delve into previously unresolved dimensions of populism, focusing on the nuanced differences and similarities between left-wing populism in Latin America and right-wing populism in Europe. While considerable discourse exists on populism, a detailed comparison within these specific geopolitical contexts, especially regarding their socio-political, economic, and cultural interplays, remains less explored.

Additionally, the study sets out to comprehensively analyze and contrast the ideological frameworks, policy approaches, and broader impacts of these populist movements. This includes examining their influence on areas such as economic policies, national identity, globalization, immigration, democratic institutions, and foreign policy, thereby enhancing the understanding of populism's multifaceted role in contemporary global politics.

Research method. In this article, a historical and comparative analysis method is primarily employed, supplemented by case study examination and qualitative content analysis. These methodologies facilitate a nuanced understanding of the phenomena of left-wing populism in Latin America and right-wing populism in Europe, enabling an exploration of their origins, ideological underpinnings, and policy implications within respective geopolitical contexts.

The main research material. Left-wing populism has been a defining feature of the political landscape in Latin America, with leaders like Hugo Chavez in Venezuela and Evo Morales in Bolivia embodying this trend. These leaders have mobilized support by championing the cause of the marginalized and advocating for socialist policies that seek to address economic inequality and social injustice.

The success of left-wing populist movements in Latin America has redefined the region's political dynamics, challenging traditional power structures and posing a direct challenge to the neoliberal policies advocated by the United States. The rise of leaders who promise radical change and social welfare programs has resonated with many in Latin American societies, especially those who have historically been excluded from the benefits of economic growth [3].

Despite the initial appeal of left-wing populism and its ability to deliver social programs and economic reforms, critics argue that this approach can lead to authoritarianism and unsustainable economic policies [4].

The narrative of left-wing populism in Latin America is best understood through a detailed exploration of its key proponents in Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, Brazil, and Argentina. Each of these countries exemplifies a different facet of populist governance, offering a comprehensive understanding of its diverse impacts on the political and socio-economic landscape.

Venezuela's experience with left-wing populism, particularly under the presidency of Hugo Chávez and subsequently Nicolás Maduro, presents a compelling case of how populism can shape a nation's political, economic, and social trajectory. Hugo Chávez, who came to power in 1999, embodied left-wing populism in Venezuela. His presidency was marked by a charismatic leadership style, a strong connection with the masses, and policies aimed at redistributing wealth and reducing inequality. Chávez's rhetoric was grounded in Bolivarianism, invoking the legacy of Simón Bolívar to promote a vision of social justice, anti-imperialism, and regional solidarity [5]. Chávez's administration introduced various socialist measures with significant funding coming from Venezuela's substantial oil earnings. Key initiatives included nationalizing significant sectors of the economy, such as the oil industry, and implementing social programs like *Misión Barrio Adentro* (a healthcare mission) and *Misión Robinson* (a literacy campaign). These programs were aimed at improving the quality of life for the poor and marginalized communities, and they initially resulted in significant reductions in poverty and improvements in health and education indicators [6]. Chávez's time in office was defined by attempts to centralize authority and transition the nation towards a socialist system. This involved significant changes to the constitution, the establishment of community councils as a form of parallel governance, and increasing control over the media and other state institutions. While Chávez maintained high levels of popular support, his policies and approach to governance were divisive and sparked significant political polarization in Venezuela [7].

Following Chávez's death in 2013, Nicolás Maduro inherited a presidency amidst mounting economic

troubles. Under Maduro, Venezuela has faced severe economic decline, marked by hyperinflation, shortages of basic goods, and a significant drop in oil production. These challenges have been exacerbated by international sanctions and declining oil prices [8]. Maduro's administration has been accused of further eroding democratic institutions and human rights. The political situation has become increasingly fraught, with accusations of electoral fraud, suppression of opposition parties, and crackdowns on protests [9].

Venezuela's background with left-wing populism under Chávez and Maduro illustrates the intricacies and potential pitfalls of populist governance. While initially successful in implementing social programs and rallying popular support through charismatic leadership and redistributive policies, the long-term sustainability of these policies has been brought into question. The country's deepening economic crisis and political turmoil underscore the challenges of maintaining a populist agenda in the face of external pressures, declining resources, and internal divisions.

Evo Morales' presidency in Bolivia from 2006 to 2019 is another notable example of left-wing populism's impact in Latin America. As Bolivia's first indigenous president, Morales represented a populist response to the historical marginalization of indigenous populations and elite-dominated politics. His administration was marked by significant populist policies and initiatives [10]. Morales advocated for the nationalization of important sectors, such as gas and oil, in order to redistribute wealth more broadly. This approach led to significant economic expansion and a decrease in poverty and social disparity, reflecting populist principles related to fairer distribution of wealth and societal fairness [11]. Culturally, Morales' government emphasized indigenous rights and identity, reflecting populist tendencies to empower groups that have been historically marginalized. The 2009 constitution, recognizing Bolivia as a plurinational state and elevating indigenous languages and symbols, was a significant populist gesture towards inclusivity and diversity [12].

Politically, Morales' Movement for Socialism (MAS) shifted Bolivia's political landscape, challenging the traditional dominance of elite-controlled political systems. However, his attempts to extend presidential terms sparked controversy, illustrating a common critique of populist regimes: the centralization of power and challenges to democratic norms [10]. In international relations, Morales aligned with other leftist governments, opposing U.S. influence in the region, a stance typical of populist leaders who often frame their policies in opposition to external powers [13]. Morales' time in Bolivia demonstrates how left-wing populism can dramatically change a nation's political discussion and policy environment, focusing on economic redistribution, cultural inclusivity, and challenging traditional power

structures. However, it also reveals the challenges and risks of populist leadership, particularly in terms of democratic principles and institutional stability.

Ecuador under Rafael Correa, from 2007 to 2017, presents another evident example of left-wing populism's influence in Latin America. Correa's administration was characterized by its populist rhetoric and policies, which sought to fundamentally transform Ecuadorian society and economy. Correa's administration adopted a set of populist measures with a focus on economic aspects. These encompassed amplified investment in social welfare, primarily funded by revenues from the heavily regulated and taxed oil industry. This strategy aimed to redistribute wealth and alleviate the notable disparities within Ecuadorian society. The government's actions resulted in substantial decreases in poverty rates and enhancements in social benchmarks, reflecting ideals of economic fairness and equality often associated with populism [14]. Politically, Correa's leadership was characterized by a prominent populist approach. His language frequently portrayed 'the people' in opposition to the established elites and multinational corporations, casting his policies as a struggle for the Ecuadorian population against both external and internal adversaries. This stance was symbolized in the 2008 constitutional revision, which amplified government involvement in the economy and broadened social entitlements. The revised constitution represented a key feature of Correa's populist program, emphasizing greater state regulation and welfare provisions [15].

Correa's government promoted a sense of national identity that was inclusive of Ecuador's indigenous and marginalized communities, aligning with populist strategies to rally various social groups around the government's agenda. In the field of international relations, Correa positioned Ecuador alongside the leftist and populist administrations in the area, particularly forming alliances with Venezuela under Hugo Chávez and Bolivia under Evo Morales. He openly criticized U.S. actions in Latin America, reflecting a populist strategy of projecting threats externally and garnering local backing through anti-imperialist language [16]. However, Correa's administration also faced criticism for undermining democratic institutions and press freedom, a common issue in populist regimes. His government was accused of consolidating power, manipulating electoral laws, and restricting media freedoms, raising concerns about the long-term health of Ecuador's democratic institutions [17].

Rafael Correa's presidency in Ecuador is a textbook example of how left-wing populism can impact a nation, with significant changes in economic policy, political discourse, and national identity. His administration's focus on social justice, anti-elitism, and national sovereignty resonates with populist

themes. The obstacles to democratic principles during his leadership also illustrate the potential drawbacks of populist administration.

Brazil's experience with left-wing populism during the presidencies of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2003–2010) and his successor, Dilma Rousseff (2011–2016), from the Workers' Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores – PT), is a significant episode in the country's political history. These administrations were marked by policies aiming at economic growth, social welfare, and reducing inequalities, characteristic of left-wing populist governance [18].

Under Lula's leadership, Brazil experienced robust economic growth, largely fueled by the global commodities boom. This economic prosperity enabled the funding of extensive social programs, with the Bolsa Família program being the most prominent. This program, providing financial assistance to impoverished families conditional on children's school attendance and vaccinations, was instrumental in reducing poverty and inequality in Brazil. Both Lula and Rousseff emphasized policies for social inclusion, focusing on uplifting lower socio-economic segments, which aligned with their populist approach of championing the cause of the marginalized [19]. Lula's presidency was also distinguished by his charismatic leadership and a political style deeply resonant with the working class. His ability to connect with ordinary Brazilians was a hallmark of his populist approach. Rousseff's tenure, although less charismatic, followed a similar policy trajectory. However, both presidencies navigated through Brazil's complex political landscape marked by coalition politics, which sometimes led to policy compromises and allegations of corruption [20].

The later years of Rousseff's presidency and the post-presidential period for Lula were overshadowed by significant corruption scandals, notably the Operation Car Wash (Lava Jato) investigation. This scandal implicated several high-ranking officials and business leaders and played a pivotal role in the political discourse of the country. Rousseff's presidency ended with her impeachment in 2016, a process steeped in controversy and political division, reflecting deepening polarization in Brazilian politics [21]. The impact of the Workers' Party's governance on Brazil was profound. The policies implemented during this period led to a notable reduction in extreme poverty and social inequality. However, the era was also characterized by heightened political polarization, partly due to the circumstances surrounding Rousseff's impeachment and legal challenges faced by Lula. This era in the history of Brazil demonstrates the drawbacks of leftist populism, showing how substantial societal advancements can be accompanied by issues like corruption and political polarization [22].

In terms of foreign policy, Brazil under Lula and Rousseff aligned with other left-wing governments in

Latin America. This period saw Brazil taking a stand against U.S. intervention in the region and promoting regional integration initiatives, reflecting the government's populist stance of prioritizing national and regional sovereignty over external influences.

The political landscape of Argentina has been profoundly shaped by left-wing populism, particularly during the presidencies of Néstor Kirchner (2003–2007) and his wife, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (2007–2015). Their administrations, often referred to as Kirchnerismo, represent a pivotal period in Argentina's contemporary history, characterized by substantial social and economic measures, as well as a distinct populist language [23].

Néstor Kirchner's presidency commenced in the aftermath of Argentina's severe economic crisis of 2001–2002. His government implemented a range of policies aimed at stabilizing the economy, reducing unemployment, and addressing social inequalities. Kirchner's approach to governance was characterized by a strong state intervention in the economy, a hallmark of left-wing populism. This intervention included renegotiating the national debt, nationalizing key industries, and implementing protectionist policies to bolster domestic industries [24].

Cristina Fernández de Kirchner's successive terms continued and expanded upon these policies. Her government focused on expanding social welfare programs, increasing public expenditures, and maintaining strong state control over key sectors of the economy. Both Kirchners' administrations were marked by a rhetoric that frequently positioned the government as a defender of the common people against perceived injustices of international financial institutions and domestic elites [25].

However, both presidencies faced allegations of corruption, and their economic policies led to high inflation rates and fiscal deficits. Their time in office was characterized by a confrontational style of governance, particularly in dealing with the media, the judiciary, and the political opposition, leading to criticisms of authoritarian tendencies and undermining of institutional checks and balances. The period of Kirchnerismo was marked by a reorientation of Argentine politics towards a more pronounced left-wing populist stance, emphasizing social justice, economic redistribution, and national sovereignty. However, the Kirchners' approach to governance also contributed to heightened political polarization in Argentina, a legacy that continues to influence the country's political landscape [26]. Argentina, during the Kirchners' time, formed alliances with fellow left-wing administrations in Latin America, including those led by Hugo Chavez in Venezuela and Evo Morales in Bolivia. This alignment was indicative of a larger regional pattern of leftist populism that opposed neoliberal measures while promoting increased regional autonomy and collaboration [27].

The presidencies of Kirchner in Argentina present a multifaceted view of the capacity of left-wing populism to bring about substantial social and economic transformations. However, they also underscore the difficulties associated with populist leadership in upholding democratic institutions and ensuring economic stability. The influence of their governance on Argentine society, economy, and politics continues to be extensively discussed and examined within contemporary Latin American political circumstances.

In contrast to the left-wing populism prevalent in Latin America, Europe has witnessed a surge in right-wing populism in recent years. Leaders like Viktor Orban in Hungary, Matteo Salvini in Italy, and Marine Le Pen in France have capitalized on anti-immigrant sentiments and nationalist rhetoric to fuel their political agendas. The rise of right-wing populism has challenged the principles of liberal democracy and highlighted the tensions surrounding issues such as immigration, multiculturalism, and national sovereignty [28]. The Brexit referendum in the United Kingdom, resulting in its decision to leave the European Union, served as a pivotal moment that underscored the widespread disillusionment with the political establishment and the growing influence of right-wing populist movements. The rhetoric of reclaiming national sovereignty and restoring control over borders resonated with many in the UK, reflecting a broader trend across Europe [29]. As right-wing populist leaders advocate for stricter immigration policies, economic protectionism, and a rejection of supranational governance, they have garnered significant support from segments of the population who feel threatened by globalization and cultural change. However, critics have raised concerns about the divisive nature of right-wing populism and its potential to undermine social cohesion and human rights [30]. The implications of the rise of right-wing populism in Europe extend beyond domestic politics, influencing the dynamics of EU decision-making, intergovernmental relations, and the broader global order. By examining the strategies and rhetoric employed by right-wing populist leaders, we can gain insights into the complex interplay between identity politics, socio-economic grievances, and the reconfiguration of political alliances [31].

Having outlined the broader contours of right-wing populism's ascent in Europe, it becomes imperative to delve into specific national contexts to fully grasp the complexity and diversity of this phenomenon. Each country further highlighted – Italy, Hungary, Poland, and Austria – offers a unique perspective, shaped by its historical experiences, cultural identity, and socio-political fabric. By examining these individual cases, we can better understand how right-wing populism adapts to and capitalizes on local conditions, and the varied impacts it has on

each nation's political ecosystem. In Italy, the rise of leaders like Matteo Salvini exemplifies the populist response to immigration and economic challenges, reshaping traditional politics. Hungary, under Viktor Orbán, presents a case where populist governance has led to significant constitutional and societal shifts, often challenging the EU's liberal democratic ideals. Poland's experience under the Law and Justice Party highlights the interplay between nationalism, religious conservatism, and populist politics. Meanwhile, Austria demonstrates how mainstream parties have responded to and, at times, embraced populist themes, particularly around immigration and national identity. These cases not only illustrate the different trajectories and manifestations of right-wing populism in Europe but also provide insights into the broader challenges facing liberal democracies in the 21st century. Navigating through each country's experience, we will discover a tapestry of common themes and distinct national narratives, offering a deeper understanding of right-wing populism's role in reshaping European politics.

The political landscape of Italy in recent decades provides a compelling case study of right-wing populism's rise and influence. Italy's encounter with right-wing populism, particularly under the leadership of figures like Silvio Berlusconi and Matteo Salvini, illustrates a complex interplay of nationalist rhetoric, anti-immigrant sentiment, and political discontent. Silvio Berlusconi's tenure as Prime Minister, spanning several terms since the mid-1990s, marked the emergence of right-wing populism in modern Italian politics. Berlusconi, a media mogul turned politician, embodied populist characteristics through his charismatic leadership, personal control over media narratives, and a political style that often bypassed traditional party structures. His term was marked by a combination of economic liberalism, conservative social policies, and a rhetoric that often invoked national pride and skepticism towards the European Union [32].

In more recent years, Matteo Salvini and his party, The League (Lega), have represented a more explicit form of right-wing populism. Salvini's rise to prominence was marked by a hardline stance on immigration, Euroscepticism, and the promotion of Italian sovereignty against perceived external threats, particularly from the European Union and immigration. Under Salvini's leadership, The League transformed from a regional party advocating for the autonomy of Northern Italy to a national force pushing a broader right-wing populist agenda [33]. The impact of right-wing populism in Italy has resulted in substantial changes in policies, particularly concerning immigration and Italy's relationship with the European Union. Additionally, it has contributed to divisions within both politics and society, challenging the traditional political alignments and

discourse of the country [34]. The Italian experience with right-wing populism mirrors broader patterns seen in other European settings, where economic insecurities, concerns about national identity, and skepticism towards supranational institutions like the EU have fueled populist feelings. However, the case of Italy also emphasizes how charismatic leadership and media influence play a significant role in shaping and propelling the populist narrative.

The political evolution of Hungary, particularly under the leadership of Viktor Orbán and his party, Fidesz, presents a salient example of right-wing populism's ascendancy and its implications in a European context. Orbán's tenure, beginning in 2010 and continuing into the present, has been marked by a distinct shift towards right-wing populist policies, characterized by nationalist rhetoric, authoritarian tendencies, and a contentious relationship with the European Union. Viktor Orbán's rise to power and the transformation of Fidesz from a liberal youth party to a right-wing populism advocate is indicative of the broader political and social shifts within Hungary. Orbán's governance has been hallmarked by a strong emphasis on Hungarian sovereignty, cultural conservatism, and a pronounced skepticism towards external influences, particularly from the European Union. His rhetoric frequently frames Hungary as being at the forefront of defending European Christendom against various perceived threats, including immigration and liberal social policies [35].

Central to Orbán's populist approach has been the concept of "illiberal democracy," which he has openly endorsed [36]. This model emphasizes national sovereignty and traditional values, often at the expense of liberal democratic principles such as freedom of the press, judicial independence, and minority rights. Under Orbán, Hungary has seen significant constitutional and legal changes, consolidating power within the executive and limiting the checks and balances typical of liberal democracies [37]. The impact of right-wing populism in Hungary extends to the broader European political discourse, particularly regarding immigration and the role of nation-states within the EU. Fidesz's policies have often put Hungary at odds with other EU member states and institutions, challenging the Union's cohesion and values [38]. Furthermore, Hungary's populist turn has contributed to political polarization within the country, galvanizing support among those who feel left behind by globalization and liberal policies, while alienating and raising concerns among pro-EU, liberal segments of the population [39].

When examining Hungary's experience with right-wing populism, it is crucial to consider the interplay of historical, social, and economic factors that have shaped its trajectory. Orbán's Hungary exemplifies how right-wing populism can leverage historical narratives, cultural identity, and societal anxieties to

effect substantial changes in governance and policy, posing significant challenges to traditional liberal democratic norms and institutions.

Poland's political landscape since the late 2000s, particularly under the influence of the Law and Justice Party (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość, PiS), offers a profound illustration of right-wing populism's impact in a Central European context. The ascendancy of PiS, notably under the leadership of Jarosław Kaczyński, has been characterized by a fusion of nationalist rhetoric, conservative social policies, and a complex relationship with the European Union [40]. The rise of PiS in Poland reflects a broader trend of populist sentiment in the region, driven by a combination of historical, cultural, and economic factors. PiS's political narrative centers around protecting Polish traditional values and sovereignty against what they perceive as external threats, including influences from the European Union and liberal social policies [41]. This approach has resonated with significant portions of the Polish electorate, particularly those who feel marginalized by the rapid social and economic changes in the post-Communist era. Under PiS, Poland has witnessed a significant shift towards conservative policies, particularly in areas like judiciary reform, media freedom, and minority rights. The party's governance has been marked by efforts to assert greater control over the judiciary, leading to accusations of undermining the rule of law and democratic principles [42]. These changes have spurred domestic opposition and have placed Poland in a contentious position with the European Union, particularly regarding adherence to EU democratic standards.

A key aspect of PiS's populism is its emphasis on promoting a homogeneous national identity, often expressed through a conservative, Catholic lens. This focus has led to policies and rhetoric that are at times exclusionary, particularly towards LGBTQ+ communities, and has fueled social divisions within Poland [43]. The PiS government has also been characterized by its welfare and economic policies, which include generous social spending programs aimed at families and the elderly. These policies have bolstered the party's support among various socio-economic groups, aligning with populist themes of supporting the «common people» against perceived elite indifference [44]. Poland's experience with right-wing populism under PiS is a critical case study in understanding the nuances of contemporary populism in Europe, highlighting how populist movements can capitalize on national identity and cultural changes, also marking the challenges posed by such movements to the principles of liberal democracy and European integration.

Austria's encounter with right-wing populism, especially through the influence of the Freedom Party of Austria (Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs, FPÖ)

and the People's Party (Österreichische Volkspartei, ÖVP) under the leadership of Sebastian Kurz, presents a distinct European case study of the populist phenomenon. This experience is characterized by nationalist rhetoric, anti-immigration sentiment, and a redefinition of the political landscape. The FPÖ, established as a significant right-wing populist force in Austria, has been known for its hardline stance on immigration, its Eurosceptic positions, and its emphasis on protecting Austrian national identity. The party's rise, particularly under leaders like Jörg Haider and Heinz-Christian Strache, has been fueled by growing public discontent over issues like immigration, integration, and the perceived loss of national sovereignty within the European Union framework [45]. Sebastian Kurz's leadership in the ÖVP marked a strategic shift towards a more hardline stance on immigration and integration, mirroring some of the populist rhetoric of the FPÖ. This shift was partly a response to the growing popularity of right-wing populist themes among the electorate and represented a broader trend in European politics where traditional center-right parties have adopted aspects of populist rhetoric to regain or maintain political relevance [46].

Under these parties, Austria saw significant policy shifts, especially regarding immigration and asylum laws. These changes included stricter border controls, a focus on integration measures for immigrants, and a discourse that framed immigration as a threat to Austrian cultural and social norms. These policies reflected broader European anxieties about immigration and identity in the context of globalization and the European refugee crisis [47]. The influence of right-wing populism in Austria has also led to heightened political polarization. The FPÖ, in particular, has been involved in several controversies and scandals, which have raised concerns about the health of democratic institutions and political culture in Austria. The party's emphasis on Austrian identity and skepticism towards the EU has resonated with a significant segment of the Austrian population but has also alienated others, contributing to a more divided political landscape [48]. In foreign policy, Austria's right-wing populist parties have often been critical of the European Union, advocating for a reassertion of national sovereignty and a reevaluation of Austria's role within the EU. This stance is indicative of the broader Eurosceptic trend observed in several European countries in response to increased centralization and integration efforts by the EU.

The United Kingdom's experience with right-wing populism, culminating in the Brexit referendum of 2016, stands as one of the most prominent and consequential examples of this political phenomenon in recent history. The rise of right-wing populism in the UK, primarily through the UK Independence Party (UKIP) and significant factions within the

Conservative Party, has dramatically reshaped the country's political landscape and its relationship with the European Union [49]. UKIP, under the leadership of Nigel Farage, played a pivotal role in mainstreaming right-wing populist rhetoric in the UK. The party's platform centered on opposition to the European Union, strict immigration controls, and a broader critique of globalist policies. Farage's charismatic leadership and his ability to tap into public anxieties about sovereignty, immigration, and a perceived detachment of the political elite from the concerns of ordinary citizens were instrumental in mobilizing support for Brexit [50]. The Conservative Party, particularly under the leadership of David Cameron and later Theresa May and Boris Johnson, also grappled with right-wing populist sentiments within its ranks. Cameron's decision to hold a referendum on EU membership was partly a response to this internal pressure and the broader political climate influenced by UKIP's success [51].

The Brexit referendum and its aftermath highlight the profound impact of right-wing populism on national policy and discourse [52]. The campaign leading to the referendum was marked by polarizing rhetoric, particularly around issues of national sovereignty, immigration, and the UK's role in global affairs. The result, a vote to leave the EU, marked a significant shift in the UK's foreign policy and economic orientation [53]. Brexit's implications extended beyond the referendum. It led to political and economic uncertainty, reshaped the UK's political parties, and intensified debates about national identity, the future of the United Kingdom (particularly in Scotland and Northern Ireland), and the country's place in the world [54]. The UK's experience with right-wing populism, culminating in Brexit, serves as a clear example of how populist movements can leverage public discontent to effect significant political change. It underscores the power of nationalist and anti-establishment sentiment in altering the course of a nation's history. Analyzing the UK's journey towards Brexit requires a nuanced understanding of the interplay between domestic political dynamics, economic factors, historical contexts, and the broader trend of rising populism in Europe and globally.

The tapestry of populism, colored distinctly by Latin America's left-wing and Europe's right-wing shades, sets the stage for a nuanced interplay of themes and ideologies. As these paths cross, they reveal a landscape rich in contrast and similarity, spanning diverse realms such as economic policies, nationalism and identity politics, attitudes towards globalization and supranational entities, immigration policies, and the impact on democratic institutions and the rule of law. This intricate weave extends further, touching upon foreign policy orientations, the nuances of populist rhetoric and communication styles, and the shaping of social policies.

Through an exploration of key areas, from economic strategies to cultural narratives, the multifaceted nature of populism can be unraveled, shedding light on its varied expressions and impacts across Latin America and Europe.

In a comprehensive analysis of the economic policies of left-wing populism in Latin America and right-wing populism in Europe, one observes distinct approaches reflective of their differing historical and socio-economic contexts. Latin American left-wing populists have typically focused on wealth redistribution, state intervention in the economy, and extensive social welfare programs. This approach is often rooted in a response to deep-seated inequalities and a history of neoliberal economic policies that are perceived to have benefited elite groups at the expense of the broader population. Nationalization of key industries, particularly natural resources, has been a common strategy to redirect wealth for social spending. Prominent examples include Venezuela's oil industry under Hugo Chávez and Bolivia's gas industry under Evo Morales. These policies aim to address socio-economic disparities and are often accompanied by rhetoric emphasizing social justice and economic independence from international financial institutions [55; 56; 57]. Contrastingly, right-wing populism in Europe, while sharing the critique of establishment economic policies, often takes a different route. The economic stance here is characterized by protectionism, skepticism towards global trade agreements, and a focus on supporting native industries and workers [58]. European right-wing populists frequently voice concerns about the economic impacts of immigration and globalization, positioning themselves as protectors of the domestic workforce and traditional industries. Welfare chauvinism, where social welfare benefits are seen as primarily for the native population, can also be a feature of this approach. This economic narrative appeals to those who feel left behind by globalization and the perceived economic liberalization policies of the European Union [59; 60]. The divergence in economic policies between these two forms of populism can be attributed to their different historical trajectories and economic structures. Latin America's history of colonialism and its aftermath have heavily influenced its economic policies, leading to a focus on rectifying historical inequalities and achieving economic sovereignty. In contrast, right-wing populism in Europe emerges from a context of relatively stable welfare states, where economic anxieties are often tied to issues of national identity and sovereignty in the face of globalization and European integration [61].

While both left-wing populism in Latin America and right-wing populism in Europe arise from a critique of the prevailing economic order and a promise to represent the 'common people,' their approaches to

economic policy differ significantly. Latin American populists tend to advocate for redistributive policies and state-led economic models, whereas European right-wing populists often focus on protectionism and prioritizing the native population in economic policies. These differences highlight the adaptability of populist movements to their specific regional and socio-economic contexts.

The intersection of nationalism and identity politics presents a pivotal area of divergence between left-wing populism in Latin America and right-wing populism in Europe, each shaped by distinct historical and cultural narratives [62]. Latin American left-wing populism often embraces a form of inclusive nationalism that integrates indigenous and broader regional identities [63]. This approach typically challenges historical narratives of colonialism and imperialism, seeking to reassert a pan-Latin American identity that emphasizes solidarity across national borders within the region. For example, leaders like Evo Morales in Bolivia have foregrounded indigenous rights and cultures as central components of national identity, marking a departure from traditional narratives that marginalized these groups [64]. Similarly, Hugo Chávez in Venezuela promoted a form of Bolivarianism, which sought to cultivate a sense of unity among Latin American countries based on shared history and opposition to U.S. influence. This inclusive nationalism is often framed in a way that aims to redress historical injustices and create a more equitable society that acknowledges and celebrates its diverse cultural heritage [65].

On the other hand, right-wing populism in Europe tends to advocate a more exclusive form of nationalism, often centered on ethnic, cultural, or religious homogeneity. This brand of nationalism is frequently reactive, emerging in opposition to perceived threats from immigration, multiculturalism, and globalization, which are seen as diluting national identity and sovereignty [66]. For instance, the Alternative for Germany (AfD) has capitalized on anxieties about immigration and Islam, framing these issues as existential threats to national identity and cultural continuity. This form of nationalism often glorifies an idealized version of the past and promotes a monocultural vision of the nation-state, appealing to those who feel alienated or threatened by rapid social changes [67]. The differing approaches to nationalism and identity politics in these regions can be understood as responses to their specific socio-historical contexts. In Latin America, where societies are often characterized by a mix of indigenous, European, African, and other ancestries, left-wing populism's inclusive nationalism seeks to forge a common identity that encompasses this diversity. In Europe, however, right-wing populism's exclusive nationalism often arises from fears of losing a perceived homogeneous cultural identity

amidst increasing immigration and the supranational governance of the EU.

The attitudes towards globalization and supranational entities further accentuate the differences between left-wing populism in Latin America and right-wing populism in Europe, reflecting distinct historical experiences and regional dynamics.

Latin American left-wing populists typically adopt a critical stance towards globalization, viewing it as an extension of neocolonialism or a mechanism that perpetuates economic and social inequalities [65]. This perspective is rooted in the region's historical experience with colonialism and its aftermath, where external economic and political influences often had exploitative dimensions. Consequently, left-wing populist leaders like Hugo Chávez of Venezuela and Evo Morales of Bolivia have been vocal critics of international financial institutions such as the IMF and World Bank, which they accuse of imposing neoliberal economic policies detrimental to their nations' sovereignty and social welfare. The emphasis is often on economic independence and regional integration as a counterweight to global economic forces, with initiatives like ALBA (Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America) reflecting this approach [68; 69].

In contrast, European right-wing populism's skepticism towards globalization and supranational entities primarily centers around issues of national sovereignty and cultural identity [70; 71]. European right-wing populists often perceive globalization as a threat to national identity and job security, with particular animosity directed towards the European Union, which they argue undermines national sovereignty through supranational governance. Parties like the UK's UKIP under Nigel Farage have capitalized on these sentiments, advocating for a return to national sovereignty and stricter controls on immigration as a means of protecting national culture and the economy [72]. The Brexit referendum in the UK is a quintessential manifestation of this trend, where the desire to reclaim control over national borders and laws was a driving force.

These contrasting attitudes towards globalization and supranational entities can be understood within the broader context of each region's integration into the global economy and political order. Latin American left-wing populism's opposition to globalization is informed by a desire to redress historical patterns of exploitation and dependency, whereas European right-wing populism's skepticism is more rooted in preserving national sovereignty and cultural homogeneity in the face of global and regional integration processes.

The divergence in immigration policies between Latin American left-wing populism and European right-wing populism is a reflection of their distinct socio-political landscapes and historical contexts.

In Latin America, left-wing populist regimes generally have not made immigration a central issue in their political rhetoric or policy agenda, in stark contrast to their European counterparts [73]. This difference is partly due to the varying nature of immigration patterns in these regions. In Latin America, immigration has often involved regional migration, with countries experiencing both emigration and immigration. The discourse around immigration in Latin America has historically been less charged than in Europe, as the concerns have often been more about emigration and the treatment of their citizens in foreign countries, particularly in the United States and Europe [74].

In contrast, right-wing populism in Europe has frequently placed immigration at the forefront of its agenda. European right-wing populist parties and leaders have capitalized on public anxieties about immigration, particularly in the context of the refugee crisis and migration from Muslim-majority countries [75; 76]. Parties like the Alternative for Germany (AfD), and Italy's League have all espoused stringent anti-immigration policies. They frame immigration as a threat to national identity, economic stability, and social cohesion [77]. This stance is often coupled with Eurosceptic sentiments, criticizing the European Union's immigration and asylum policies as infringements on national sovereignty.

The contrasting approaches to immigration can be attributed to the different economic conditions, social structures, and historical experiences with immigration in these regions. In Latin America, the narrative around immigration is more about diaspora and regional mobility, often lacking the urgency and alarmist tones found in European right-wing populist discourse. In Europe, however, the recent surge in immigration, particularly during the refugee crisis, has ignited debates about national identity, cultural integration, and security, which right-wing populists have effectively used to mobilize support.

The relationship of left-wing populism in Latin America and right-wing populism in Europe with democratic institutions and the rule of law reveals significant contrasts, shaped by their respective political cultures and historical contexts.

Latin American left-wing populism has often been characterized by a contentious relationship with existing democratic institutions and the rule of law. Leaders like Hugo Chávez in Venezuela and Evo Morales in Bolivia have been accused of consolidating power by weakening checks and balances, including the judiciary and legislative bodies, and by manipulating electoral processes to maintain their grip on power [4]. This concentration of power is often justified as necessary for implementing broad social and economic reforms against entrenched elite interests. However, critics argue that such moves undermine democratic norms and lead to authoritarianism.

These populist regimes have also been involved in reshaping constitutions to align with their ideological perspectives, further entrenching their authority and sometimes enabling indefinite re-elections [78].

In Europe, right-wing populism also poses challenges to democratic institutions and the rule of law, albeit in different ways. European right-wing populists, such as those in the Alternative for Germany (AfD) or the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ), often gain influence within the existing democratic framework. They typically do not seek to dismantle democratic institutions outright but have been known to challenge the independence of the judiciary, undermine press freedom, and erode norms of political civility and discourse. In countries like Hungary and Poland, where right-wing populists have gained significant control, there have been notable efforts to restrict judicial independence and media freedoms, raising concerns about democratic backsliding [79; 36].

The populist challenge to democratic institutions and the rule of law in both regions stems partly from their portrayal of the existing system as corrupt and unresponsive to the people's needs. In Latin America, this is often framed as a struggle against oligarchic structures and foreign interference, while in Europe, it is more about national sovereignty and resistance to perceived overreach by supranational bodies like the European Union. However, the impacts on democratic institutions and the rule of law vary. In Latin America, left-wing populists have at times radically altered the political system and governance structures, while in Europe, right-wing populists often operate within the existing system, seeking to shift policies and discourse rather than overhaul the system entirely.

The foreign policy orientations of left-wing populism in Latin America and right-wing populism in Europe reflect their distinct ideological underpinnings and regional contexts, highlighting divergent approaches to international relations and global engagement.

In Latin America, left-wing populist regimes have typically pursued foreign policies centered on regional solidarity, anti-imperialism, and resistance to neoliberal global economic policies [80]. This approach is deeply rooted in the historical context of the region, marked by experiences of colonialism and U.S. interventions. Leaders of Venezuela and Bolivia sought to forge alliances based on ideological affinity, as seen in the creation of organizations like ALBA (Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America). These alliances aimed to counterbalance the influence of traditional Western powers and international financial institutions like the IMF and World Bank, which are often viewed as perpetuators of economic dependency. The foreign policy rhetoric of these leaders frequently emphasized themes of Latin American unity, sovereignty, and a collective

resistance to economic and political pressures from more developed countries [82; 80].

Contrastingly, European right-wing populism's foreign policy orientation is primarily characterized by Euroscepticism, skepticism towards multilateralism, and a strong emphasis on national sovereignty. Parties such as the UK Independence Party (UKIP), and Italy's League have been critical of the European Union, advocating for a reclamation of national decision-making authority from Brussels. This stance reflects broader concerns about national identity, cultural preservation, and economic autonomy in the face of globalization and European integration. While not necessarily isolationist, these parties often favor bilateral over multilateral agreements, viewing the latter as constraints on national sovereignty. The Brexit vote in the UK is a quintessential example of this trend, where the desire for national autonomy in legislative and immigration matters trumped the perceived benefits of EU membership.

The rhetoric and communication style of populists, whether in Latin America's left-wing or Europe's right-wing spheres, play a crucial role in mobilizing support and shaping public discourse. Despite their ideological differences, both forms of populism share certain rhetorical strategies, yet they apply them in distinct ways reflective of their unique political and cultural contexts.

Latin American left-wing populists typically employ a rhetoric that revolves around social justice, equality, and anti-imperialism. Their narrative often positions the populace against the 'elite' or external forces, such as multinational corporations or foreign governments, portrayed as oppressors or exploiters [83]. This rhetoric is rooted in the region's history of colonialism and economic inequality, using charismatic and passionate rhetorical expressions to appeal to the common people. Their communication often involved direct engagement with the public through frequent broadcasts and speeches, aiming to establish a connection with the populace while bypassing traditional media outlets [84; 85].

In contrast, European right-wing populists tend to employ a rhetoric that emphasizes national sovereignty, cultural identity, and a sense of lost greatness. Their discourse often frames the current socio-political situation as a decline from a once-great past, attributing this decline to factors like immigration, EU bureaucracy, or liberal policies [86]. Leaders such as Viktor Orbán in Hungary and Matteo Salvini in Italy have mastered the art of appealing to cultural and historical sentiments, often using provocative and polarizing language to galvanize support [87]. Right-wing populists in Europe also make extensive use of social media and alternative media channels to disseminate their message, circumventing traditional media which they often portray as part of the 'corrupt elite'.

Both Latin American left-wing and European right-wing populists share a common strategy of portraying themselves as the true representatives of the people, standing against a corrupt, detached elite. They also both tend to favor a charismatic leadership style and direct, often simplistic messaging that resonates with everyday concerns of the electorate. However, the content and thematic focus of their rhetoric differ, reflecting their divergent ideological underpinnings and the specific socio-political issues prevalent in their respective regions.

The comparison of social policies between Latin American left-wing populism and European right-wing populism unveils fundamentally different priorities and approaches, reflecting their respective ideological foundations.

Latin American left-wing populists typically prioritize social policies aimed at reducing inequalities and enhancing social welfare. These policies often include increased spending on education, healthcare, and poverty alleviation programs, with a focus on empowering traditionally marginalized groups such as indigenous communities and the poor. This approach stems from the historical context of deep social and economic disparities in the region [88; 89]. For instance, in countries like Bolivia and Venezuela, governments implemented substantial social programs funded by revenues from nationalized industries. These programs aimed to redistribute wealth and provide greater social security to the populace, reflecting the populist commitment to social justice and equity.

In contrast, European right-wing populism tends to focus on social policies that emphasize traditional values and national identity, often coupled with a skepticism of social liberalism. The social policy agenda in this context may include stricter controls on immigration, policies aimed at reinforcing traditional family structures, and in some cases, rolling back certain liberal social reforms [90]. For example, the Law and Justice Party (PiS) in Poland has promoted policies that align with conservative social values, including opposition to same-sex marriage and increased support for traditional family units. In Hungary the government has implemented policies that incentivize traditional family life, such as financial benefits for large families, while maintaining a strong stance against immigration [91].

The divergence in social policies is a reflection of the contrasting ideological underpinnings of these populist movements. Latin American left-wing populism is rooted in a struggle against social and economic inequality, leading to policies that aim to uplift the lower segments of society. European right-wing populism, conversely, is driven by a desire to protect national culture and identity, often perceived as being under threat from liberal social policies and immigration. This leads to a social policy agenda that is more conservative and nationalistic.

Conclusion. In concluding this analysis of left-wing populism in Latin America and right-wing populism in Europe, it is clear that these movements, while sharing a common populist label, manifest distinctly in response to their unique regional contexts. The article has demonstrated that Latin American left-wing populism, with its emphasis on social justice, economic redistribution, and opposition to neoliberalism, differs fundamentally from the right-wing populism of Europe, which prioritizes national sovereignty, cultural identity, and is often characterized by anti-immigration sentiments and Euroscepticism.

The deep dive into countries like Venezuela and Bolivia in Latin America, and the United Kingdom in Europe, has provided critical insights into how populism can shape national policies, impact international relations, and redefine political discourse. The study has shown that populism, regardless of its ideological leaning, tends to emerge in times of significant social, economic, and political upheaval, offering simple solutions to complex problems and often challenging the status quo. One of the key findings of this research is the impact of populism on democratic institutions

and the rule of law. In Latin America, populist regimes have often led to the erosion of democratic norms and institutions, while in Europe, right-wing populism has challenged the principles of liberal democracy and the post-war consensus on European integration. This has significant implications for the future of democratic governance and the liberal international order. Additionally, the study has highlighted the role of charismatic leadership in populism, the utilization of direct communication channels to bypass traditional media, and the framing of populist narratives that resonate with a significant portion of the population. These tactics, while effective in garnering support, often lead to increased polarization and social division. As the global political landscape continues to evolve, it is imperative to monitor the trajectory of populist movements. Future research should focus on understanding the long-term impacts of populism on social cohesion, economic stability, and international cooperation. There is also a need to explore the potential for populist movements to adapt and change in response to new global challenges, such as climate change, technological advancements, and shifting geopolitical dynamics.

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