9. Germany. Is the Populism Laggard Catching Up?

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Introduction

In Germany, the phenomenon of populism has been discussed intensively in recent years; however, empirical research on populism and populist political communication is scarce. This shortage can presumably be explained by the populist parties' lack of success on a national level, a characteristic that distinguishes Germany from many other European countries (Bornschier, 2012). More fundamentally, consensus is missing as to whether some of the parties analyzed can actually be considered populist (Decker, 2014; Gebhardt, 2013; Holtmann, Krappidel, & Rehse, 2006; Jaschke, 2013; Neu, 2003; Oberreuter, 2011; Werz, 2013). The few existing empirical studies are mainly single-case studies of mainstream political movements, parties, or politicians, all partially behaving in a "populist manner." In addition, little international comparative research includes German populist parties, their communication, their media resonance, or the effects of their communication on citizens (for exceptions, see Kienpointner, 2005; Pauwels, 2014; Rooduijn, de Lange, & van der Brug, 2014). Nevertheless, this chapter aims to systematically review existing theoretical considerations and those studies that are concerned with populist political communication in Germany.

Research on Populism in Germany

In line with the international literature, the term *populism* is highly controversial among German scholars. Due to widespread disagreement, populism's negative connotations, and the diversity of actors and processes that are labeled populist, scholars have even argued that populism should be completely discarded as a social science category (Decker, 2004; Hartleb, 2005; Priester, 2012b). Moreover, the term *populism* is often adopted as a political buzzword (*Kampfbegriff*) in political discourse. Journalists and mainstream politicians mostly use populism as a swearword to accuse others of cheap propaganda based on emotional arguments and of floating on the tide of public opinion, or to compromise the right and left wings (Birsl & Lösche, 2001; Decker, 2004; Steinert, 1999). Politicians have only occasionally explicitly called themselves populists—mostly adding their own, personal understanding of populism. For example, Kipping from The Left party describes her populism as specifically addressing those who are excluded from society (Eubel & Meisner, 2011).

Correspondingly, positions differ on whether populism is a movement, a ("thin") ideology, a mentality, a discourse practice, a political communication style, or a combination of these elements (Decker, 2004; Priester, 2011, 2012b). With respect to what or who is characterized by the term, scholars agree that populism can refer to social movements and political parties as well as to individual political actors (Decker, 2004; Rovira Kaltwasser, 2011). Some scholars question, however, whether politicians who use a populist rhetoric that does not represent their party's program are populist (Diehl, 2011). In this context, Priester (2012a) differentiates between *genuine populism* and *pseudo-populism*. She describes genuine populism as an ideology of leaders from non-elite backgrounds, but pseudo-populism as being

used by (established) politicians as a means of gaining public support. In a different approach, Hartleb (2004) proposes the distinction between *bottom-up populism* and *top-down populism*. While the latter describes governmental populism, the former refers to opposition populists presenting themselves as ordinary people.

Priester (2012b) understands populism as a mentality typically involving a dichotomous notion between the people and the elite, a belief in the genuine judgment of "the people" (common sense), an anti-politics and anti-institutions attitude, conspiracy theories about the elite, moralization of the discourse (true/not true, good/bad), a rhetoric of crisis and destruction, and legitimacy by the vox populi. Moreover, populists pursue the target of re-establishing a "status quo ante" and the return to an imagined "golden age" (Priester, 2012b, 2012c; also see Bergsdorf, 2005; Decker, 2004; Hartleb, 2005; Puhle, 2003; Rovira Kaltwasser, 2011). It is also stated that populism should not be considered a synonym for extremism (Hartleb, 2005). For the empirical analysis of populism, Decker proposes to distinguish economic, cultural, and political categories of populism and to analyze the causes, the ideology, its occurrence, and its effect on these three dimensions. In contrast, Diehl (2011) suggests analyzing populism by means of the three dimensions: ideology, communication, and organization. Like others, Diehl points out that populism can best be characterized by the specific *combination* of these dimensions and not just by single dimensions.

Besides these conceptualizations by German authors, the definition of populism by Mudde (2004) is prominently used in Germany: populism is a "thin" ideology, portraying society as divided into two homogenous groups ("pure people" vs. a "corrupt elite") and appealing to common sense. These concepts form part of an *anti-elitist populism* (Jagers & Walgrave, 2007). Other authors also consider the construction of a "we-group", or in-group, that contrasts with an out-group (which populists describe as "different" due to its religion, ethnic origin, or culture) as an important feature of populism, referring to it as *excluding populism* (Hartleb, 2005; Häusler & Schedler, 2008; Rosenberger, 2005).

The normative assessment of populism in Germany strongly depends on the authors' specific conceptualizations of democracy. For instance, authors referring to economic democratic theory regard democracy as a fight for majorities and treat voters as consumers who have to decide among different political options. They see populism as just another tactic in the fight for votes, and their view of populism is therefore not necessarily negative. Participatory democratic theory, where the objective is to activate citizens to participate, also has a rather positive view of populism—but only as long as it triggers political participation. The assessment of populism becomes negative, however, when populism prevents political participation due to the frustration of voters who fall victim to suggestions of easy solutions that cannot be implemented. And finally, promoters of deliberative democracy, who value the informal coercion of the better argument, regard populism as irrational and unreasonable and therefore state that populism generally has to be prevented (Münkler, 2011). Moreover, although populism may be a corrective for representative democracy at certain times, because it points to a lack of political responsiveness, its anti-pluralistic notions and the overvaluation of common sense are widely seen as problematic (Priester, 2012b).

Heated debate surrounds the issue of which German parties can be considered populist (Decker, 2014; Jaschke, 2013; Werz, 2013). On the right-wing spectrum, the Republicans are widely assessed as a populist party (Pauwels, 2014). The Republicans were in the state parliament of Baden-Württemberg between 1992 and 2001. However, since then the party has been represented in only a few city councils and has currently become even less important.

The right-wing conservative Party for a Rule of Law Offensive (PRO) is judged to be populist. Better known as the Schill Party (named after its leader), it was founded in 2000 and was part of the Hamburg state government from 2001 to 2004 but dissolved in 2007. It proclaimed itself to be the party of honest common citizens, fighting against elites as well as criminals and minorities (Decker, 2003b; Hartleb, 2004). Another right-wing party that has been called populist, at least by some, is the National Democratic Party of Germany (NPD). It was established in 1964 and is currently represented only in the state parliament of Schleswig-Holstein (four seats) and in the European Parliament (one seat). Yet, while some consider it to be a non-populist, extreme-right party due to its radically anti-democratic discourse (Decker, 2006), international scholars, in particular, describe this party as a borderline case (Pauwels, 2014) or argue about its categorization (Caiani & della Porta, 2010; Teney, 2012). In Germany itself, the National Democratic Party is considered more an extremist than a populist party. This view is also shared by the German federal states. In 2013, they filed a request to the Federal Constitutional Court to ban the National Democratic Party, arguing that it is fighting key constitutional principles and systematically working toward overturning democracy. A similar case is the anti-Islamic Pro Germany Citizens' Movement (Pro) that has, since 2005, spread from the city of Cologne to other cities and regions. It is a conglomerate of local and regional citizen initiatives and splinter parties that have, for example, opposed the building of mosques. The movement is in close contact with Belgium's Vlaams Belang and calls itself populist. However, several scholars classify it as an extremist faction in populist disguise. The party has run in several elections at all levels but has gained limited support (Häusler, 2008).

A rather new member in the arena and a potential populist party is the Alternative for Germany (AfD) party, founded in early 2013 and known as the "Anti-Euro Party." Since then, the party has passed the five-percent threshold in all four federal- and state-level elections in 2014 and 2015. (receiving between 6.1% to 12.2% of the vote), as well as in the 2014 European elections (where it received seven percent). There is currently no agreement among scholars about how to assess Alternative for Germany since the party is still in its establishment phase. Gebhardt (2013) describes it as a "partially right-wing populist party that currently misses the populist moment." Others argue that the situation still remains unclear since the party leadership belongs to the elite (the party founder was an economics professor). In addition, Alternative for Germany seems to differ from other German right-wing parties and European right-wing populists, for example, in terms of its policy stands on immigration and asylum. Consequently, the party has not joined the European Alliance of Freedom (which includes Vlaams Belang, Front National, the Freedom Party of Austria, and the Sweden Democrats). Instead, it has joined the European Conservative and Reformist Group (which also includes the British Tories and the Polish Law and Justice Party). It is evident, however, that Alternative for Germany attracts other right-wing populist movements and that a large share of its voters have attitudes comparable to those of other right-wing populist parties (Häusler, 2013; Niedermeyer, 2013; Schmitt-Beck, 2014). Nonetheless, amidst an ongoing internal party struggle about its future orientation, it is hard to tell at the moment which direction the Alternative for Germany will take.

On the left side of the political spectrum, the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS)—the direct successor to the former East German state party, the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED, 1989–2007)—has been assessed as populist (Berking, 1997; Hartleb, 2004; Neu, 2003). Some scholars also therefore consider its successor, The Left, to be populist. (The Party of Democratic Socialism merged with the new and very small Electoral Alternative

for Labor and Social Justice [WASG] in 2007.) The Left positions itself against the German elites and institutions, and tries to constitute an in-group with a specific focus on East Germans. It demands more direct means of participation at the federal level, proposes the dissolution of NATO, and is critical of the United States' and European Union's austerity measures in the recent financial crisis (Decker & Hartleb, 2007; Hough & Koß, 2009; Neu, 2003; Pauwels, 2014; Rooduijn et al., 2014; Zaslove, 2008). Today, The Left is the biggest opposition party (approximately nine percent) in the German Bundestag. It is represented in ten state parliaments and is a member of the government in the state of Brandenburg (more than 27%). In addition, it leads the coalition and had its first prime minister elected at the state level in the eastern German state of Thuringia in 2014 (more than 29%). Thus, The Left can currently be called a mainstream party, at least in eastern Germany.

Until recently, right-wing populist parties have generally not been successful in Germany on the national level. The ongoing success of The Left, particularly in eastern Germany, can mostly be regarded as a long-term consequence of German reunification—with the party mostly representing the specific mentality, experiences, and problems of large segments of eastern German voters. But why has right-wing populism failed to be as successful in Germany as in neighboring countries like Austria, France, or the Netherlands? Scholars mention several reasons. First, a five percent electoral threshold at the national and state levels makes it hard for new parties to enter parliament. In addition, as a result of Germany's history, media and other politicians are quick to associate right-wing populist parties with National Socialism. Moreover, the right-wing populist scene has traditionally been fragmented because its parties and movements have failed to merge into one organization as they did in other countries (Bornschier, 2012; Decker, 2003a, 2008, 2013; Decker & Hartleb, 2007; Howard, 2000; Beyme, 2010). Finally, in terms of the media system, it has been argued that the largest German newspaper, the tabloid *Bild*, has served as a kind of surrogate for the non-existent right-wing populist parties, because it has given voice to concerns about immigration and criminality and because of its sometimes anti-establishment attitude (Perger & Hamann, 2004).

Populist Actors as Communicators
As mentioned above, there is little systematic empirical research concerning populist political actors as communicators in Germany. Moreover, the few existing studies are mostly descriptive case studies of former politicians, such as Möllemann of the Free Democratic Party (FDP) (Rensmann, 2004; Scharsach, 2002) or former political parties considered to be populist, such as the Party of Democratic Socialism or the Schill Party (Decker, 2003b; Decker & Hartleb, 2005; Hartleb, 2004; Jungwirth, 2002; Neu, 2003). Hence, there is a lack of longitudinal studies, of studies comparing actors or parties, and of internationally comparative studies. Thus, even if we investigate actors said to be populist, we know very little about whether they systematically differ in their communicative style from other political actors in Germany and beyond. Moreover, the operationalization of populism often varies, rendering a comparison between studies difficult.

One of the few exceptions is the time series study by Rooduijn, de Lange, and van der Brug (2014), who compared party manifestos of mainstream and populist (non-mainstream) parties in five Western European countries, operationalizing populism by the degree of people-centrism and anti-elitism. They showed that (a) mainstream parties in Germany used almost no populist statements, (b) The Left was significantly less populist than the average

populist party, and (c) that The Left remained at the same level of populism over time (which was also true for the other populist parties) (see also Rooduijn & Pauwels, 2011). The results support the notion that The Left is a borderline case with respect to populism.

Pauwels (2014) conducted a qualitative content analysis of primary and secondary party literature, and quantitative (computerized) content analyses of the respective party manifestos to identify populist parties in Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands. The results differ depending on the methodical approach: Using a minimal definition of populism (that is, dualism of the pure people versus the corrupt elite, with an aim to empower the people), the qualitative analysis shows that both the Republicans and The Left can be considered populist, whereas the National Democratic Party qualifies as right-wing extremist rather than populist (Pauwels, 2014). The computerized quantitative content analyses accordingly identify The Left to be populist; however, the National Democratic Party's manifestos qualify as populist as well, which is explained by the coding of every paragraph referring to "the people" or "anti-elitism" as populist (Pauwels, 2014). Taken together, these results again suggest that The Left and the nationalist National Democratic Party should not be put into the same category.

Regarding Alternative for Germany, a recent content analysis of the party's European election manifesto and website shows that the party can be located as right wing, but there is no evidence of radicalism, nativism, or populism. For instance, the manifesto does not contain a single reference to the "elites," the "political class," or the "Eurocrats" (Arzheimer, 2015).

Furthermore, an international comparison of parliamentary speeches in Germany, New Zealand, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom analyzed whether politicians use polls in their speeches as a populist tool. In 30% of speeches, including polls, political speakers talked in a populist manner, which demonstrates that polls alone do not function as a tool for populists (Petersen, Hardmeier, & Wüest, 2008). The literature review provides some insights into the characteristics of a populist style of communication as it is found or conceptualized in Germany.

These results, however, should be taken with a grain of salt because they usually do not rely on studies comparing different parties or actors. First, according to German authors, a populist style of communication (or populist rhetoric) can mainly be identified by a clear friend-or-foe dichotomization; in particular, right-wing populists distinguish out-groups (like foreigners) who are blamed for social grievances (Hartleb, 2004; Reisigl, 2005). Another feature is argued to be the reduction of the complexity of political content; for example, political issues are simplified by using illustrations, metaphorical language, and personalization (Hartleb, 2004, 2005; Reisigl, 2005; Rensmann, 2004). Through a populist style of communication, politicians try to evoke the impression of being close to the people. They implement this communication style by using everyday language and by explicitly emphasizing that they themselves are common men; they are "one of you" providing political solutions "for you" (Reisigl, 2005). In addition, a populist style of communication clearly affirms the political message— for instance, by insistently repeating arguments, by dramatizing, and by trying to evoke emotions (Hartleb, 2004; Reisigl, 2005).

Second, German scholars maintain that communication skills and charisma contribute to the success of populist political leaders. Hartleb (2004) argues that there are four common self-portrayals of populist political leaders. They often stylize themselves as (a) innocent victims of the political establishment, (b) advocates and combatants for the common man, (c)

persistent combatants for fairness and honesty in society, or (d) progressive saviors of the country (Hartleb, 2004). Decker (2003) claims that although the emergence of populist parties is often caused by changes in social structure and institutional contexts, the parties most importantly need populist political actors who are capable of using these variables to their advantage. Several authors identify charisma as a central determinant for the success of populist leaders. For instance, Rensmann (2004) argues that Jürgen Möllemann (a former leading member of the non-populist Free Democratic Party) presented himself as a courageous taboo-breaker and combatant against the political elite (also see Scharsach, 2002; Schicha, 2003). Ronald Schill, leader of the former right-wing populist Schill Party, is regarded as a charismatic personality, described as "Judge Merciless" by the tabloid press, with a flair for producing sound-bites suitable for media coverage (Decker, 2003b; Decker & Hartleb, 2005, 2007; Hartleb, 2004). In a qualitative international comparison of populist discourses, Kienpointner (2005) identified strict, "law-and-order" thinking, calls for strong restrictions on immigration, and the use of menacing metaphors and hyperbolic exaggeration as Schill's communication strategies.

Third, right-wing and left-wing populist parties are supposed to hold different positions and to propose different key issues in their communication. For instance, Hartleb (2004) states that right-wing populist parties appeal to the ordinary people, blaming privileged social groups and minorities for social grievances. In addition, right-wing populist parties proclaim saving national identity through their stance against immigration, globalization, and the European Union. Although right-wing populist parties are often neoliberal when it comes to economic and social policies, they promise social security and safety for the ordinary people (Birsl & Lösche, 2001; Decker, 2004; Dörre, 2003; Frölich-Steffen & Rensmann, 2005; Hartleb, 2004; Lochocki, 2012; Reisigl, 2005; Rensmann, 2004). At the opposing side of the political spectrum, left-wing populist parties also conceptualize themselves as opponents of the establishment, appealing to the common man. They set themselves apart from fascists, capitalists, and multinational companies and often claim to be parties of peace, anti-globalization, and anti-Americanism, bearing social benefits and social security (Hartleb, 2004; Pauwels, 2014). Hence, referring to the types of populism suggested by Jagers and Walgrave, (2007) right-wing populist parties are widely considered to apply *complete populism*, whereas left-wing populism mostly uses *anti-elitist* elements.

The Media and Populism
The literature review reveals that there is very little empirical research on the relationship between the media and populism in Germany. Hence, there are only hints that populist actors strategically use mass media and adapt to the media logic in order to reach their political goals (Decker, 2003b; Korte, 2003; Rensmann, 2004) but probably not more so than other political actors. It is argued, however, that features of a populist style of communication—like the simplification of complex political issues—correspond particularly well to media logic (Meyer, 2006; Vorländer, 2011).

There is no systematic research on media coverage of populist political actors and on media populism itself in Germany that directly refers to the populist character of politicians or their parties. What we do find, however, are some studies looking specifically at the media coverage of parties that are sometimes regarded as populist—for example, of The Left (e.g., Hansen, Schmid, & Scherer, 2010; Jandura, 2007, 2011;). But coverage of The Left is usually investigated as part of general studies on election coverage (e.g., Reinemann, Maurer, Zerback, & Jandura, 2013), and these studies do *not* make explicit references to populism but

rather subsume The Left under the category of small parties. The crucial question in most of these studies is whether the media foster or hamper the success of newly founded parties, especially in a system where electoral thresholds make it difficult for newcomers to be successful. What these studies do suggest with respect to The Left is that potential populism does not necessarily raise a party's chances to be covered widely and positively by the German media. For a long time, the party was covered *less* frequently than other small parties of about the same size, hampering its public visibility (Eilders, 2000). This did not change until the national election campaign of 2009 (e.g., Jandura, 2011, pp. 193–194). Moreover, the general tone of media coverage used to be critical in newspapers across the political spectrum (Hansen et al., 2010), with the party being covered most intensively and critically by the conservative press (Jandura, 2011; see also Reinemann, Maurer, Zerback, & Jandura, 2013).

These results point to the importance of historical and contextual factors in explaining how a country's media react to the activities of populist parties. In addition, populist parties and movements closely monitor how they are covered and also harshly criticize the ways in which they are treated by the media, portraying the media as part of the ruling elite. This pattern could be observed in the statements and speeches of Alternative for Germany representatives from the party's foundation in 2013. It was also apparent in the rampant media bashing at the demonstrations of the anti-Islamic movement, Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the Occident, which received much attention between December 2013 and January 2014. Here, demonstrators regularly shouted "liar press" to journalists covering the event.

Citizens and Populism
Research on the effects of populist political communication on citizens in Germany is scarce. There are no experimental studies on the elements of populist messages that might have certain emotional, attitudinal, or behavioral consequences for the actors that send them. What is the impact of the messages themselves? For example, how do they affect the perception of other political actors, the political system, and out-groups? Yet, there are numerous analyses of voter structures of (extreme) right-wing and left-wing political parties in Germany that can be considered, to a certain degree, as populist. These studies examine demographics as well as economic, psychological, and attitudinal characteristics (Arzheimer & Falter, 2013; Arzheimer & Klein, 1997; Bartlett, Birdwell, & Littler, 2011).

On the right side of the political spectrum, research on Schill Party voters showed that half of them were female and the majority were aged over 45. Most of them did not hold a higher education degree, and one-third were blue-collar workers (Faas & Wüst, 2002). Concerning the National Democratic Party, Teney (2012) demonstrated that there is a positive correlation between the unemployment rate and the party's success in the 2009 federal elections on an aggregate level. In addition, a negative relationship between the percentage of immigrants within an electoral district and vote shares for the National Democratic Party emerges. This finding supports the contact hypothesis: a higher share of immigrants presumably leads to more intercultural contacts, which results in lower National Democratic Party votes. In contrast, an analysis of right-wing populist parties in 16 European countries (referring to the Republicans in the German case) revealed that the number of refugees and asylum seekers was *positively* associated with those parties' vote shares. A universal welfare state (e.g., one with active labor market programs) decreased their success; nor was economic growth associated with their success (Swank & Betz, 2003).

Qualitative interviews with voters in Germany, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Hungary, Italy, and Switzerland showed that socio-economic change, discontent with political

mainstream parties, and family socialization are important factors explaining the support for right-wing populist parties. In Germany, competition in the labor market, the consequences of reunification, and the immigration of ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe particularly played a role. As a result, voters who feared social decline or felt frustration and injustice (being unable to keep up their standard of living despite hard work) were susceptible to populism. Populists blaming elites or outgroups and claiming to speak for "the people" found especially high resonance among those voters (Hentges et al., 2003). Correspondingly, Heitmeyer (2001) states that, given an increased perception of social insecurity, a loss of trust in political institutions, and a general distrust in politics, people are more likely to vote for populist parties.

Similar characteristics can also be found among the voters of the newly founded Alternative for Germany. In a recent analysis, its supporters are investigated as part of the German Longitudinal Election Study. In the election, the party received almost five percent of the votes and, hence, was just below the five percent threshold. The analysis showed that most of the voters (70%) decided only just before the election to vote for Alternative for Germany. In general, those who estimated the prospective situation of the German economy less favorably than other voters, who evaluated the Euro crisis as the most important problem facing the nation, who were afraid of the Euro crisis, who rejected help for crisis-torn Euro-member countries, and who assessed themselves as socio-economically liberal-conservative were more likely to vote for Alternative for Germany (Schmitt-Beck, 2014). Furthermore, these voters were mostly citizens who could not identify with any political party in Germany. Alternative for Germany was more attractive to men and to citizens from the eastern federal states. The analysis also showed that people with a skeptical attitude toward immigration were overrepresented among late-deciding Alternative for Germany voters but not among early-deciders. For them, the Euro was the most important issue influencing their decision to vote for this party (also see Häusler, 2013). Surveys conducted in 2014–2015 in the context of federal state elections and beyond showed that Alternative for Germany voters were most likely to be critical of immigration, Islam, and the German political system (ARD-DeutschlandTREND, 2014, 2015; "Deutliche Mehrheit", 2014; "Islam gehört", 2015). Arzheimer (2015) found similar results in an analysis of the user comments on the party's website. These patterns resemble the characteristics known about voters of other right-wing populist parties across Europe.

On the left of the political spectrum, analyses of The Left voters from 1994 to 2009 showed that factors such as living in eastern Germany, a higher education, being non-Christian (at least in eastern Germany), unemployment, being a member of a trade union, dissatisfaction with democracy and political institutions in Germany, and positive attitudes toward socialism and the German Democratic Republic increased the probability of voting for The Left (Doerschler & Banaszak, 2007; Pauwels, 2014; Zettl, 2014). For the most part, these characteristics can be traced back to the historical background of reunification and to the history of the party. Despite successes in the western states, The Left has been and remains a representative mainly for voters from the eastern states.

Summary and Recent Developments
The concept of populism is not only used in everyday political discourse; it has also received considerable scholarly attention in Germany. However, just as in the international literature, there is no general consensus on the definition of populism and how it should be measured. In addition, at least for some parties, it is disputed whether they really represent typical cases of

populism. For example, The Left is often regarded as being just an ordinary socialist party and even a mainstream party in eastern Germany, and the National Democratic Party is regarded as a right-wing extremist party. This uncertainty may be due, in part, to the lack of systematic empirical research on populist communication—which, in turn, may be traced back to the limited success that particularly right-wing populist have had in Germany over the last decades.

What the literature review also shows is a predominance of descriptive, single-case studies and theoretical work. Furthermore, it is first and foremost political science or sociology that has dealt with the topic, whereas communication scholars have largely neglected it. Studies comparing various populist political parties or actors, studies tracing their communication longitudinally, studies analyzing their resonance in the media in connection to their degree of populism in a comparative way, and internationally comparative studies investigating these subjects are scarce or even non-existent. There is also a dearth of studies that would try to disentangle the effect processes related to populist communication strategies and messages. Only recently have some international comparative studies taken Germany into account. Hopefully, we will see more systematic empirical work investigating the communicative aspects of populism in the near future. Clearly, with the advent of new, potentially populist players (Alternative for Germany, Pro Germany Citizens' Movement, and Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the Occident), there is an increasing need to understand the communicative foundations of populism's success in Germany.

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