WILEY

The nation of the people: An analysis of Podemos and Five Star Movement's discourse on the nation

Jacopo Custodi | Enrico Padoan

Faculty of Political and Social Sciences, Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa, Italy

Correspondence
Jacopo Custodi, Faculty of Political and Social Sciences, Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa, Italy.
Email: jacopo.custodi@sns.it

Abstract

This article empirically explores how populist actors talk about the nation. This is a research area mostly tackled in studies on right-wing populism, with other forms of populist politics usually left out of the analysis. To fill this academic gap, we focus on the Spanish party Podemos and the Italian Five Star Movement (M5S). The former is a paradigmatic example of radical left populism, whereas the latter is commonly considered as a catch-all populist party with no clear ideological connotation. Through a discourse analysis on leaders' speeches and official public declarations, we focus on the role that national identity plays in the strategies of Podemos and M5S and on the type of nation they discursively construct. Whilst Podemos' populist strategy purposely aims at contending to the right ideologically loaded concepts and signifiers to construct an idea of nation fitting the party's leftist values, M5S's strategy mostly aims at appropriating valence issues, such as the "Made in Italy" brand and the concept of "national interest". Thus, our analysis contributes to clarify the differences between the leftist political culture of Podemos and the "post-ideological" one of M5S, as also reflected by survey data confirming strong differences in "nationalist" attitudes between their respective electorates.

1 | INTRODUCTION

How do populist actors talk about the nation? This is a research question mostly tackled in studies on right-wing politics, which remains the primary focus of European studies on the relationship between populism and nationalism (with the exception of secessionist populism, e.g. Ruiz Casado, 2020; Miró, 2021). Yet, there is scholarly agreement that some actors of the European radical left also draws from populism and nationalism in their discourse: radical left populism emerges as a national-popular project that tends to see the nation as its prime political battleground and even as a source of identity (Custodi, 2017; Eklundh, 2018; Katsambekis & Kioupkiolis, 2019, pp. 103–105; García Agustín, 2020, pp. 65–80). As Dalle Mulle and Kernalegenn indicate in the introduction of this special issue, this immediately points to a tension between the universalism of the left and the particularism inherent in nationalism (Dalle Mulle & Kernalegenn, 2022). It is a tension that has been scarcely explored in recent works on the left, including those specifically on left-wing populism (a gap that this special issue contributes to filling). In fact, the scholarly acknowledgement that left populists frequently use national identity to mobilise support is usually relegated to the margins of broader analyses – see, for instance, Gómez-Reino and Llamazares, 2015, pp. 2–3; Gerbaudo, 2017, pp. 122–123; García Agustín and Briziarelli, 2018, p. 18; Basile & Mazzoleni, 2019, p. 7 – and thus lacks more targeted studies to be substantiated. Consequently, in this article, we tackle this academic gap by advancing an empirical analysis on the Spanish party Podemos and the Italian Five Star Movement (*Movimento Cinque Stelle*, hereafter M5S), from their foundation until 2019. The former has been a paradigmatic example of radical left populism, whilst the latter has been commonly considered as a catch-all populist party hardly classifiable through the left/right division. Relying on a set of selected speeches, articles and texts by the leadership of the two parties, we provide a comprehensive assessment of how these two actors refer to national pride and belonging in their discourse. This permits to shed light on how populist actors who are not rightist refer to nationality and to inquire into the differences between those having a clear-cut leftist identity and those who have not. As the analysis will indicate, populist parties outside the conceptual borders of right-wing populism, such as Podemos and the M5S, can also include nationalist elements in their discourse, but these elements differ substantially from the ones of right-wing populist actors, as well as from each other, because they are intrinsically linked to their specific ideological standpoints and strategic reflections. In order to substantiate this claim, the article proceeds as follows:

Section 2 engages with the scholarly debate on the relation between populism and nationalism, stressing the importance of studying it beyond right-wing politics, and presents the research's case studies and methodology.

Section 3 and 4 lay out the empirical analysis on Podemos and M5S, respectively, illustrating how the leadership of the two parties discursively imagines the nation.

The Discussion and Conclusion section assesses and compares the empirical findings, by also taking into consideration to which extent nationalist ideas are present within the party electorates.

2 | POPULISM AND NATIONALISM BEYOND THE RIGHT

Does populism equate to nationalism? Scholarly works on European politics have often conflated the two terms, considering populism as "a kind of nationalism" (Stewart, 1969) – a political project that "articulat[es] an anti-elite, nationalist rhetoric" (Jansen, 2011) and "emphasises nativism or xenophobic nationalism" (Inglehart & Norris, 2016). As noted by De Cleen and Stavrakakis, this tendency to theoretically conflate nationalism and populism is arguably

an unfortunate consequence of the "strong presence of populist radical right parties in Europe", which become the prime objects of analysis (De Cleen & Stavrakakis, 2017, p. 3). In fact, as claimed by a string of recent publications, acknowledging that most of the European populists are also right-wing nationalist does not imply that populism and nationalism are synonyms (De Cleen, 2017; De Cleen & Stavrakakis, 2017; Kuyper & Moffitt, 2020). Ultimately, these recent analyses converge on the importance of treating nationalism and populism as two analytically distinct concepts, because this permits to better study their empirical interaction in concrete politics (Anastasiou, 2019; Brubaker, 2019; De Cleen & Stavrakakis, 2017, 2020). Although it is useful to distinguish the two concepts analytically, it ought to be reminded that the political intertwining between the nation and the people is not an exclusive phenomenon of contemporary right-wing populism, but can be found in countless historical experiences, starting with the French Revolution (Breuilly, 2012; Conversi, 2020; Mandelbaum, 2016).

Conceptually, nationalism and populism share some similar features: they both refer to an idea of community whose boundaries are open to political contestation, and neither of the two can be treated as a proper ideology but rather as a *sustainer* of the actors' actual ideologies (Freeden, 1998). In fact, both populism and nationalism can be articulated with a plurality of political and ideological contents (Finlayson, 1998; Stavrakakis & Galanopoulos, 2018). Moreover, they both bear the idea of being a "sovereign" community, entitled to decide for itself (Anderson, 2006; Canovan, 2005). Yet, the processes of identification with "the people" and "the nation" also bear specific meanings and social practices which are profoundly sedimented in contemporary societies. Historically, the concepts of nation and people have evolved through a "zigzag pattern of semantic change" that led them to increasingly overlap over time (Greenfeld, 1992, pp. 4–9). But greater coincidence of meanings does not imply that they are identical. It is certainly possible for a political actor – as we will disclose in the empirical sections – to discursively claim that "the people" equates to "the nation", but the very fact that s/he would need to claim so implies that this is not an automatic association, but it is rather a political articulation of two concepts whose semantic fields are not perceived as completely identical by the listener, because they carry out different sedimented meanings.

Drawing from these insights, we depart from substantialist approaches to populism and nationalism based on generalisable criteria (e.g. Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017; Smith, 2005), and rather define these two concepts from a constructivist perspective, which proves useful to analyse their discursive dimension and the changes in meanings (De Cleen, 2017). Accordingly, we treat populism as *the politics that aims at representing "the people" as a large powerless group against an elite perceived as a small and illegitimately powerful group, and constructs its political demands as representing the will of "the people"* (De Cleen, 2017; Laclau, 2005; Stavrakakis, 2017; Stavrakakis & Katsambekis, 2014); and nationalism as *the politics of imagining a political community conceived as inherently limited and sovereign, which can reproduce previous imaginations and/or put forward new ones* (Anderson, 1996; Joseph, 2004, pp. 92–131; Anderson, 2006; Finlayson, 2012). As these definitions indicate, populism and nationalism are not monolithic forms of politics: just as there is not a single type of populism (March, 2017; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013), there is also not only one kind of nationalism (Brubaker, 2004; Rivera Pichardo et al., 2021). As regards to nationalism, its polymorphism has led some scholars to elaborate a normative distinction between patriotism and nationalism, with the former being inclusive, defensive and multicultural; and the latter being its negative counterpart: exclusive, aggressive and nativist (see, for instance, Adam, 1990; Viroli, 1995). This distinction reflects the meanings that these words often hold in politics (e.g. Orwell, 1953), but in academic analyses it risks simplifying the intrinsic plurality of ways through which a national community can be imagined. The politics of imagining a nation should not be downscaled to a normative nominal category (either good or bad), because positive and negative manifestations of national identity (and hybrid forms too) are all shaped by the common underlying logic of nationalism provided in the definition above (Bonikowski, 2016; Brubaker, 2004). Consequently, in this article we retain from normatively distinguishing between patriotism and nationalism, opting for treating the two terms as analytically synonyms (Brubaker, 2004). However, this does not imply that in the discourse analysis we overlook the plurality of terms used by the actors. Differences in the words actors use to label the national community – such as *patria*,[1] country, or nation – may have an empirical value that we do take into account in the analysis.

2.1 | Case studies

As stated in the introduction, in this research we focus on the discourse of the Spanish party Podemos and the Italian M5S.

Podemos is a typical example of "radical left populist" party (Damiani, 2020; Ramiro & Gomez, 2017), which was founded in Madrid in 2014 by a group of young leftist professors, converging with parts of the militancy of the 2011 anti-austerity movement (15-M) and the small Trotskyist Party Anticapitalist Left. They established Podemos with the aim of participating in the 2014 European elections, and the party has become since then one of the main actors of Spanish politics, currently in government as a junior and to-the-left partner of the centre-leftist Spanish Socialist Workers' Party.

On the contrary, M5S is a "civic populist" movement party (Damiani & Viviani, 2019) that was founded in Milan in 2009 by Beppe Grillo, a comedian and blogger, and Gianroberto Casaleggio, a web strategist. It has explicitly defied all attempts to be pigeon-holed in the left/right division (Gerbaudo & Screti, 2017), and it has been governing in Italy both with the right-wing populist party the League (2018–2019) and with a progressive coalition formed by centre-left parties (2019–2021).

To the best of our knowledge, only Vittori (2017) and, tangentially, Gerbaudo and Screti (2017) and Damiani and Viviani (2019) have empirically scrutinised to which extent both Podemos and the M5S can be treated as "nationalist". Vittori operationalised the concept of nationalism through the identification of four features: (a) the necessity of making the borders of the political and of the national unit coincident; (b) the positive valorisation of the members of the community; (c) the homogeneity of a group – conceived politically and culturally as a nation; and (d) the monopolisation of the right-to-decide by the people within the nation (what is defined as sovereigntism). The author argued that both parties should be described as "sovereignist" instead of "nationalist", since they almost entirely lack in their official discourse any reference to the (a)–(c) features of nationalism. Damiani and Viviani (2019), who focused on the kind of Euroscepticism that may be associated to these parties, similarly concluded that both Podemos and M5S should effectively be considered "sovereignist" parties, because their anti-EU stances (more prominent in the case of the M5S) are deprived of any chauvinist accent. Finally, Gerbaudo and Screti, by looking at the relationship between "State" and "Nation" in Podemos and M5S's discourses, argued that, although both parties draw from patriotism, only the M5S has adopted a nationalist position which takes aim at migrants and minorities (Gerbaudo & Screti, 2017, p. 331).

This article does not disconfirm these findings, although it deepens and qualifies them. Our different approach on nationalism permits to go beyond the sole measurement of saliency of nationalist claims within Podemos' and M5S's discourses (as the works mentioned above generally did). In our empirical analysis, we qualitatively analyse what type of nation they discursively refer to, looking at how both parties exploit national identity to push forward their political agenda. In this sense, the comparison between Podemos and M5S has a great potential for analytic purposes. Both parties have arisen in the aftermath of the Great Recession in Southern Europe and have adopted a populist strategy directed against the governments of their countries, claiming for democratic renewal and rejection of austerity measures (Padoan, 2020). However, as said above, only Podemos can be included within the European radical left family. Thus, the comparison allows to emphasise the differences, *within* non-rightist populist parties, between the post-ideological populism adopted by M5S and the radical left one represented by Podemos.

2.2 | Data and method

As outlined above, the research purpose of this article is to study how Podemos and the M5S refer to and conceive the nation in their political discourse. In order to do so empirically, we rely on a set of 60 selected speeches, articles and texts by the leadership and prominent figures of the two parties, from their foundation until the end of 2019.[2]

For a detailed justification for our data selection, as well as for the entire list of the dataset, see Appendix A of the supporting information.

All the data have been subjected to qualitative thematic analysis, a method for discourse analysis whose flexibility is particularly suitable to interpretive approaches (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Gerbaudo & Screti, 2017; Ryan & Bernard, 2003). A theme is an idea expressed in a text (Ryan & Bernard, 2003, p. 87), which "captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82). Relying on a qualitative coding procedure (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996), we used MAXQDA, a qualitative data analysis software, to identify the central patterns of the discourse of M5S and Podemos in reference to the nation. We gradually moved from descriptive open coding, which stays close to the texts and simply identifies the presence of national (ist) vocabulary, towards more selective and theoretically inspired coding that focuses on the processes of signification of the nation in the discourse. Although our thematic analysis is primarily qualitative, we also used some quantitative techniques whether this proved necessary to introduce and/or strengthen the argument. In fact, qualitative discourse analysis may also include some quantitative data in order to "provide an initial picture of the overall patterns of discourse, whilst registering the presence of 'overwording', unusual collocations, and specific rhetorical figures" (Howarth, 2005, p. 337). This part of the analysis was done with KH Coder, a software for quantitative content analysis.

Finally, when looking at party electorate, we rely on survey data from different post-electoral surveys conducted by the *Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas* in Spain and by the *Italian National Elections Studies* in Italy (see Appendix B).

3 | THE NATION IN PODEMOS

"Social-democratic, patriotic and plurinational" – these are the keywords that Pablo Iglesias, Podemos' Secretary-General from 2014 to 2021, used during the electoral campaign of 2016 to define what Podemos stands for, adding that "Marx and Engels too were social democrats" [ES7]. The second term – *patriotic* – may seem odd for labelling a party of the radical left, albeit in its populist version, considering that national pride is far from being a common trait of the European radical left (March & Keith, 2016). It may seem even odder in Spain, as the Spanish radical left had been avoiding any reference to Spanish national identity in its discourse since late-Francoism onwards (Navarro Ardoy, 2015; Rendueles & Sola, 2019), due to its ideological closeness to Spain's peripheral nationalisms (Quiroga, 2010) and to the legacy of Francoism over the meaning of Spanishness (Núñez Seixas, 2010; Ruiz Jiménez et al., 2021).

Yet, Iglesias' choice of defining Podemos as patriotic was not a one-time tentative rhetorical formula, but it has been a constant since the founding of the party. In fact, Iglesias and the party's other leaders have frequently drawn from a national popular vocabulary, claiming to be proud of Spain and of them being Spaniards. They have been articulating left-wing socioeconomic claims and cultural pluralism together with up-front Spanish patriotism. This represents a turning point for the radical left in Spain: very few Spanish left-wing activists, if any, would have predicted that in 2016 they would be cheering at a leader who, during the closing rally of the electoral campaign, stated that they are the ones who represent "patria, order, law, institutions", whilst, in front of him, the crowd was holding giant letters that together formed the phrase "the patria is the people" [ES4].

This bond between the idea of *patria* and the idea of *people* is central to Podemos' patriotism. As the head of Podemos' parliamentary group Pablo Echenique puts it, "to love your country is to love your people and to be a patriot is to make sure that people who live in Spain have a decent life. For this reason, we are enormously proud to be Spanish" [ES12]. In the words of Íñigo Errejón, number two of Podemos from 2014 to 2018, it is not the "elite", but the "humble people" to whom the patria belongs [ES8]. In saying so, Podemos entangles the creation of the political frontiers typical of populism (*us, the people* vs. *them, the elite*) with the in-out relation typical of nationalism (*patriot* vs. *antipatriot*), framing Spain "as a country of the People against the antipatriotic elites" [ES9]. This has been clear since the first party conference in 2014, when Iglesias exemplified this entanglement by saying that

talking about patria [means] talking about the dignity of the people regardless of their spoken language, it is talking about the need to have schools where people can send their children, it is talking about the need to have hospitals, it is talking about the need to have the best health professionals. That is it. Feeling proud of your country. Proud of having the best public schools, proud of having the best hospitals. It is not the political elite that makes the country work, nor does it make the trains run on time, or the hospitals and the schools work. It is the people. This is our patria: the people [ES1].

During inflammatory parts of Iglesias' speeches, patriotism emerges vigorously, with abundant references to Spain, patria and pride in being a Spaniard. By way of example, Table 1 illustrates a simple quantitative analysis conducted to the speeches Iglesias gave at the closing rally of the electoral campaigns, for the 2016 and 2019 general elections, respectively [ES4, ES23]. It shows that nationality (expressed with different terms, such as patria, Spain, country and Spaniard/s) is a foreground theme in the discourse.[3]

As explained in section 2, patriotism is not "univocal": there is not a unique way of praising national belonging (Anderson, 1996; Finlayson, 1998). In the case of Podemos, national pride is framed within a progressive political agenda based on left-wing economic claims and cultural pluralism. Working people and the poor are often labelled as "patriots" [ES4, ES13, ES20, ES24], and the contemporary feminist movement is praised as "the real Spain" [ES18], performing a "republican and social patriotism" [ES15]. Along similar lines, people active in grassroot social movements, from the animal right movements to the young people who fight against climate change, are "heroes who build the patria" and "true patriots" [ES3, ES20, ES23]. On the contrary, tax-evading billionaires and corrupt politicians became "an elite that uses the Spanish flag to hide its corruption" [ES10]; they are "enemies of Spain" [ES3] and "traitors of the patria" [ES21], "unworthy to even pronounce the word Spain or the world patria" [ES4].

The defence and expansion of the welfare state is a central axis of Podemos' patriotism [ES14]. For instance, during the closing speech at the 2015 party demonstration *Marcha del Cambio*, Iglesias defines the patria as the

TABLE 1 The most recurrent nouns in Iglesias' speeches at the closing rally for the 2016 and 2019 general elections

2016		2019	
Nouns	**Frequency**	**Nouns**	**Frequency**
Corruption (*corrupción*)	30	Spain (*España*)	13
Thanks (*gracias*)	22	Country (*país*)	11
Patria (*patria*)	20	Campaign (*campana*)	9
Spain (*España*)	18	Constitution (*constitución*)	8
Right/s (*derecho/s*)	11	Spaniard/s (*español/es*)	7
Law (*ley*)	10	Contract/s (*contrato/s*)	7
Country (*país*)	10	Company/es (*empresa/s*)	7
Change (*cambio*)	9	People (*gente*)	7
Word (*palabra*)	9	Majority (*mayoría/s*)	7
People/s (*pueblo/s*)	9		
Europe (*Europa*)	8		
Institution/s (*institución/es*)	8		
Comrade/s (*compañero/a/os/as*)	7		
People (*gente*)	7		
History (*historia*)	7		
Total nouns of the speech	671	Total nouns of the speech	448

community which ensures that patients are treated in the best hospitals with the best medicines and adds in outraged tones that "his patria" has been "humiliated" by "this scam that they call austerity" [ES2]. Similarly, in the closing rally of the 2015 electoral campaign, he states that he wants to be the president of a country where any of its citizens, when s/he travels to the United States and sees how someone there can die for lack of health insurance, can feel proud of being a Spaniard, proud of being from a country where the best health care is public and looks after everyone [ES3]. Commenting on right-wing activists who were screaming "long live Spain" in an attempt to interrupt a Podemos meeting, he says:

> Of course, long live Spain! But defending Spain is to defend public services. Defending Spain is to defend public companies, defending Spain is to defend public health, it is to defend the public pension system, it is to defend the dignity of workers. This is what defending Spain means, and no jingoist [...] with the ideas of Margaret Thatcher, running dog of rich people, is going to give us lessons on what being a Spaniard means [ES21].

In frontal opposition to Spanish right-wing patriotism – that imagines Spain around the ideas of state centralism and monoculturalism (Coller et al., 2018; Herrera & Miley, 2018) – the Spain of Podemos is a "plurinational country" [ES11, ES18]: "a patria made out of different languages, cultures and feelings" [ES6], "a country of countries where citizens have different national attachments" [ES7]. Linguistic and cultural differences are not only acknowledged as defining features of Spain, but they are also presented as sources of national pride. Iglesias claims to be "proud of a diverse and plurinational Spain" [ES6]: "I am proud to be Spanish and I like Spain. I like how Spain sounds in Basque, how it sounds in Spanish, how it sounds in Galician, how it sounds in Catalan. I like my country because it is diverse" [ES23]. In endorsing this pluralist and inclusive conceptualisation of Spanish identity, Iglesias asserts that a Spaniard is "everyone who lives and works in Spain, regardless of her/his origin" [ES16] and this is exactly what "really torments fascists": "to see Senegalese and Bangladeshis proudly wrapped in the Spanish flag" [ES16]. Similarly, the fact that Spain did not experience any substantial xenophobic backlash during the migrant crisis is framed as a source of national pride: "we must be very proud of being Spaniards", Iglesias claims in mid-2018, "because in Spain there has not been a xenophobic response to refugees and migration flows such as in other countries" [ES17].

As we have shown, Podemos' patriotism is always signified in opposition to internal and not external adversaries. It is not related to international politics but remains limited to the arena of national politics. Although the party does express some mild (and often secondary) Eurosceptic stances, these are rarely linked to their patriotism: in all the texts we analysed, Podemos' criticisms of the European Union are never framed within a nationalist narrative; instead, they are usually expressed through the traditional narrative of the radical left's *alter-Europeanism* – as a call for a social Europe and for European solidarity, against the neoliberal policies of the EU (see also, Damiani & Viviani, 2019). In the words of Iglesias, "we dream of a Europe of citizens. Not of merchants and banks. A Europe of the people and the peoples" [ES2]. When Podemos leaders talk about European affairs and criticise EU-led austerity policies, their patriotic rhetoric fades away and references to national identity become virtually non-existent. This indicates that the supposed link between left-wing Euroscepticism and nationalism, as argued by Halikiopoulou et al., does not hold true in the case of Podemos (see Halikiopoulou et al., 2012).

Finally, Podemos' patriotism draws largely from morality and emotions. The feeling of "pride" plays a central role in the articulation of nationality: a recurring pattern is to first declare pride in Spain/patria/Spanishness and to soon move to the definition of what Spain/patria/Spanishness *really* means. For instance, Iglesias is "proud of being a Spaniard" because in his patria "the best healthcare is public and looks after everyone" [ES3]. If we look deeper at the Iglesias' speeches presented in Table 1, we see that the adjective "proud" is the most recurrent one throughout both speeches, as Table 2 indicates, and it is mostly associated with national terms, as Table 3 shows.[45]

In triggering the feeling of national belonging, the party leadership has not merely drawn on "constitutional patriotism" (Müller & Scheppele, 2007); it has, rather, opted for an idea of moral community based on an emotion-charged national-popular vocabulary capable of fuelling an emotional collective identity [ES25] in a similar vein to

TABLE 2 The most recurrent adjectives in Iglesias' speeches at the closing rally for the 2016 and 2019 general elections

2016		2019	
Adjectives	**Frequency**	**Adjectives**	**Frequency**
Proud (*orgulloso/s*)	22	Proud (*orgulloso/s*)	11
Social (*social/es*)	13	Spanish (*español/a/es*)	9
Political (*politico/a/as*)	12	Public (*público/os/a/as*)	9
First (*primer/a/os*)	5	Political (*politico/a/as*)	6
European (*europeo/a/os/as*)	5	Social (*social/es*)	5
Historic (*histórico/a/os*)	5		
Total adjectives of the speech	166	Total adjectives of the speech	125

TABLE 3 Nouns and adjectives that co-occur the most with the adjective "proud" (orgulloso/s) in Iglesias' speeches at the closing rally for the 2016 and 2019 general elections

2016		2019	
Nouns and adjectives	**Frequency**	**Nouns and adjectives**	**Frequency**
Spain (*España*)	6	Spanish (*español/a/es*)	5
Patria (*patria*)	4	Country (*país*)	3
Social (*social*)	3	Spain (*España*)	3
Spanish (*español/a/es*)	3	Family (*Familia/s*)	2
Europe (*Europa*)	2	Patria (*patria*)	2
History (*Historia*)	2		
Institution (*Institución*)	2		
Struggle (*Lucha*)	2		
People (*Pueblo*)	2		
Total nouns and adjectives of the speech	837	Total nouns and adjectives of the speech	573

the Latin America's Bolivarian Left (Burbano de Lara, 2015, pp. 22–23). As Iglesias provocatively said, "being constitutional patriots is not so sexy after all" [ES5]. Rather than defining their patriotism in simply constitutional terms, they fused it with the emotional dimension of left-populism (Eklundh, 2018), resulting in the *decent* people being the nation, and the *corrupt* elite being not really Spaniards [ES19]. However, this is an aspect where our analysis also indicates a certain degree of change over the years. Although we found scarce reference to the Spanish constitution in the discourse of Podemos during the years 2014–2018, this changed in 2019. During the electoral campaign for the 2019 election there was a novel attempt to include the constitution in their patriotic discourse. In the same way that they claimed to be proud of Spain and of being Spaniards, they also added pride in the Spanish constitution, seemingly taking a position of constitutional patriotism; but they did so without breaking from the emotional and moral dimensions of populism [ES21, ES22, ES23].

Before moving on to the analysis of the M5S, one last point deserves to be addressed, albeit briefly: *why* Podemos has so extensively resorted to a patriotic rhetoric, despite the widespread anti-national stances of the Spanish radical left (for a more detailed examination of the reasons, see Custodi, 2020). In fact, 1 year before founding Podemos, Iglesias still claimed that Spanish identity was of no use to the left, and he personally could not even pronounce the word "Spain" [ES26]. However, in the discussions before launching the party, Iglesias and the

party's other future leaders began to form the view that, for a populist project to be successful, it had to include "the aim of refounding a new Spanish national identity" [ES29]. Patriotism, they believed, would provide legitimacy and strength to their political project, as well as curbing the consensus of the right. As Errejón remembers

> from the beginning, a distinctive feature of Podemos was its social and democratic patriotism, synthesised in the slogan "the patria is the people", of clear national-popular resonance. This was radically innovative in Spain since the end of the dictatorship, and was harshly criticised by the Left who accused Podemos of getting close to the extreme right – when in fact it was blocking its way on [ES30].

According to Errejón, this resignification of Spanish identity served at denying right-wing actors "the opportunity to put forward, uncontested, their own view of what the country stands for" [ES27]. Progressive forces must hegemonise the terrain of national identification – he insisted – or the reactionary forces will do so instead [ES18, ES19]. This would not come easily for them, because

> our political group [*the leftists*] lost a war [*the Spanish Civil War*], and when they lost a war they lost a country, and the country began to be associated with the Right, and when they take this away from you, when they take away from you a flag that can be used to name us all, they have taken much away from you [ES32].

Notwithstanding the difficulties, the main figures of the party leadership became convinced that this was a necessary and important part of the populist strategy they aimed to put forward. If controlling the meaning of popular concepts is central for a populist strategy (Mouffe, 2018), then for a left-populist project to be successful in Spain, people's banal nationalism had to be wrested from the grasp of the right and reframed with progressive values [ES8, ES28]. Therefore, patriotism was deliberately used by the party's goal-oriented leadership as a means to challenge the association of nationhood with right-wing values typical of Spanish politics and to propose another identification with Spain along inclusive and leftist lines. It emerged as a deliberate left-populist strategy that can be readily defined as *counter-hegemonic patriotism* (Custodi, 2020; Custodi & Caiani, 2021), because it was openly conceived to shape an alternative form of national identification aimed at challenging the dominant one on its own terrain.

4 | THE NATION IN THE FIVE STAR MOVEMENT

Although the categorisation of the M5S as a form of "inclusionary populism" (Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013), jointly with Southern European left-populist parties such as Podemos, has recently become more diffused among scholars (e.g. Font et al., 2019; Hutter & Kriesi, 2019; Padoan, 2020), previous researches preferred either to escape from the inclusionary-exclusionary dimension (defining the party as a case of "valence issue populism", e.g. Zulianello, 2019) or to treat M5S's populism as "polyvalent". According to Pirro, "its populist frame has been able to incorporate ideological features attributed to the "new politics" of the libertarian left as much as the "new populism" of the radical right", with particular reference to the restrictive stance adopted by the party on migration issues (Pirro, 2018, p. 443). Indeed, the policy preferences held by the M5S on those issues have proved to be compatible with populist radical right-wing's ones. However, the party's ideological and discursive justifications seem to have little to do with nativism, which posit that "states should be inhabited exclusively by members of the native group and non-native elements (persons and ideas) are fundamentally threatening the homogenous nation-state" (Mudde, 2007, p. 19). In fact, it is very hard to find references to ethnicity in the party discourse within the speeches we selected. Yet, appeals in defence of the "country" can be traced since the early phases of the M5S's history [IT29], and they have become more forceful (including references to the signifier "*patria*") since the party has

reached governmental positions [IT13, IT21, IT2, IT3, IT4, IT5]. Overall, we argue that in the M5S's discourse on the nation appeals for the restoration of the country's sovereignty and claims that Italy "must be respected" abound, whilst nativism is mostly absent, with a few exceptions, as we will see.

In terms of "national pride", the M5S, very interestingly, displays two (apparently contradictory) tendencies: on the one side, the party insistingly celebrates "Italian excellences"', such as specific national figures or entire economic sectors that are supposedly recognised worldwide as Italian products (the so-called "Made in Italy"). On the other side, the party at times refers to "Italians" in a pejorative way, by essentialising them as a people prone to clientelism and lack of civic sense, and presents itself as a vehicle of a "cultural revolution" [IT2] which would be necessary to change the Italian mentality. In both cases, the M5S emphasises a certain "exceptionalism" (Chernilo, 2020) of Italy as a nation. M5S founder Beppe Grillo argued in 2013 [IT30]: "Two Italy exist: Italy A and Italy B. The first one is formed by those who benefit from politics, by civil servants who have the certainty of receiving a salary, by pensioners. The second one is composed of self-employed workers, unemployed and precarious workers, SMEs, students. Italy A is obviously interested in defending the status quo. In their flags we can read: 'teniamo famiglia'", a sarcastic motto that refers to Italian familism. The celebration of Italian "talents" and *eccellenze* (IT14; IT15; IT20), typical of the "Italian self-reflexion genre" (Di Gesù, 2014), goes together with arguments echoing both the literature on the welfare state's insider-outsider divide (Rueda, 2007) and the classic theses by Banfield on the Italian "amoral familism" (Banfield, 1958).

The appropriation of the "made in Italy" brand gives the M5S the opportunity of, for instance, attacking EU free trade policies (e.g. "we have been copied by, and sold to, China", in detriment to "small producers of typical excellences from Italian regions" [IT14]) or presenting itself as the true defender of Italian export-led economy [IT17]. The celebration-mythisation of SMEs (and a consequent downplaying of any class divide in the name of organicist views, see Caruso, 2016) is linked in the party discourse with producerist ideas (Berlet & Lyons, 2002), although M5S's social policy proposals are less consonant with welfare producerism. Indeed, in the M5S we also find, as a policy flagship, the introduction of new forms of social assistance (the *reddito di cittadinanza*, "citizenship income"). Yet, high relevance has been given to the so-called "anti-sofa clauses", to disincentive opportunistic behaviours by the recipients (Stamati, 2020).

It is precisely such legalistic approach, well-visible in anti-corruption stances – forming, according to some scholars, the real ideological core of the party (e.g. Zulianello, 2019) – that justifies the exclusionary positions of the M5S on migration issues: critiques against the "migration business" (allegedly involving "leftist" non-government organizations [IT6]) go hand in hand with calls for repatriating illegal residents [IT20]. In 2013, Grillo and Casaleggio even criticised a bill proposed by the M5S's parliamentary group for abrogating the "crime of clandestinity": "if during the electoral campaign we had announced the abrogation of this crime, which exists in *countries much more civil than Italy*, we would have barely reached 1% of the votes. We are not here to 'educate' citizens in a pedagogic way, like old parties. The M5S and the citizens are one same entity" [IT7, italics added]. Grillo and Casaleggio merged the emphasis on "common sense" and critiques against "uncivil Italy" with xenophobic appeals by putting in contrast natives and migrants: "How many illegal migrants can we afford to host, if one Italian out of eight does not have money for lunch?" [IT7].

Grillo's xenophobic appeals reappeared on the debate on *ius soli* (i.e. the possibility of extending Italian citizenship to all the children born in the Italian soil): "such a proposal will *change the geography* of our country" [IT27, italics added]. Rather than the *ius soli*, the M5S is officially backing [IT10] the so-called *ius culturae* (i.e. citizenship is given after having attended Italian schools for 5 years), although it specifies that it "should come after having solved other emergencies, such as people that do not have money for lunch" [IT8, in 2013], and considers the overall debate "definitely inopportune in such a difficult conjuncture" [IT9, in 2020]. For the purposes of this article and of this special issue, it is also important to notice how the debates on the citizenship law have been sometimes linked to the access to social policy by the M5S,[6] which in this way winked at xenophobic sentiments whilst reaffirming its supposed "post-ideological" methods, in contrast with "ideological debates" over these issues [IT6].

A key element of the M5S's "sovereignist" rhetoric consists in the defence of "national interests" in the international arena and, consequently, in the need to "assure that Italy has the respect it deserves" [IT17; IT19]. The importance of national interests is particularly emphasised by the current leader Giuseppe Conte [IT21] who defined them as "the true North Star that guides our government" [IT17, IT16]. On migration issues, the M5S repeatedly invokes the abrogation of the Dublin Regulation: "EU response has unveiled egoisms [...]. EU showed its weakness [...] with the complicity of previous [centre-left][7] Italian governments, which failed to make themselves respected in Europe" [IT25]. On the long-lasting debates on the European Stability Mechanism, the party opposed it by saying that "it implies a transfer of sovereignty and it mortgages the future of the citizens" [IT1].

Sovereignist and patriotic appeals, as we anticipated, increased in number after the victorious elections in March 2018 and the formation of the government with the radical right party League in May 2018. M5S's Euroscepticism skyrocketed when the President of the Republic Mattarella vetoed the possible appointment of a Eurosceptic figure at the top of the Ministry of Economics: according to Di Maio "in this country you may be a criminal, a tax-evader, [...], under investigation for corruption, and you can be a Minister. But if you have criticised the EU, you cannot" [IT12]. When the first budgetary bill was approved (the so-called *Manovra del Popolo*), a profusion of populist-sovereignist speeches were made. "The bill is approved!", with letters coloured with the national colours green, white and red, was the title of a blog post on the official website *Il Blog delle Stelle*: "the first bill written in only one language: in Italian! This is not a bill written by Brussels, [our government] instead of PASSIVELY ACCEPTING EU'S IMPOSITIONS [...] WENT TO BRUSSELS AND BROUGHT A POPULAR BILL INTO THOSE PALACES. THIS IS A TRUE AND CONSTRUCTIVE POPULISM WHICH IS ALSO WRITTEN IN OUR CONSTITUTION [...] SOVEREIGNTY BELONGS TO THE PEOPLE [...]" [IT2; capital letters in the original]. *Manovra del Popolo* was celebrated as a bill that, in contrast to the critiques from "99% of the media system...the Single Thinking Choir" [IT3] and from "nearly all the parties that defended the interests of big corporations and of opportunistic entrepreneurs", would have redistributed wealth "after decades of blind austerity hitting workers and companies" [IT4]. As one of the most visible M5S's Senators Gianluigi Paragone (who later left the M5S and founded the party *Italexit*) emphatically declared, and quite consonantly with our previous reflections: "this is a *Made in Italy* bill, written in Italy, not in Europe [...] it's a *social bill*, an *Italian social bill* [...] Europe cannot write a bill like this, because the EU only knows the 'austerity grammar'" [IT5; italics in the original].

Interestingly enough, such rhetoric was not entirely abandoned when the M5S-League government broke apart, and the M5S joined the Democratic Party in a new government alliance. In the opening speech for the new government, the PM Conte declared: "defending our national interest does not mean to pursue isolationist strategies: it means to put our *patria* beyond everything, to resist economic powers and undue foreign pressures" [IT21]. Patriotic appeals were also recurrent in the debates on the NextGenerationEU funds, mainly in order to attack "false sovereignist parties like the League [...] who stand with austerity champions like Orbàn and German and Dutch hawks [...]. We would have expected all Italian parties united as a Roman *testudo formation*, instead there were parties breaking the unity and betraying the interests of our *patria* [...] it's time for history: *Italy called*", echoing the lyrics of the Italian national anthem [IT13].

Such pompous declarations show how signifiers like *patria* and *nation* (al interests) include criticisms against post-democracy, neoliberal austerity and in favour of wealth redistribution (thus clearly differentiating the party from the populist right), as well as a rejection of class conflicts and, as emerging from Grillo's speeches recalled above, a "whitening" portray of Italian people, in stark contrast with Southern European left-wing populist parties such as Podemos. However, in the M5S's rhetoric, more central than the notion of *patria* (and *far* more important than *nation*), is the concept of *state*, coherently with the recurrence of the terms such as *citizens/persons*. A state that must be made more respected both *internally*, against corruption[8] and other forms of illegal behaviour, paving the way to harsh law-and-order stances, and *externally*, by defending "national interest" beyond any "ideological" defence of EU institutions or international alliances and blocs.[9]

A further confirmation of these claims comes from the analysis of Luigi Di Maio's speech at the closing rally for the 2018 general elections (see Tables 4 and 5). The most frequent noun within his 32 min speech is "Country"

TABLE 4 The most recurrent nouns in Luigi Di Maio's speech at the closing rally for the 2018 general elections

2018	
Nouns	**Frequency**
Country (*Paese*)	**22**
Year/s (*anno/i*)	21
People/persons (*persone*)	19
Movement (*Movimento*)	15
World (*mondo*)	13
Italy (*Italia*)	12
Month/s (*mese/i*)	11
Son (*figlio*)	10
Government (*governo*)	10
State (*Stato*)	10
Work/job (*lavoro*)	9
Life (*vita*)	9
Total nouns of the speech	408

TABLE 5 The most recurrent adjectives in Luigi Di Maio's speech at the closing rally for the 2018 general elections

2018	
Adjectives	**Frequency**
Big (*grande*)	15
First (*primo/a*)	11
Fair, right (*giusto/a*)	6
Political (*politico/a*)	6
Public (*pubblico/a*)	6
Last (*ultimo/a*)	6
Total adjectives of the speech	102

(*Paese*), a much less loaded term than *patria* (which, as well as *nation*, was not even mentioned). "Italy" comes after "World". All of these terms are often put in contraposition (e.g. "the world has changed whilst Italy is always the same"; "this country does not change and adapt to the world because who rules does not want to change"; "we have to open Italy to the world"), whilst the rhetoric of Italian "excellences" abounds ("we are the Italy of Olivetti, Marco Polo, Enrico Fermi"; "I went to ask the contribution of all the *eccellenze* of this country"). The "Movement" makes clear its ambition to "govern" (see Table 4), to set "big" goals and face "big" challenges (see Table 5), and to "make you finally proud of Italian politics". The term "state" is always used emphatically: "when my decree will be approved, the state will be on my side when my first son will be born"; "Italians do not have children because the state now is against them"; "we have the opportunity to have a state on our side during the most difficult moments of our lives"; "Italians had to build solidarity networks because the state was not supportive"; "we aim for a honest state"; "we want to fly and know that we can fall because the state is there to protect you if you fail"; "no one will be left behind by the state". The recurrence of the term "first" also intends to emphasise the "kind revolution" that the MoVement intended to start as well as its priorities: "our first decree of our first Council of Ministers will cut the MP's salaries by half" [IT11].[10,11]

TABLE 6 Nationalist elements in Podemos and M5S' discourses: A summary

		Five star movement	Podemos
References to the national community	Word *patria*	Non-central; more present during the governing phase	Central; resignified through references to welfare policies and multiculturalism
	Word *nation*	Non-central; present when referring to "national interests"	Avoided, replaced by "plurinationalism"
	National pride	Present in the "made in Italy" rhetoric, but not in the essentialisation of Italian traits	Absent symbolically, but very much present rhetorically along with leftist stances
Policy stances	Welfare chauvinism	Present, although camouflaged by legalistic arguments	Totally absent
	Europeanism	From hard to soft Euroscepticism	Alter-Europeanism
Overall strategy		Avoiding "ideological" battles and imposing a new political vocabulary (e.g. honesty, state)	Counter-hegemonic battle on signifiers associated to the right (e.g. patria, Spain)

5 | DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the empirical analysis of this article, we inquired into Podemos and M5S's discourses on the nation, two non-rightist populist parties which made an electoral breakthrough after the Great Recession in their respective countries. We emphasised their different ideological positioning, as only Podemos can be treated as a left-populist party whereas the M5S has more civic and post-ideological stances. They both tried to develop a discourse potentially appealing to a broader electorate, and, in the case of Podemos, to constituencies going beyond those traditionally associated to the radical Left. References to the national community effectively assumed an important role in their discourse, more prominently in the case of Podemos. However, as summarised in Table 6, which includes different "nationalist elements" which this special issue pays particular attention to, the discursive strategies pursued by Podemos and the M5S were quite different, as well as the meanings they attached to national belonging and pride.

In the case of the M5S, we found that this party did not properly work on the concept of "nation". However, it did wink (with some success, as data reported in Appendix B display) at nationalist voters through conservative stances on migration issues (motivated by a "law and order" rhetoric and practice) and welfare chauvinist positions – well visible in the restrictions included in the party's flagship *reddito di cittadinanza*. Furthermore, the M5S's defence of "made in Italy" perfectly fits with the party's strategy of looking for and relaunching Italian talents, as well as with the party's mythologisation of Italian SMEs. Such an emphasis on the "made in Italy" brand can also be interpreted as an attempt of appropriation of forms of banal nationalism (Billig, 1995) staying in between the production and the consumption spheres, since "fashion and food play a particularly important role in the construction of Italianicity" (Rabbiosi, 2018, p. 73). On the other hand, the party displayed overtly sovereignist and Eurosceptic platforms, at times also calling for the defence of the *patria*, which did assume for a while – and particularly in the first governing phase – some relevance within party's official discourse. However, the concept of state – implicitly, the Italian state, representing the Italian citizens – seems to be the truly central signifier that the M5S aimed at "owning": a state to be served with honesty (or, as the former PM often says, quoting article 54 of the Constitution: "with discipline and honour"), to be respected by the Italian citizens (and, as a consequence, anti-corruption and anti-tax-evaders stances ensue) and also abroad (and, as a consequence, sovereigntism, soft Euroscepticism and anti-Troika claims ensue); a State that needs to be strengthened through expansionary social policies in order to "not leave anyone behind". Nor the concept of "honesty", nor arguably the concept of "state" were branded by other Italian political parties when the M5S began its rising trajectory. This opened a great window of opportunity for the M5S, which had great success among voters mostly concerned with unemployment and corruption (see Appendix B). In sum, the M5S (successfully)

aimed at advancing its own, new political vocabulary, avoiding any "battle" for owning semantic overloaded words. The (partial) exception is the term "patria", more easily associated to Italian right-wing political cultures. As we saw, the M5S began to adopt it since its access to government, and kept using it after the end of the government with the League, against Italian populist radical right parties, occasionally dubbing them as "fake patriots/sovereignists".

In contrast, Podemos pursued quite a different – and, arguably, more difficult and complex – strategy, that is, to play counter-hegemonically on the terrain of national identification. The party invested many energies to try laying claim on Spanish identity and to assign new meanings to overloaded concepts such as patria and Spain whilst simultaneously talking about plurinationalism – a novel concept, arguably more resonant with a left-wing electorate. Although Podemos' voters proved to be much more attracted by (or, at least, responsive to) the concept of plurinationalism than to Spanish pride (see Appendix B), the party nonetheless attempted to draw largely to patriotism as a means to challenge the right on its own terrain. It centred its discourse on the defence of public services against "anti-patriotic" austerity policies, articulating leftist claim with a national-popular vocabulary. In later years, changes in party discourse led constitutional patriotism (jointly with a more traditional leftist narrative and symbolism) to acquire more importance. Finally, and clearly in contrast with the M5S, Podemos' patriotism never led to any "chauvinistic deviation" on policy stances, neither in terms of access to welfare and citizenship nor in terms of the party's strategy on EU issues, where Podemos quite consistently embraced "alter-Europeanism", in line with most of the contemporary European radical left.

Overall, this article has indicated that populist parties outside the conceptual borders of right-wing populism, such as Podemos and the M5S, can also include relevant nationalist elements in their discourse, but these elements are not necessarily exclusionary and/or ethnocultural, and thus do not equate to the ones of right-wing populist actors – to whom the recent literature on populism and nationalism centred most of its empirical focus. What is more, nationalist elements also differ between Podemos and the M5S, and this is because the ideas of national belonging and pride the two parties refer to are intrinsically linked to their specific ideological standpoints and strategic reflections. As our findings confirm, nationalism is not an ideological stance per se, but it reflects actors' ideology and strategy. However, parties who include nationalist elements in their discourse also have to deal with sedimented meanings and values around the idea of nationality (Finlayson, 1998, p. 113). This complicates strategic attempts of resignification in a progressive direction, especially for left-wing actors, whose core voters and activists in Spain and Italy tend to be reluctant to identify with the nation (see Appendix B).

Finally, it ought to be remembered that our empirical analysis focused on the discourse of Podemos and the M5S until 2019, although in the most recent years, especially with the emergence of new challenges such as the global pandemic, these parties have both entered into new political trajectories that partially affected their populist and nationalist discursive elements. New fruitful studies on populism and nationalism beyond the right could thus come from the analysis of the pandemic years, and this paper can represent a solid starting point for studies of this kind.

ORCID
Jacopo Custodi 🆔 https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4606-7545
Enrico Padoan 🆔 https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1292-5428

ENDNOTES

[1] We decided to leave the word "patria" untranslated, since it is understandable for English-speaking readers. The English term with the closest meaning would be "fatherland" or "homeland".

[2] Given that all texts analysed are either in Spanish or Italian, any phrases reported within inverted commas were first translated into English by ourselves.

[3] All nouns that recur at least seven times are shown in the table.

[4] All adjectives that recur at least five times are shown in the table.

[5] The frequency refers to the number of sentences in which the adjective "proud" co-occurs. Only nouns and adjectives whose frequency is ≥2 are listed. Given that the division in sentences of an oral speech is questionable, the absolute value of the frequency should be taken with a grain of salt. However, the relative value of the frequency is highly indicative, and it clearly shows that terms related to nationality are among the most co-occurring ones for the adjective "proud".

[6] Indeed, the *reddito di cittadinanza*, as approved in 2019, imposes, among other bureaucratic obstacles, a minimum of 10 years of residence in Italy to be eligible.

[7] Also defined as "bedside rugs" of Washington [IT18] and of "bankers of Europe" [IT25].

[8] See the slogan adopted by the M5S to celebrate its anti-corruption bill *Legge Spazzacorrotti* ("Corrupter-Destroyer Bill"): "Do not challenge the State!".

[9] "[Arguing in favour of revoking economic sanctions against Russia] The M5S is not pro-Putin, nor pro-US: it is pro-Italy. It is our right and our duty to work for our national interest" [IT22].

[10] All nouns that recur at least nine times are shown in the table.

[11] All adjectives that recur at least six times are shown in the table.

REFERENCES

Adam, H. (1990). Exclusive nationalism versus inclusive patriotism: State ideologies for divided societies. *Innovation: The European Journal of Social Science Research*, *3*(4), 569–587.

Anastasiou, M. (2019). Of nation and people: The discursive logic of nationalist populism. *Javnost - the Public*, *26*(3), 330–345. https://doi.org/10.1080/13183222.2019.1606562

Anderson, B. (1996). Introduction. In G. Balakrishnan (Ed.), *Mapping the nation* (pp. 1–16). Verso. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1qwwk26.5

Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (2nd edn. rev ed.). Verso.

Banfield, E. C. (1958). *The moral basis of a backward society* (Vol. 26, p. 185). The Free Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/2550413

Basile, L., & Mazzoleni, O. (2019). Sovereignist wine in populist bottles? An introduction. *European Politics and Society*, *21*(2), 151–162. https://doi.org/10.1080/23745118.2019.1632576

Berlet, C., & Lyons, M. N. (2002). *Right-wing populism in America: Too close for comfort*. Guilford Publications.

Billig, M. (1995). *Banal nationalism*. Sage.

Bonikowski, B. (2016). Nationalism in settled times. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *42*(1), 427–449. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-081715-074412

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Breuilly, J. (2012). What does it mean to say that nationalism is 'popular'? In *Nationhood from below* (pp. 23–43). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230355354_2

Brubaker, R. (2004). In the name of the nation: Reflections on nationalism and patriotism. *Citizenship Studies*, *8*(2), 115–127. https://doi.org/10.1080/1362102042000214705

Brubaker, R. (2019). Populism and nationalism. *Nations and Nationalism*, *26*, 44–66. https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12522

Burbano de Lara, F. (2015). Todo por la patria. Refundación y retorno del estado en las revoluciones bolivarianas. *Íconos—Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, *52*, 19–41. https://doi.org/10.17141/iconos.52.2015.1670

Canovan, M. (2005). *The people*. Polity.

Caruso, L. (2016). Economia e populismo. Il trasversalismo del Movimento 5 Stelle alla prova della dimensione economica e sociale. *Quaderni di Scienza Politica*, *23*(1), 25–54.

Chernilo, D. (2020). Beyond the nation? Or back to it? *Current Trends in the Sociology of Nations and Nationalism. Sociology*, *54*(6), 1072–1087. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038520949831

Coffey, A., & Atkinson, P. (1996). *Making sense of qualitative data*. SAGE Publishing.

Coller, X., Cordero, G., & Echavarren, J. M. (2018). National and regional identity. In X. Coller, A. M. Jaime-Castillo, & F. Mota (Eds.), *Political power in Spain* (pp. 183–202). Palgrave Macmillan. 10.1007/978-3-319-63826-3_10

Conversi, D. (2020). The left and nationalism: from the French revolution to the Anthropocene. In *Research handbook on nationalism*. Edward Elgar Publishing. https://doi.org/10.4337/9781789903447.00009

Custodi, J. (2017). *Populism, left-wing populism and patriotism*. Master thesis, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain.

Custodi, J. (2020). Nationalism and populism on the left: The case of Podemos. *Nations and Nationalism*, Online First 11 October 2020, *27*, 705–720. https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12663

Custodi, J., & Caiani, M. (2021). Populismo di sinistra e nazionalismo. Il caso spagnolo. *Comunicazione Politica*, 1/2021, 79–101.

Dalle Mulle, E., & Kernalegenn, T. (2022). The left(s) and nationalism(s) in contemporary Western Europe. *Nations and Nationalism*. https://doi.org/10.1111/nana12864

Damiani, M. (2020). *Populist radical left parties in Western Europe*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351022668

Damiani, M., & Viviani, L. (2019). Populism and Euroscepticism in Podemos and in the five star movement. Faraway, so close? *Partecipazione e Conflitto*, *12*(1), 197–216.

De Cleen, B. (2017). Populism and nationalism. In C. R. Kaltwasser, P. A. Taggart, P. O. Espejo, & P. Ostiguy (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of populism* (pp. 342–362). Oxford University Press.

De Cleen, B., & Stavrakakis, Y. (2017). Distinctions and articulations: A discourse theoretical framework for the study of populism and nationalism. *Javnost—The Public*, *24*(4), 301–319. https://doi.org/10.1080/13183222.2017.1330083

De Cleen, B., & Stavrakakis, Y. (2020). How should we analyze the connections between populism and nationalism: A response to Rogers Brubaker. *Nations and Nationalism*, *26*(2), 314–322. https://doi.org/10.1111/nana.12575

Di Gesù, M. (2014). *Una nazione di carta. Tradizione letteraria e identità italiana*. Carocci.

Eklundh, E. (2018). Populism, hegemony, and the phantasmatic sovereign: The ties between nationalism and left-wing populism. In A. Ó. García & M. Briziarelli (Eds.), *Podemos and the new political cycle* (pp. 123–146). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-63432-6_6

Finlayson, A. (1998). Ideology, discourse and nationalism. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, *3*(1), 99–118. https://doi.org/10.1080/13569319808420771

Finlayson, A. (2012). Imagined communities. In A. Scott, E. Amenta, & K. Nash (Eds.), *The Wiley-Blackwell companion to political sociology* (pp. 273–282). Wiley-Blackwell. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444355093.ch24

Font, N., Graziano, P., & Tsakatika, M. (2019). Varieties of inclusionary populism? SYRIZA, Podemos and five star movement compared. *Government and Opposition*, *56*, 163–183. https://doi.org/10.1017/gov.2019.17

Freeden, M. (1998). Is nationalism a distinct ideology? *Political Studies*, *46*(4), 748–765. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9248.00165

García Agustín, Ó. (2020). *Left-wing populism: The politics of the people*. Emerald Group Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1108/9781839092039

García Agustín, Ó., & Briziarelli, M. (2018). Introduction: Wind of change: Podemos, its dreams and its politics. In A. Ó. García & M. Briziarelli (Eds.), *Podemos and the new political cycle* (pp. 3–22). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-63432-6_1

Gerbaudo, P. (2017). *The mask and the flag: Populism, citizenism and global protest*. Oxford University Press.

Gerbaudo, P., & Screti, F. (2017). Reclaiming popular sovereignty: The vision of the state in the discourse of Podemos and the Movimento 5 Stelle. *Javnost - The Public*, *24*(4), 320–335. https://doi.org/10.1080/13183222.2017.1330089

Gómez-Reino, M., & Llamazares, I. (2015). *From working-class anticapitalism to populism: Theoretical developments and political choices in the birth of Podemos*. Team populism conference 'explaining populism'. Brigham Young University.

Greenfeld, L. (1992). *Nationalism: Five roads to modernity*. Harvard University Press.

Halikiopoulou, D., Nanou, K., & Vasilopoulou, S. (2012). The paradox of nationalism: The common denominator of radical right and radical left euroscepticism. *European Journal of Political Research*, *51*(4), 504–539. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.2011.02050.x

Herrera, E. M., & Miley, T. J. (2018). National identity and political representation: Rival "top-down" national projects. In X. Coller, A. M. Jaime-Castillo, & F. Mota (Eds.), *Political power in Spain* (pp. 203–223). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-63826-3_11

Howarth, D. (2005). Applying discourse theory - The method of articulation. In D. Howarth & J. Torfing (Eds.), *Discourse theory in European politics*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230523364

Hutter, S., & Kriesi, H. (Eds.) (2019). *European party politics in times of crisis*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108652780

Inglehart, R., & Norris, P. (2016). Trump, Brexit, and the rise of populism: Economic have-nots and cultural backlash. *HKS faculty research working paper series*, RWP16–026. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2818659

Jansen, R. S. (2011). Populist mobilization: A new theoretical approach to populism. *Sociological Theory*, *29*(2), 75–96. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9558.2011.01388.x

Joseph, J. E. (2004). *Language and identity: National, ethnic, religious*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230503427

Katsambekis, G., & Kioupkiolis, A. (Eds.) (2019). *The populist radical left in Europe*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315180823

Kuyper, J., & Moffitt, B. (2020). Transnational populism, democracy, and representation: Pitfalls and potentialities. *Global Justice: Theory Practice Rhetoric*, 12(2), 27–49. https://doi.org/10.21248/gjn.12.02.208

Laclau, E. (2005). *On populist reason*. Verso.

Mandelbaum, M. (2016). The fantasy of congruency: The Abbé Sieyès and the 'nation-state' Problématique Revisited. *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 42(3), 246–266. https://doi.org/10.1177/0191453715617503

March, L. (2017). Left and right populism compared: The British case. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 19(2), 282–303. https://doi.org/10.1177/1369148117701753

March, L., & Keith, D. (Eds.) (2016). *Europe's radical left: From marginality to the mainstream?* Rowman & Littlefield.

Miró, J. (2021). The tensions of populism in power: A discursive-theoretical analysis of the Catalan secessionist push (2006-2017). *Distinktion: Journal of Social Theory*, 22(1), 1–22. https://doi.org/10.1080/1600910X.2020.1765824

Mouffe, C. (2018). *For a left populism*. Verso.

Mudde, C. (2007). *Populist radical right parties in Europe*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511492037

Mudde, C., & Rovira Kaltwasser, C. (2013). Exclusionary vs. inclusionary populism: Comparing contemporary Europe and Latin America. *Government and Opposition*, 48(2), 147–174. https://doi.org/10.1017/gov.2012.11

Mudde, C., & Rovira Kaltwasser, C. (2017). *Populism: A very short introduction*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/actrade/9780190234874.001.0001

Müller, J. W., & Scheppele, K. L. (2007). Constitutional patriotism: An introduction. *International Journal of Constitutional Law*, 6(1), 67–71. https://doi.org/10.1093/icon/mom039

Navarro Ardoy, L. (2015). *La nación evitada: Identidad nacional en España y discursos de élites de izquierda*. Ph.D. thesis, Universidad Pablo de Olavide de Sevilla, Spain.

Núñez Seixas, X. M. (2010). La nación en la España del siglo XXI: un debate inacabable. *Pasado Y Memoria*, 9, 129–147. https://doi.org/10.14198/PASADO2010.9.06

Orwell, G. (1953). Notes on Nationalism. In *England, your England and other essays*. Secker and Warburg.

Padoan, E. (2020). *Anti-neoliberal populisms in comparative perspective. A Latin Americanization of southern Europe?* Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367322168

Pirro, A. (2018). The polyvalent populism of the 5 star movement. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 26(4), 443–458. https://doi.org/10.1080/14782804.2018.1519484

Quiroga, A. (2010). Salvation by betrayal: The left and the Spanish nation. In D. Muro & G. Alonso (Eds.), *The politics and memory of democratic transition: The Spanish model* (pp. 155–178). Routledge.

Rabbiosi, C. (2018). Locating Italianicity through food and tourism: Playing with geographical associations. In R. Sassatelli (Ed.), *Italians and food* (pp. 71–94). Palgrave. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-15681-7_4

Ramiro, L., & Gomez, R. (2017). Radical-left populism during the great recession: Podemos and its competition with the established radical left. *Political Studies*, 65(1), 108–126. https://doi.org/10.1177/0032321716647400

Rendueles, C., & Sola, J. (2019). Strategic crossroads: The situation of the left in Spain. *Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung*. https://www.rosalux.eu/publications/strategic-crossroads/ (Accessed 12 September 2019).

Rivera Pichardo, E., Jost, J., & Benet-Martínez, V. (2021). Internalization of inferiority and colonial system justification: The case of Puerto Rico. *Journal of Social Issues*, 78, 79–106. https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12437

Rueda, D. (2007). *Social democracy inside out. Partisanship and labor market policy in advanced industrialized democracies*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199216352.001.0001

Ruiz Casado, J. A. (2020). Articulations of populism and nationalism: The case of the Catalan independence movement. *European Politics and Society*, 21(5), 554–569. https://doi.org/10.1080/23745118.2019.1686945

Ruiz Jiménez, A. M., Romero Portillo, D., & Navarro Ardoy, L. (2021). Social patriotism: Populist glue for a multinational democracy. *National Identities*, 23(2), 127–148. https://doi.org/10.1080/14608944.2020.1735326

Ryan, G. W., & Bernard, H. R. (2003). Techniques to identify themes. *Field Methods*, 15(1), 85–109. https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X02239569

Smith, A. D. (2005). The genealogy of nations: An ethno-symbolic approach. In I. Atsuko & G. Uzelac (Eds.), *When is the nation? Towards an understanding of theories of nationalism*. Routledge.

Stamati, F. (2020). "Sovereignism" and the challenge of welfare reform. pensions and social assistance between innovation, continuity and reversions to the past. *Contemporary Italian Politics*, 12(2), 258–273. https://doi.org/10.1080/23248823.2020.1744891

Stavrakakis, Y. (2017). Discourse theory in populism research: Three challenges and a dilemma. *Journal of Language and Politics*, 16(4), 523–534. https://doi.org/10.1075/jlp.17025.sta

Stavrakakis, Y., & Galanopoulos, A. (2018). *Ernesto Laclau and communication studies*. Oxford research encyclopedia of communication. https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.013.590

Stavrakakis, Y., & Katsambekis, G. (2014). Left-wing populism in the European periphery: The case of SYRIZA. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 19(2), 119–142. https://doi.org/10.1080/13569317.2014.909266

Stewart, A. (1969). The social roots. In G. Ionescu & E. Gellner (Eds.), *Populism. Its meanings and national characteristics* (pp. 180–195). Weidenfeld and Nicholson.

Viroli, M. (1995). *For love of country: An essay on patriotism and nationalism*. Oxford University Press.

Vittori, D. (2017). Podemos and the five-star movement: Populist, nationalist or what? *Contemporary Italian Politics*, *9*(2), 142–161. https://doi.org/10.1080/23248823.2017.1339935

Zulianello, M. (2019). Varieties of populist parties and party systems in Europe: From state-of-the-art to the application of a novel classification scheme to 66 parties in 33 countries. *Government and Opposition, 55*, 327–347. https://doi.org/10.1017/gov.2019.21

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information can be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of this article.