



Together or Apart

Populist Perceptions on an Institutionalized EU Migration Approach

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Abstract

The following paper aims to answer the question, *how do national populist movements perceive an institutionalized approach to migration on an EU level?* Maintaining International Relations relevancy, the puzzle at heart is eminent with its acknowledgement of national-populist parties in relation to EU collaboration, specifically in reference to the issue of migration. Thus, the paper establishes the central argument that populist discourse establishes the EU as a constituent of the elite, projecting a nationalist agenda on migration rather than cooperating and maintaining a collective identity through the institution. Constituting contra-camp identities between the institution and its citizens whilst addressing issues at the EU level, ultimately influences transnational relations. The paper presents the cases of Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia who have arguably held populist governments during or following the migration crisis 2015/2016. Implementing a poststructural framework in collaboration with a populist ‘theory’ or paradigm, a set of quantitative analyses are enlisted, featured as a ‘backdrop’ for the discursive practices and context stage of the prominent CDA analyses. Conclusively, the results find a noticeable critique toward the EU migration approach, where the institution is recognized as an ‘elitist’ establishment maintaining opposing values to ‘the people’ and favoring migration.

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1. Introduction

The introduction of this paper provides insight into the research puzzle, recognizing its importance within the context of International Relations (IR). This is followed by a brief recognition of the paper's aim, centering on exploration of the depiction of a common EU migration approach within populist narratives. Finally disclosing the structure of the paper, to better understand its general productivity.

1.1 Research Puzzle

How do national populist movements perceive an institutionalized approach to migration on an EU level? The question finds its roots within a significant amount of IR scholarship such as Webber (2014: 352) labelling the evolvement of national-populist politics as a 'tectonic plate' in the debate on European Union (EU) disintegration. Similarly, Bulmer and Joseph (2016: 726) argue that a central concern within European integration is the empowerment of 'political elites' having access to the decision-making center of the EU at the expense of those less well off. Therefore, domestic social relations within global developments must be acknowledged in order to identify the process by which European integration is shaped (Bulmer and Joseph, 2016: 726). Consequently, the puzzle within this paper emphasizes the importance of acknowledging national-populist parties in relation to EU collaboration, specifically in reference to the issue of migration. As discussed further throughout the paper, populist narratives hold the potential to establish the EU as an elitist' institution, separating it from a common association with 'the people' (Mudde, 2004: 543). Establishing contra-camp identities between the institution and its citizens whilst addressing issues at the EU level, ultimately influences transnational relations. Thus, populist discourses need be recognized in order to understand positions of opposition toward an institutionalized migration approach.

1.2 Research Aim

Debating populist narratives on EU migration cooperation, the purpose of this paper centers on exploring the depiction of the EU within populist narratives, ultimately acknowledging populist positions of opposition toward an institutionalized approach on migration. Hence, I argue that populist discourse establishes the EU as a constituent of the elite, projecting a nationalist agenda on migration rather than cooperating and maintaining a collective identity through the

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institution. The paper employs an analysis on the cases of Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia who have maintained populist governments amid or subsequently to the migration crisis of 2015/2016. Thus, the paper regards migration as a catalyst within the populist narrative, considering how perceptions of the EU may be challenged in regard to the development. Consequently, the IR contribution of the paper rests on the establishment of a foundational building-block in reference to further debates of populist discourse and regional cooperation processes. Such is recognized by Bulmer and Joseph (2016: 732) who pose that by facilitating conversations on domestic politics and social relations, an ‘umbilical cord’ is generated between domestic interests and the EU institution.

1.3 Disposition

The paper contains a literature review, methodology, analysis, and conclusion. Specifically the literature review acknowledges the relevance of the puzzle of the paper within an IR context by maintaining three sections 1) The Populist Debate –addressing populism on the European-level, and conceptualizing populist notions, 2) Regional Cooperation Through EU Relations – uncovering issues relating to the EU and recognizing variables potentially instigating a disassembling of the institution, and 3) Migration Politics in the Contemporary Setting – understanding the complexities of migration politics and Euroscepticism; each section building upon previous IR scholarship. Identity remains persistent throughout each theme, being a core notion within populist discourse, influencing transnational relations. Additionally, the paper justifies the theory of poststructuralism in addition to contextualizing populism as a ‘theory’ or ‘paradigm’.

Furthermore, the methodology explains the utilization of quantitative analyses in combination with the Faircloughian CDA, referencing scholars who have prior implemented such methods. Yet, it is in the analysis where these methods come to light, providing insight into the states’ relationships toward the EU and a unified migration approach. The analysis firstly introduces the ‘backdrop’ of a set of quantitative methods with initial focus on the conducted Pearson’s Correlation Coefficients (PCC), followed by the primary research by CDA, analyzing how these attitudes are expressed in practice. Finally, the conclusion is actualized, reflecting on the research and how it relates to the main question and argument of the paper.

2. Literature Review

The literature review provides insight into the three themes of populism, EU stability, and migration politics. By studying previous literature conducted by IR scholars relevant IR debates within the paper are acknowledged. *The Populist Debate* addresses populism at the European-level whilst simultaneously recognizing populist terminologies such as ‘the elite and ‘the people’. These premises are then applied to the cases of Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia in order to recognize them as maintaining populist rule during or following the migration crisis 2015/2016. *Regional Cooperation Through EU Relations* addresses issues challenging the EU whilst pinpointing variables potentially sparking disassembling of the institution. Finally, *Migration Politics in the Contemporary Setting* acknowledges complexities of migration politics in relation to Euroscepticism. Identity remains persistent throughout each theme, where it is a core notion within populist discourse, influencing transnational relations.

2.1 The Populist Debate

Webber (2014: 353) argues for need to shed a spotlight on the issue of rising populist movements within IR, labeling them a ‘tectonic plate’ due to their increasing support and broader access of influence on the European-level. Up until the late decade domestic systems favored a closer political integration, however these processes did not translate into core areas of national state sovereignty, lacking political prominence (Webber, 2014: 352). As hostility toward the EU and European integration has increased, constraints have been placed on maneuvering member-governments on EU issues (Webber, 2014: 353). The ‘anti-european’ sentiments have paved the way for growth within national-populist parties opposing European integration, wherein some states such parties hold the power to make or break governments (Webber, 2014: 353; Spiegel Online, 2011).

However, in order to understand the premise of populism, I argue that Mudde (2004: 543) presents a systematic definition of the terminology, deducing populism as, “[...] an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogenous and antagonistic groups, ‘the pure people’ versus ‘the corrupt elite’, and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people.” Taggart deciphers the people as *the heartland*, a unified population envisioned by the populist imagination (2000: 95). Nonetheless, the heartland is deemed as a complexity due to its ‘vagueness’ and has faced a multitude of interpretations by varying populists. Furthermore, populism adapts a ‘moralistic’

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cloak, perceiving a *normative* distinction between the elite and the people (Mudde, 2004: 544). Not only is the elite seen as having differing priorities and values to the people, but are considered *evil*; thus, compromise refrains from feasible, since it ‘corrupts the purity’ (Mudde, 2004: 544). Consequently, ‘the people’ are encouraged to regain control over elitist institutions (Gagnon, et al., 2018: xii).

Arguing for the populist orientations of Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia one can reference Fenko et al. (2019: 393) who establish the link between populism and Euroscepticism in order to recognize how Central and Eastern European (CEE) populist states behave in relation to EU crises. Hard Euroscepticism is determined as implementing outright and unqualified opposition to European integration (Fenko et al., 2019: 394; Taggart, 1998: 366). Thus, coinciding with populism both notions identify a struggle for power within the domestic political sector. Furthermore, populism is applicable across the left and right ‘continuum’, where states such as Hungary and the Czech Republic, have employed Eurosceptic populist parties within right-wing politics as leading national governments (Fenko et al., 2019: 396). The Hungarian party Fidesz perceives itself as the ‘defender of the European nations against the Brussels-elite’, whereas the Slovak leftist populist party Direction – Social Democracy holds an arguably ‘cultural’ populist position, echoing anti-Muslim notions and opposing the EU migration policy (Juhász et al. 2015: 6-7; Fenko et al., 2019: 396).

Placing concerns of populism in a political context, it is not limited to a stance of party’s politics but is also an active response in times of uncertainty. Lara (2018: 37) states, “[...] ‘populism’ is in many respects a perfect example of an ‘asymmetrical combat-concept’, in that the strength of its semantics lies in encouraging the actor’s vision about the future as the possible ‘death’ or ‘cure’ of democracy.” Thus, the concept finds itself connected to the need of defending or dismantling democratic institutions (Lara, 2018: 37). Yet, the position of combat-concept rests in liberals’ perceptions of the movement as lacking a specified ideology, exemplified by the heartland as a unified people *imagined* by the populist; thus, expectations and the who and what of the political targets are difficult to determine (Lara, 2018: 37).

With populism being linked to the global realm, it would be assumed that the affair holds a magnitude of reference within IR literature, yet scholarship has only recently began applying populism within a systematic context (Wojczewski, 2019: 2). Consequently, I argue that the challenges of populism toward the EU need to be addressed on a larger scale in order to prompt prolonged cohesion within the institution. Populism and Euroscepticism cannot solely maintain a ‘domestic’ understanding, since its increasing support holds influential

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dynamics at the EU level. As explained by Webber (2014: 535) as the populist movement evolves, it becomes less feasible for 'pro-European' parties to discount populist perceptions; thus, populism evidently holds impact upon transnational relations.

2.2 Regional Cooperation Through EU Relations

"If a 'crisis' is defined as a 'situation that has reached an extremely difficult or dangerous point; a time of great disagreement, uncertainty or suffering' (Cambridge English dictionary), the current situation of the EU may well be labelled a crisis [...]" (Webber, 2014: 342). As previously addressed, the increased support of populist movements paves the way for their participation on the European-level both in terms of the EU and member governments' action (Webber, 2014: 353). Bulmer and Joseph (2016: 726) share this sentiment, arguing one of the main challenges toward the institution being empowerment of political elites with access to the center of EU decision-making at the expense of those less well off. Additionally, hegemonic projects can arise as a barrier between transnational relations, exemplified by migration in this paper (Webber, 2014: 726). This is illustrated by de Wilde et al. (2016: 830-831) who acknowledge two contra-spheres, where politicians such as Lefrançois preach for a 'welcoming Europe' and others such as Clark advocate for 'demarcation'.

Webber presents a 'theoretical toolbox' (see Table 1) providing insight into the theoretical perspectives on EU stability, exploring theory-based prognoses on potential disintegration, and their respective variables impacting the dismantling. Restating the main argument of this paper, populist discourse establishes the EU as a constituent of the elite, projecting a nationalist agenda on migration rather than cooperating and maintaining a collective identity through the institution. Consequently, I argue that the two most relevant theoretical perspectives which correlate with the orientation of this paper are IR institutionalism and comparative federalism. Both theories perceive a lack of shared interests and common identity, in relation to a battle between state sovereignty and EU capabilities.

IR institutionalism is deemed the 'cautious optimist' by Webber (2014: 345) seeing states as primary actors within European, as well as, world politics. Yet, it maintains a cautiously optimistic relation to European integration (Webber, 2014: 345). The theory argues that organizations stay relevant within politics due their management of collective action problems, monitoring of compliance and stabilizing expectations (Keohane, 1993: 274, 284, 288; Keohane and Nye, 1993: 2-5; Webber, 2014: 345). However, with a lack of 'hegemonic dominance' or 'common interests' it is unlikely that institutions such as the EU will maintain

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significance (Keohane, 1993: 295; Webber, 2014: 345). Consequently, an enlargement of the EU could place common interests between member-states at risk (Webber, 2014: 346). Nonetheless, Keohane predicts that common interests persist within the European community, and EU fallout would be slow due to 'organizational inertia', reputations, and linkage to domestic politics (Keohane (1993: 295).

Similarly, comparative federalism holds a position of uncertainty, being deemed a theory of collective 'optimists (?) and pessimists' in relation to EU disintegration (Webber, 2014: 349). Scholars such as Kelemen argue that the likelihood of an EU demise is 'greatly exaggerated', and despite increased power of party groups in the European Parliament, these remain 'too weak to restrain behavior by national parties that might imperil the Union' (Kelemen, 2007: 65, 53, 58). Furthermore, Kelemen (2007: 59) poses that relocation of authority from the national to the EU level would imply a strengthened role of EU-level parties (i.e. the national counterparts), hence stability of the institutions is rooted in a shared sense of identity. Contrary, McKay (2004: 180) is rather susceptible of EU durability, arguing that the EU is unsuccessful in maintaining an arena where political parties can mediate conflicts between the center and periphery, leaving space for increasing populist notions. Similarly, Kelemen (2007: 61) argues that the EU identity may need to be developed in order for the institution to prevail.

Nonetheless, this paper does not aim to provide a position on the potential of EU disintegration; however, it does see the 'potential disintegrators' as significant within the main argument. With the claim that populist discourse encourages a nationalist agenda on migration rather than cooperating through the EU institution, variables of declining common interests and weakness of common identity becomes more-so alarming. As argued by Bulmer and Joseph (2016: 739) relationships between actors and the EU are complex, due to varying levels of governance; thus, there may arise conflicts between levels and national/regional blocs concerning orientation to the EU. Hence, I argue that populist parties are able to sway their positions where there is a lack of common identity and shared interests within the institution, sharing Kelemen's notion that these issues need be addressed in order for the institution to maintain its position of significance.

Theory	Main Independent Variable(S)	(Potential) Disintegrator	Theory-Based Prognosis
IR Institutionalism (Keohane)	Cooperation-facilitating role of institutions (EU)	Decline of members' common interests & hegemonic dominance/will	Disintegration increasingly conceivable
Comparative Federalism (Kelemen; McKay)	Judicial, partisan & socio-cultural safeguards v. explosion of federal state	Weakness of common identity & integrative pan-European political parties	Growing risk of disintegration with growing transfer of power from national to EU level
Poststructuralist/Populist Paradigm (utilized within this paper)	Institutionalized approach to the migration crisis v. national interest	Scattered perceptions on cooperation & weakness of identity	Rising opposition toward the EU <i>elite</i> , however no immediate disintegration

Table 1. Webber's Toolbox (Modified): Theoretical overview. (Webber, 2014: 351)

2.3. Migration Politics in the Contemporary Setting

Despite questions of security not being central within this paper, it is growing increasingly complex to ignore its linkages toward migration within a globalized world (Adamson, 2006: 167). Globalization is changing the dynamics and environment in which states operate, specifically relating to establishment of security policies (Adamson, 2006: 167). Policymakers have to weigh costs and benefits of policies, addressing implications of security and other policy areas such as welfare and economic growth (Adamson, 2006: 167). However, the impact of migration cannot solely be considered domestically; the refugee crisis of 2015/2016 threatened EU asylum as well as its migration policy, generating tensions and divisions between the member-states (Bulmer and Joseph, 2016: 726). de Wilde et al. (2016: 825) claim terms of cooperation have to be negotiated in reference to a globalization cleavage, where not everyone is convinced that the benefits of open borders, such as consumption and travel, outweigh the costs, such as job insecurity, and cultural distinctiveness.

In order to discuss migration within European-level politics a definition of the terminology need be attributed. Adamson (2006: 170) regards the notion of a migrant as arguably complex, where each state preserves its own interpretation. The United Nations conceptualizes a migrant as 'someone entering a country for twelve months or longer'; yet, I

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argue that the definition is oversimplified. Instead, I pose that the conceptualization of a ‘migrant’ faces a multitude of categorizations dependent upon the incentive for migration (i.e. economic, political, refuge). Thus, with focus on the 2015/2016 migration crisis, this paper approaches the concept of a migrant as a ‘refugee’. As conceived by international law, refugees migrate due to a fear of prosecution based on their race, religion, nationality, or membership in a social or political group (Adamson, 2006: 173-174). Contemporary context has witnessed considerable inflation of asylum seekers, where false asylum seekers and illegal immigration has generated grave concern for states losing sovereign control over their borders (Adamson, 2006: 174). Consequently, a national-conservative hegemonic project assembles political forces who oppose the idea of further integration, often supported by civilians who have lost out by globalization, resisting cosmopolitanism and immigration (Bulmer and Joseph, 2016: 740).

Addressing migration at the European-level, experts have recognized migration flows as overwhelming for states’ capacities in remaining sovereign in respect to a multitude of areas, thus risking their basis of security (Adamson, 2006: 175). Consequently, sovereign states maybe increasingly reluctant in surrendering their national control in favor of EU migration policies with respect to international migration; not only due to the impact on border security, but also the influence of migration on public security, social cohesion and economic competitiveness (Koser, 2010: 302). However, framing migration as a security issue places opposition parties with an ‘opportunistic’ strategy, exemplified by populist parties who argue that they are the voice of the ‘pure people’ (Fenko et al., 2019: 408). Hence, when states with populist governing face social challenges due to impeding migration processes, they may pin this on a lack of EU efficiency, rather opting to tackle the affair nationally.

Bulmer and Joseph (2016: 726) state, “[...] integration has always been both economic and political in character and that domestic social relations need to be added to global developments in identifying the way in which European integration is shaped.” Ultimately the paper shares this sentiment, aiming to construct an ‘umbilical cord’ between domestic interests and the EU institution by facilitating conversations on domestic politics and social relations (cf. Bulmer and Joseph, 2016: 732). Relating to the discussions of *populism* and *EU stability*, the theme of migration politics is also rooted in questions of identity. As stated by Adamson (2006: 184) “Traditional conceptions of national security are based on national interests, which, as social constructivists and others have argued, are derived from a state’s national identity” (cf. Katzenstein, 1996). Essentially national identity derives from a nationalist ideology, generating

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cohesion within a state; thus, the migration flows are often considered a challenge to the perceived identity, probing much political debate (Adamson, 2006: 181).

Furthermore, various states have historically implemented national, ethnic or racial criteria within their migration policies; yet racial equality, human rights and multiculturalism has helped to delegitimize such values (Adamson, 2006: 181). Nonetheless, the linkage between national identity and migration remain apparent in contemporary politics, where the upsurge of 'social insecurity' has grown predominant (cf. Ole Wæver, 1993). The problem arises specifically within states whose national identities derive from an 'ethnic' background rather than a 'civic' one (Adamson, 2006: 182). Thus, perceptions of migration as a threat to the national identity as well as a security issue, grows evident within populist led governments, where the option to have a unified EU migration policy may be difficult to interpret. Similarly, to the theme of populism, migration politics cannot solely be identified within a domestic narrative. Instead the social relations within a country, such as opting to oppose migration flows, holds a significant influence at the European-level, such as a minimization of cooperation. Consequently, the power of a crisis such as the migration crisis in 2015/2016 does hold the potential to impactfully divide states (Bulmer and Joseph, 2016: 726).

2.4 Justifying the Theoretical Paradigm

Restating the main argument of this paper, populist narratives establish the EU as part of the elite, aiming to project a nationalist agenda on migration rather than cooperating and maintaining a collective identity through the institution. The argument maintains a narrative of identity providing the paper with a poststructural IR theory framework. Poststructuralism opposes the realist and liberalist mainstream, arguing that perceiving the state as a rational actor 'marginalizes non – and trans-state actors, stateless people, and those persecuted by 'their own' states' (Hansen, 2017: 159). Additionally, the theory argues that foreign policies are drafted by representations of 'us' versus 'them' identities constituted via language (Hansen, 2017: 159). Consequently, political community rests upon 'who we can trust and who we feel we have something in common with' (Hansen, 2017: 160). Bleiker (2001) poses that even the most objective theory cannot reject the need for interpretation, however poststructuralism is one of the few that thoroughly acknowledges this.

Utilizing poststructuralist theory to analyze a specific issue or event, requires recognition of its ontological and epistemological trajectories. Poststructuralism views the social world so far distant from hard sciences where casual epistemologies are at play – we are

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unable to uncover world politics through mere cause-and-effect relationships (Hansen, 2017: 161). Essentially, causality is inappropriate, not due to a nonexistence of structures, but instead that such structures are constituted via human action, and therefore are not independent variables (Hansen, 2017: 161). Consequently, poststructuralism endures an interpretivist ontology and epistemology, arguing that the social world strongly differentiates from the world of natural phenomena, being *subjectively* created – it is what we experience it to be (Halperin and Heath, 2017: 41). Scientific knowledge is obtained by ‘interpreting the meanings which give people reasons for acting’ (Halperin and Heath, 2017: 50). Similarly, material ‘things’ gain their meanings through representations expressed through wordage and imagery (Hansen, 2017: 159).

Furthermore, poststructuralism poses that in order to gain knowledge concerning the social world, one has to employ a methodology based in textual strategies – the world portrays a text which needs interpretive measures in order to uncover ‘hidden meanings and subtexts’ (Halperin and Heath, 2017: 50). Studying the social world as a text, one has to place intricate focus on the discursive practices within it, uncovering series of representation, the practices used to produce meanings, identities and social relations as well as the political and ethical outcomes (Campbell and Bleiker, 2016: 208). Foucault (1982: 208) sees human nature as socially constructed through operations of power, introducing key concepts at heart – *identity*, *subjectivism* and *power* (Campbell & Bleiker, 2016: 207). Here power is not merely repressive, but rather productive, determining limits between the self/other and relationships between the inside/outside, essentially knowing what something is by addressing what it is not – this is deemed *disciplinary power* (Campbell and Bleiker, 2016: 208). Consequently, disciplinary power provides conceptualizations of identity and subjectivity within discourse, by culturally constructing a series of exclusions (Campbell and Bleiker, 2016: 208).

However, the paper does not solely explore a poststructural narrative, but also follows a heeded ‘populist’ theory. Despite populism not being an established IR theory, I argue that it maintains a theoretical framework rooted within interpretivist philosophy. Similarly, to poststructuralism, populism follows the subjective reasoning, where scientific knowledge is attained by interpreting meanings providing people with reason to act (Halperin and Heath, 2017: 50). This is exemplified by Gagnon et al. (2018: vii, xi-xii) who state that populism is perceived as a reaction to a deep crisis, whether real or perceived, and thus the populist endorses a specific behavior, discursive frame or thin ideology. Additionally, Lara (2018: 37) envisions populism as a combat-concept “[...] encouraging the actor’s vision about the future as the

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possible ‘death’ or ‘cure’ of democracy.” Ultimately such perspectives are central to the textual strategies employed within interpretivism, uncovering the utilization of discourse by specified actors.

Nonetheless, poststructuralism has faced critique when tackling understandings of IR issues, linking it to other theories performing meta-theoretical critiques of realism, neorealism and so on, and questioning the reliance on external reality, foundations, objectivity and transparency of language – viz. ‘postmodernist’ theories (Campbell, 1992: 246-7). Keohane (1988) perceives the theoretical field as acquiring two contra-camps ‘rationalists’ and ‘reflectivists’, criticizing the latter for lacking a ‘social scientific rigour’ and neglecting to embrace empiricist standards in reference to research agendas, hypotheses, and tests which he views as providing credibility (Campbell and Bleiker, 2016: 203). Contrary, ‘postmodern’ theories are wrongfully depicted as rejecting traditional political boxes such as deciphering right from wrong, generating anxieties with regard to a perceived absence of secure foundation (Campbell and Bleiker, 2016: 203). Yet, ‘postmodern’ line of theory does not disregard foundations previously conceived in traditional IR, but instead aims to generate a more nuanced approach at a framework. Post-empiricist debate within philosophy has shown an instability via dualistic and dichotomous frameworks, thus we need to move beyond objectivism and relativism, developing further modes of interpretation not centered on fact/value principal (Campbell and Bleiker, 2016: 203-204; Bernstein, 1983). The same can be said for a populist paradigm, due to its interpretivist notion, and thus utilizing these theories requires a critical need to maintain transparency throughout the analysis.

3. Methodology

Combining poststructuralist theory and a populist paradigm places this paper within an interpretivist framework, seeing the social world as differing to the world of natural phenomena. Therefore, *subjective* means of conducting knowledge have to be employed in order to study the world, with social science aiming to understand human behavior by interpreting meanings, beliefs and ideas providing people with justifications to act (Halperin and Heath, 2017: 41). Thus, textual strategies are applied, specifically employing Fairloughian (1995) CDA in order to analyze discourses present within a set of speeches addressed by contemporary populist government leaders of Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia during or following the 2015/2016 migration crisis. Nonetheless, prior a set of quantitative analyses are presented addressing the states' relationships to the EU. Quantitative analysis takes you a long way in understanding political dynamics, however they are not the primary means of measurement within the interpretivist context (Halperin and Heath, 2017: 362). Instead, the quantitative analyses are merely featured as a 'backdrop' helping to understand the relationship between populism and EU migration cooperation in practice, at the context and discursive practices stages of CDA.

Small-N Study

As previously stated, the chosen cases for the analysis are Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia which all have held populist leadership during or following the migration crisis 2015/2016. Consequently, the analysis abides a small-N study due to it involving less than a dozen cases (Halperin and Heath, 2017: 217). Small-N studies are vastly used within political research, considered a 'quintessential' form of comparative analysis (Halperin and Heath, 2017: 217). They allow for a detailed in-depth analysis of case studies, simultaneously generating a larger scope for contextualization (Halperin and Heath, 2017: 218). Nonetheless, one has to be mindful of the chosen cases as to refrain from implementing bias in aiming to support the hypothesis. Thus, the chosen cases of the paper have been selected due to their political orientations. Furthermore, each state holds a varied amount of validated asylum seekers between the time-span 2013-2016, leaving no space for preconceived notions.

3.1 Quantitative Analysis

Adopting inspiration from a variety of IR scholars, this paper partly employs a quantitative means of analysis. One such example is that of Knudsen (1979: 17-18) who utilizes a statistical analysis in order to uncover the linking variables between interest groups and decision-making processes. Similarly, Adamson (2006:169) incorporates statistics throughout her writing, however this is done in order to generate a ‘backdrop’ for her analysis of migration politics and national security. Consequently, this paper engages in quantitative analysis within a similar manner to that of Adamson (2006) where the results are utilized in order to further the debates in relation to the CDA. Thus, it is necessary to recognize that the quantitative analysis is far from the main results conducted within the paper, since the interpretivist framework argues that cause-and-effect relationships are not suitable enough to uncover political relationships. The means of quantitative analyses are conducted firstly via a PCC uncovering the relationship between Eurobarometer data concerning the trust in the EU per state (i.e. Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia) and the amount of validated migrant permits per year for each individual state. This is followed by the Eurobarometer trend of Trust in National Governments and Parliaments as well as the EU spanning the past 15 years. Finally, the paper presents data on Support for a Common European Asylum System. It is important to note that the PCC functions as the primary means of quantitative analysis throughout this paper by conducting a correlation, whereas the latter two measurements merely observe already-existing data. Nonetheless, each quantitative measurement serves a function in furthering the interpretivist framework; the different analyses are introduced below.

3.1.1 Conducting a Correlation

This paper utilizes PCC in order to analyze the relationship between the amount of validated migrant permits per year and the trust in the EU per state, between the years 2013-2016. The time span covers data two years prior to the migration crisis, the two years during the migration crisis and two years following. PCC is an example of bivariate analysis exploring issues concerning the relationship between two variables – in this case Trust in the EU being the dependent value and the amount of validated migrant permits being the independent value (Halperin and Heath, 2017: 392). These two sets of variables are considered continuous (i.e. intervals) and thus adhere to the utilization of correlation (Halperin and

Heath, 2017: 392). The aim of the PCC is to recognize the strength of the relationship between the two variables, calculating Pearson's r through Microsoft Excel. Simply, Pearson's r can take values between -1 (negative association) to 1 (positive association) (see Table 2), where a negative relationship of association determines that when one variable decreases the other increases; contrary, a positive relationship of association determines that when one variable increases so does the other (Halperin and Heath, 2017: 129).

Strength of Relationship	(Negative) Pearson's r	(Positive) Pearson's r
No linear relationship	0	0
Weak linear relationship	-0.30	0.30
Moderate linear relationship	-0.50	0.50
Strong linear relationship	-0.70	0.70
Perfect linear relationship	-1	1

Table 2 Pearson's r values

3.1.2. Trend: Trust in National Governments and Parliaments, and in the EU

The Eurobarometer (2019) fieldwork is conducted in order to generate an understanding of EU citizens' positions on support and trust in the institution and its projects. Thus, following the PCC, the paper employs statistics conceived by the Eurobarometer (2019), overseeing the general trend concerning trust in national governments and parliaments, as well as the EU over the time-span of 15 years. I argue that the trend maintains significance within the paper due to its acknowledgement of relationships toward the bodies within a comparative context. Consequently, this allows us to observe the data in two ways; firstly, it uncovers whether there is stronger support for national governments and parliaments than the EU. Secondly, it allows for the recognition of how these relationships changed in relation to the migration crisis of 2015/2016.

3.1.3 Support for a Common European Asylum System

Finally, the paper incorporates further data from the Eurobarometer focusing on the support of a common European asylum system per state. I argue that the data is relevant due to its addressing of an institutionalized migration cooperation rather than an individualistic one, placing it at the central topic of this paper. By focusing on the states of Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia the observed support, or lack thereof, can be traced to the PCC seeing whether it matches the relationships of association within each state. This allows for an understanding of whether the states are more concerned with an individualistic approach to migration or a cooperative system within the EU.

3.2. Qualitative Analysis

In his literature on identity construction in relation to United States' foreign policy, Wojczewski (2019: 1) states that he is "Employing a discursive understanding of populism and combining it with insights of poststructuralist international theory and Lacanian psychoanalysis [...]."

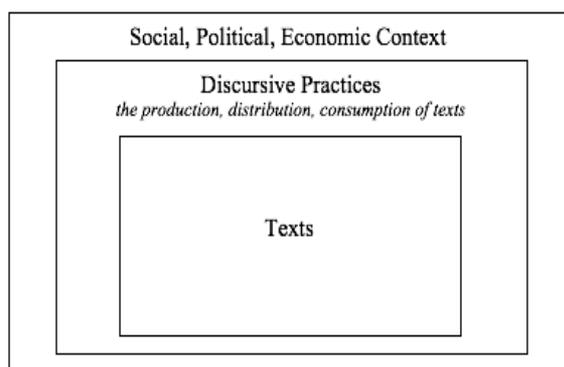


Figure 1 Levels of Faircloughian CDA
(Fairclough, 1995: 59)

Maintaining a poststructural framework in collaboration with a populist paradigm, this paper shares Wojczewski's approach toward a discursive analysis. However, the paper aims at organizing the analysis via a Faircloughian CDA (1989). As stated by Halperin and Heath (2017: 338) poststructural debate has made significant contributions within the field of discourse studies, yet it has faced critique in relation to its negligence of pre-existing social structures and power relationships. Consequently, CDA was established, aiming to uncover the linkages between language power and ideology (Fairclough, 2001: 4). It is primarily concerned with understanding the role of discourse in performing, emulating, and abiding social power abuse, dominance and inequality (van Dijk, 2001: 300, 352). Furthermore, a hypothesis that aims at uncovering linkage between discourses and power can make use of CDA in order to recognize how powerful groups dominate public discourse as well as how discourses control the minds and actions of groups maintaining less power and the social consequences which pan out (van Dijk, 2001: 355).

In order to execute a CDA it is important to recognize the three levels of the method: 1) text, 2) the context and 3) the analyzing of processes whereby the power of discourse has

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demonstrable effects (Halperin and Heath, 2017: 3401-341, 343). Jankins (1997: 329) explains how Faircloughian CDA views each level as carrying its own objective, where the first level introduces the object of analysis (i.e. the verbal, visual or verbal and visual texts) (Jankins, 1997: 329). The second level addresses the processes of which the text is produced and received (i.e. writing/speaking/designing and reading/listening/viewing) by other individuals (Jankins, 1997: 329). The final level addresses the socio-historical context of which govern the processes focusing on explanations and ‘social analysis’ (Jankins, 1997: 329). By implementing the use of CDA the method effectively allows the analyst to focus on implications which constitute the text, the specified linguistic selections, and their juxtaposition (Jankins, 1997: 329). Ultimately, the analyst is able to uncover interesting patterns and disjunctions which require description, interpretation, and explanation (Jankins, 1997: 329). This goes ‘hand-in-hand’ with the previously stated methodological perspectives within an interpretivist framework, requiring interpretation in order to uncover hidden meanings and subtexts (Halperin and Heath, 2017: 50).

In order to find texts which are appropriate in reference to the first level of CDA, a set of selection criteria were established (see Figure 2). Primarily the criteria centered on referencing texts which were appropriate within or following the time-frame 2015/2016 since this features the active era of the migration crisis. As previously established, the governments of Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia are arguably populist in nature, consequently placing them as the guiding cases of the paper. Thus, the speeches should be conveyed by highly recognized government representatives, making them legitimate discourses and not lacking significant ties to the populist parties. Additionally, it is preferred that the speeches are enlisted at events relating to EU politics solidifying the discourses’ ties to an EU audience as well as their own citizens. The texts are analyzed as a whole, however distinct themes are identified such as *migration*, *identities*, and references to *the elite* and *the people*. These themes may regard discursive, ideational and institutional factors such as the governing within the EU or identities and are constructed through wordage. Descriptive narratives are considered beneficial, however given the arena which is at play one must recognize the processes of societal assumptions, political identities, political coordination and communication and how these may impact the discourses.



Figure 2 Selection Criteria for Analytical Texts

Cases

Hungary

For the paper, two speeches by Hungarian Prime Minister (PM) Viktor Orbán are presented. I argue that due to his prominent position, Orbán acts as the ‘face out’ for his party Fidesz, ultimately making his speeches key insights into the party’s perspectives on EU relations and migration. Ultimately, both speeches address concerns of the Hungarian ‘people’ and their interests (The Hungarian Government, 2017; Embassy of Hungary, 2017).

The Czech Republic

For the paper, two speeches by the Czech Republic's PM Andrej Babiš are presented. Similarly, to Orbán, Babiš acts as the 'face out' for his party ANO 2011, consequently making his speeches key features of the party's stances on EU relations and migration. Both speeches make reference to migration as a contemporary issue for the EU agenda criticizing the cooperative process (Government of the Czech Republic, 2019; Government of the Czech Republic, 2018).

Slovakia

For the paper, two speeches presented by the Slovak PM Robert Fico and Foreign Minister (FM) M. Lajčák are presented. Arguably, both actors are prominent figures for the Direction – Social Democracy party in Slovakia, thus their speeches provide primary insight into the party's positions on EU relations and migration. Notably, the speeches, contrary to Hungary and the Czech Republic, hold a more positive disposition toward the EU, yet still maintain a critical tone on the institutionalized approach to the migration crisis (SKEU, 2016a; SKEU, 2016b).

4. Analysis

How do national populist movements perceive an institutionalized approach to migration on an EU level? The paper leads with the argument that populist discourse establishes the EU as a constituent of the elite, projecting a nationalist agenda on migration rather than cooperating and maintaining a collective identity through the institution. Evidently, this places the paper within a realm of discursive examining, holding an interpretivist ontology and epistemology. The appropriate approach to gaining knowledge concerning the social world fixates on textual strategies, requiring interpretation in order to uncover 'hidden' meanings (Halperin and Heath, 2017: 50). Consequently, the paper primarily incorporates CDA in order to analyze a set of speeches addressed by the Hungarian, Czech Republic and Slovakian populist governments recognizing perspectives on an EU institutionalized approach to migration. Notably a poststructuralist framework does not support the idea that cause-and-effect relationships can explain world politics; however, prior to the CDA, the paper features a set of quantitative analyses. These are merely considered a 'backdrop' in order to help in understanding the relationship between populism and EU migration cooperation in practice, providing a pre-

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inclination of what will come of the CDA. Thus, the analysis section is divided into two main sections: 1) Quantitative Analysis: Uncovering the Statistical Relationships, and 2) CDA: The Influence of Populist Narratives.

4.1 Quantitative Analysis: Uncovering the Statistical Relationships

4.1.1 Conducting a Correlation

As previously stated, the paper begins the analysis by employing a PCC, allowing for an analysis on the relationship between the amount of validated migrant permits per year and the trust in the EU per state, with a time-frame spanning between the years 2013-2016. The time-frame recognizes how the relationship between the two variables has evolved two years prior to the migration crisis, the two years during the migration crisis and two years following. In order to carry out the PCC a set of data is examined where the Trust in the EU acts as the dependent value (i.e. the phenomenon that is aimed at being explained) and the amount of validated migrant permits per year acts as the independent value (that which is considered significant in explaining the dependent value) (Halperin and Heath, 2017: 392). As can be observed from the data on the validated migrant permits per year (see Table 3) Slovakia had a steady increase in validated permits between 2013-2018 where the largest spike in validation was a nearly 30% increase from 2017-2018. Similarly, the Czech Republic and Hungary witnessed a nearly steady increase in validate permits, with regard to a one-year margin where the validations depreciated. The reduction was noticed in Hungary in 2014, where the validated permits decreased by nearly 40% from the previous year; however, Hungary also saw its highest increase in validated permits between 2016-2017 with an increment of more than 110%. The Czech Republic noticed its drop in 2017 where validations subsided by nearly 2%; however, the following year an increase was yet again determined, this time amassing a margin of roughly 10%.

States	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Hungary	66 379	40 085	45 468	54 814	117 026	130 000
The Czech Republic	275 075	280 762	288 426	309 601	304 269	334 157
Slovakia	24 864	28 611	34 113	39 906	48 119	62 365

Table 3 Validated migrant permits per year (2013-2018): Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia (Eurostat 2020)

From the data on validated migrant permits, it is evident that the Czech Republic has witnessed the largest bulk of approved authorization, where its lowest quantity was still two times as large as Hungary’s greatest number of validated permits. With such a substantial difference in permits per state, it is assumed that any discontent of a general European-level approach to migration cooperation would be reflected in the compiled data on trust in the EU. As can be observed by the data on Trust in the EU between 2013-2018 (see Figure 3), the Czech Republic is seemingly the state with greatest dissatisfaction, where its quota of ‘Don’t Trust’ reached a staggering 66% in 2016, the same year that it saw its second highest inflation of validated permits. Hungary saw its lowest margin of ‘Tend to Trust’ in 2015 with 41%, the same year that Slovakia saw its lowest measure of ‘Tend to Trust’ with 39%. Yet, merely observing data cannot provide a clear insight into potential relationships between the data sets, hence the implementation of PCC is addressed per state below.

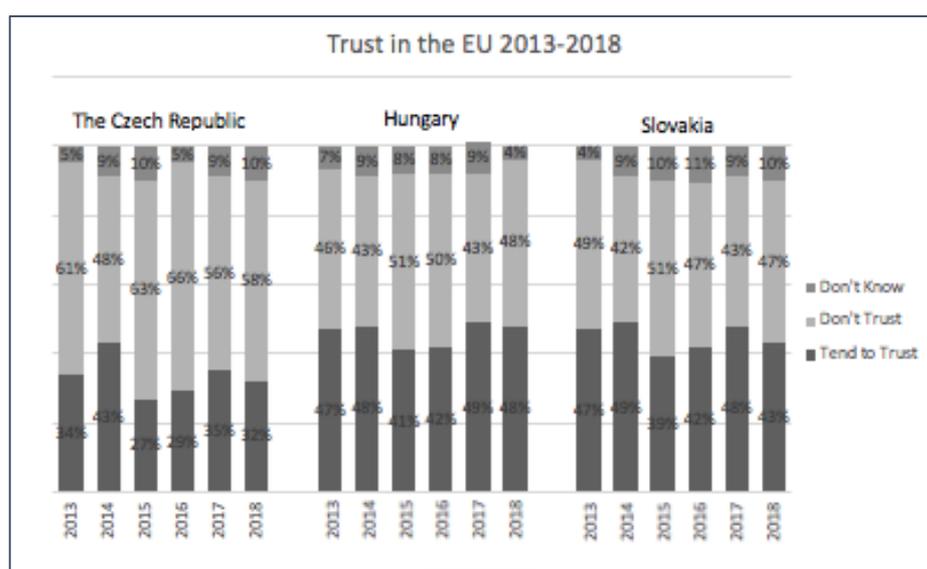


Figure 3 Trust in the EU (2013-2018): the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia (Eurobarometer 2013-2018)

Hungary

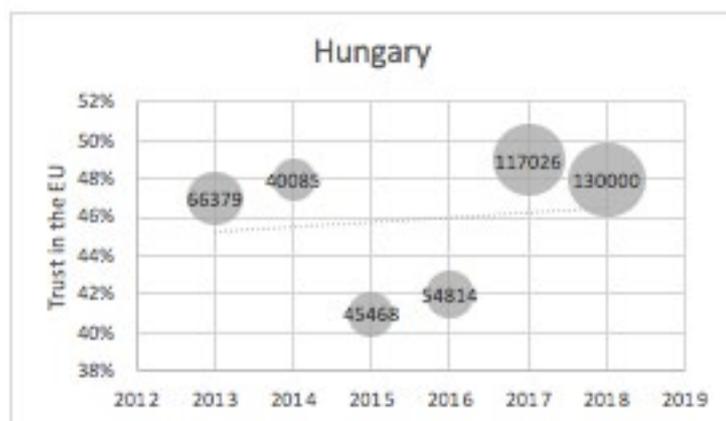


Figure 4 Hungary: Validated permits and trust in the EU (2013-2018)

Year	Validated Permits	Tend to Trust	Don't Trust	Don't Know
2013	66 379	47%	46%	7%
2014	40 085	48%	43%	9%
2015	45 468	41%	51%	8%
2016	54 814	42%	50%	8%
2017	117 026	49%	43%	9%
2018	130 000	48%	48%	4%
Correlation (r): 0,59				

■ The values utilized for the PCC

Table 4 Values utilized for Hungary's PCC

As can be determined when assessing Table 4, the main columns utilized for the conduction of the Hungarian PCC is 'validated permits' and 'tend to trust'. After calculating the Pearson's correlation, the r-value given was 0,59. Studying Table 2, this value allows for the observation of a (positive) moderate linear relationship. As previously stated, when two (sets) of variables are positively related, they change in the same direction (Halperin and Heath, 2017: 129). Thus, the provided r-value supposes that when the number of validated permits increase so does the trust in the EU. The relationship is expressed in Figure 4.

The Czech Republic

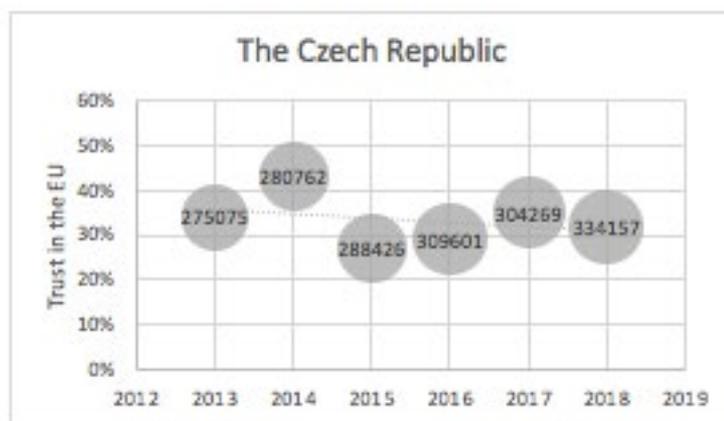


Figure 5 The Czech Republic: Validated permits and trust in the EU (2013-2018)

Year	Validated Permits	Tend to Trust	Don't Trust	Don't Know
2013	275 075	34%	61%	5%
2014	280 762	43%	48%	9%
2015	288 426	27%	63%	10%
2016	309 601	29%	66%	5%
2017	304 269	35%	56%	9%
2018	334 157	32%	58%	10%
Correlation (r): -0,34				

■ The values utilized for the PCC

Table 5 Values Utilized for the Czech Republic's PCC

Similarly, to the above-section on Hungary, Table 5 provides the values utilized for the conduction of the Czech Republic's PCC, highlighting the specifically utilized columns. After carrying out the Pearson's correlation, the given r-value was -0,34. Referencing Table 2, a (negative) weak linear relationship is observed. Ultimately this means that a relationship can be detected, but there is no definite cause-and-effect relationship; however, there is a tendency that when validated permits increase, trust in the EU decreases. The relationship is expressed in Figure 5.

Slovakia



Figure 6 Slovakia: Validated permits and trust in the EU (2013-2018)

Year	Validated Permits	Tend to Trust	Don't Trust	Don't Know
2013	24 864	47%	49%	4%
2014	28 611	49%	42%	9%
2015	34 113	39%	51%	10%
2016	39 906	42%	47%	11%
2017	48 119	48%	43%	9%
2018	62 365	43%	47%	10%
Correlation (r): -0,23				

■ The values utilized for the PCC

Table 6 Values Utilized for Slovakia's PCC

Observing Table 6, the values utilized for Slovakia's PCC are expressed, explicitly highlighting the most significant columns. After calculating the Pearson's correlation, the determined r-value resulted in -0,23. Similarly to the Czech Republic, the negative margin would imply that as validated permits increase, the trust for the EU decreases. Yet, the value is too low to recognize a relationship, thus the relationship is determined nonexistent. The relationship is expressed in Figure 6.

Summarizing the PCC

The conducted PCCs provided varying categories with Hungary presuming an existent (positive) moderate linear relationship, where an increase in validated permits generated an increased trust in the EU. However, this challenges the literature by Fenko et al. (2019: 396) arguing that Hungary has implemented Eurosceptic populist parties as leading national governments, with Fidesz expressing itself as the ‘defender of the European nations against the Brussels-elite’ (Juhasz et al. 2015: 6-7). Furthermore, Slovakia’s PCC generated no relationship, implying that the Direction – Social Democracy party’s strong opposition to the EU migration policy has held no influence on the overall trust in the EU (Fenko et al., 2019: 396). Yet, the results for the Czech Republic’s PCC were reported as expected, where a (negative) weak linear relationship was observed, implying when validated permits increase, the trust in the EU decreases. This relates to claims by Fenko et al. (2019: 396) where the Czech Republic has implemented Eurosceptic populist parties, implying that the leadership has influenced perspectives on the EU *elite*. Nonetheless, these relationships should not be considered definitive; rather, the PCC’s provide simplified insight into possible linkages between variables of validated asylum permits and trust in the EU. However, the paper does not aim to analyze influence of populist discourse on perceptions of the EU, but rather how these discourses are constituted. Thus, the PCCs are merely featured as a ‘backdrop’ in understanding the relationship between populism and EU migration cooperation in practice, useful at the context and discursive practices stages of CDA.

4.1.2 Trend: Trust in National Governments and Parliaments, and in the EU

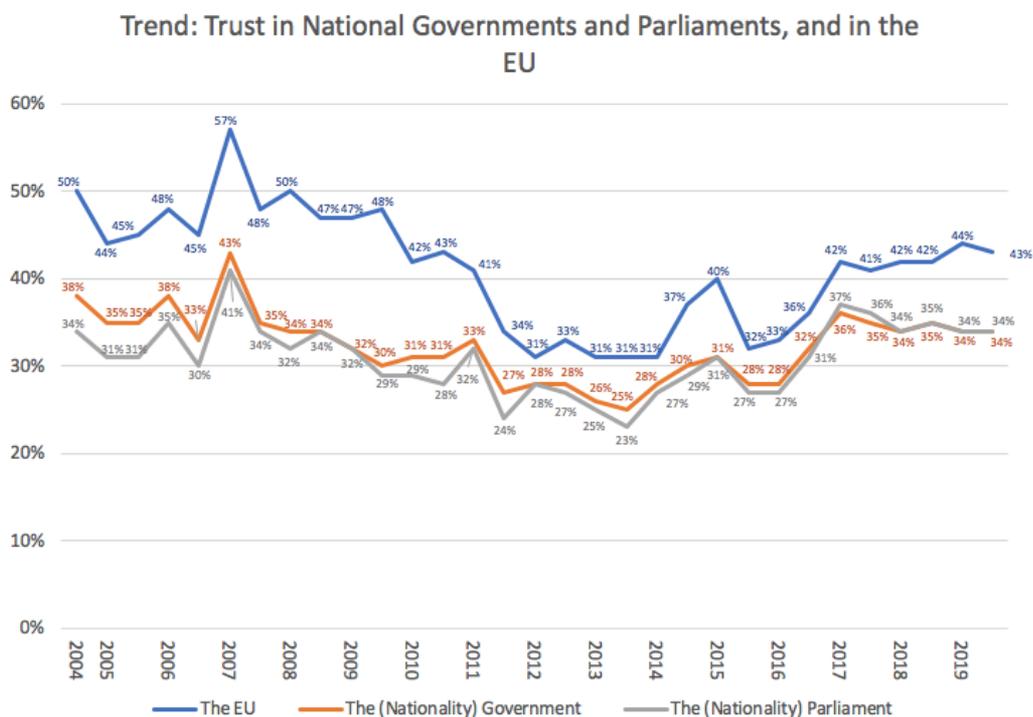


Figure 7 Trend: Trust in National Governments and Parliaments, and in the EU (Eurobarometer 2019)

Having conducted the PCC for each state, the paper introduces the Eurobarometer (2019) statistics on the trend of trust in the national governments and parliaments as well as the EU (see Figure 7). The values have been conducted between 2004 and 2019 for each Spring and Autumn report (with the exception of 2004 which only saw values from the Autumn report). As can be observed, the general trust in the EU was significantly strong during the 2000s, with 57% being the highest reported value in Spring 2007. However, the trend was seen declining in the beginning stages of the 2010s, jumping from 43% in Autumn 2010 to 34% one year later. In Spring 2015, the values increased, this time to 40%, however this high soon reduced to 32% the following Autumn and remained within the lower 30s throughout the duration of the migration crisis. Trust in the national governments and parliaments also saw a decrease in support during this time, with a reported low of 27% trust in the national governments and 28% in the national parliaments. However, following the crisis, all three bodies saw an increase, with the EU specifically noting values in the 40s as early as 2017.

Much like the results found via the PCCs, the observed trend in the varied institutes does not support the idea that there is an observed negative perception on the EU. However,

it is important to note that the trend does not apply solely to populist led governments, but a variety of differing leadership; hence, it is difficult to draw any populist-oriented debates from the graph. Instead the graph should merely be addressed in its character of a longitudinal trend on EU trust, and how it has changed throughout the past two decades. Evidently, the EU has been preferred to the national governments and parliaments; however, the institution’s support has faced a strong decline throughout the 2010s. Nonetheless, observing 2017 onward the increase is slowly rising, yet it is not until the implementation of the CDA such trends are interpreted in practice.

4.1.3 Support for a Common European Asylum System

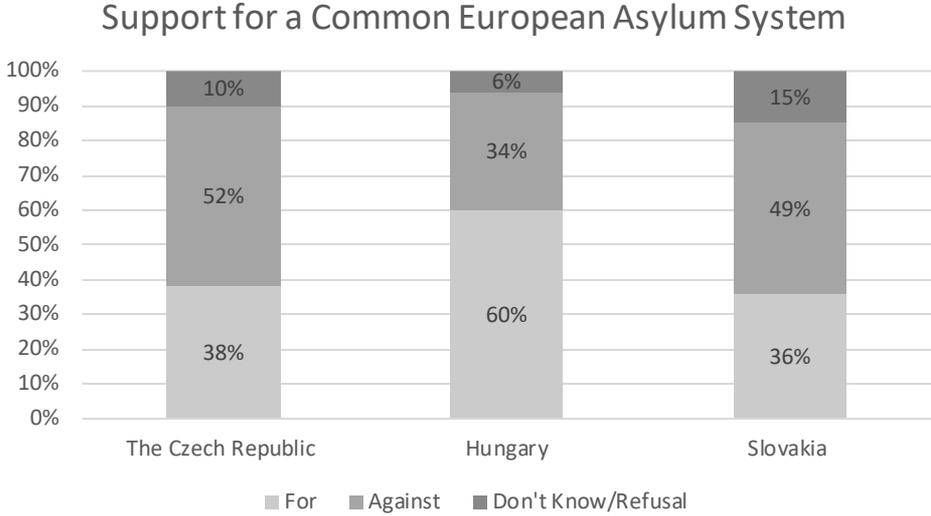


Figure 8 Support for a Common EU Asylum System per The Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia (Eurobarometer, 2019)

The final part of the quantitative analysis involves examining the support for a common European asylum system per the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia. Observing Figure 8 the Czech Republic and Slovakia both hold a preference ‘against’ a common system, with the Czech Republic voting 52% against and Slovakia 49%. These results are fitting with the writings of Fenko et al (2019: 396) where the Czech Republic has implemented Eurosceptic populist parties within their leading governments, implying that the leadership has influenced perspectives on the EU ‘elite’. Similarly, the Direction – Social Democracy party’s strong opposition to the EU migration policy may have the potential to influence a negative perception on a common European asylum system. Yet, similarly to the PCCs, Hungary takes a distinctive approach favoring EU

institutionalization on a common approach by 60%. As previously stated, this challenges the literature by Fenko et al. (2019: 396) since Hungary has implemented Eurosceptic populist parties as leading national governments, with Fidesz perceiving itself as the ‘defender of the European nations against the Brussels-elite’ (Juhász et al. 2015: 6-7). However, as stated with the prior two quantitative analysis, this paper does not aim to detect any cause-and-effect relationships within the data sets. Instead, they should merely be utilized in order to generate prior knowledge before the CDA is adapted.

4.2 CDA: The Influence of Populist Narratives

As previously stated, due to the poststructuralist nature of the paper in coherence with a populist theory or ‘paradigm’, the main analysis of this paper centers on a qualitative foundation. Ultimately, this allows the paper to examine the discursive practices utilized by populist leadership, generating a negative portrayal of the EU elite and an institutionalized approach to migration cooperation. Consequently, I argue that a structured approach toward the analysis comes in form of a Faircloughian CDA, uncovering the discursive settings within the texts, their practices and their contexts. Hence, each state will be given a section below, with their populist leadership presenting two speeches to be analyzed.

4.2.1 Hungary

Speech of Viktor Orbán at the European People's Party Congress

The first speech addressed in reference to Hungary is one presented by PM Viktor Orbán at the European People’s Party Congress. By adapting the method of a Faircloughian CDA (1989), the first stage aims at presenting a *descriptive* analysis of the text providing a framework on *vocabulary*, *grammar* and *textual structure*. Referencing the vocabulary-level, the speech utilizes experiential values – linguistic practices constituting a common ideological core/belief (Fairclough, 1989: 114). By implementing terminologies such as ‘serious dangers’, a ‘migration *crisis*’ and a ‘security and terror *crisis*’, Orbán generates the belief that Europe is facing imminent challenges harming the future of the region (About Hungary, 2017). This is furthered by the relational values at the vocabulary-level – “[...] how a text’s choice of wordings [...] helps create, social relationships between participants” (Fairclough, 1989: 116). Orbán reiterates terms of ‘Muslim migration’, ‘Muslims’, ‘the European People’, and references to ‘us versus them’ terminology (About Hungary, 2017). Addressing relational values at the grammatical level, these are exemplified within the

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statement: “The Human Rights Court has to be reformed urgently, because its judgements are a threat to the security of the *European people* and an invitation for *migrants*” (About Hungary, 2017). By generating such division, the competitive ideology stresses the unity of the European people at the expense of recognized division of interest (Fairclough, 1989: 128).

Similarly, metaphorical linguistics at a vocabulary-level are used when describing migration as the ‘trojan horse of terrorism’ (About Hungary, 2017). As illustrated by Fairclough (1989: 119) a metaphor is “a means of representing one aspect of experience in terms of another [...]” – different metaphors contain varying ideological attachments. Thus, by drawing upon classical Greek mythology, the audience is encouraged to recognize migration as a gateway to terrorist agenda. Such concerns are furthered when the text applies repetitive sentence cohesion at the grammatical-level in statements such as: “The way we see it, Europe is the best place in the world for human life. *For the time being*. We can live in freedom and prosperity, in our own cultural environment. *For the time being*” (About Hungary, 2017). The repetitiveness encourages the perception that increasing migration is a threat European values. Thus, I argue that the textual structure is divided into two halves, where the first half aims at generating the issue of migration as a threat to Europe, followed by the second half aimed at tackling the issue through Orbán’s narrative such as reforming EU foreign policy (Hungary, 2017). As stated by Fairclough (1989: 138) the structuring of a text implements levels of routine and social practice which ideologically ‘sets and closes agendas.’

However, in order to recognize such agendas, CDA incorporates an *interpretive* analysis of the discursive practices. To begin, the situational context and intertextual context are presented, where the situational context illustrates the interaction at play and the intertextual context references the presupposed history of the text (Fairclough, 1989: 147, 152). Evidently, the situational context concerns the expression of opinions on migration and EU relations, where Orbán considers himself the voice of the people. The intertextual context can be determined from the previously engaged quantitative analysis, where at the time of the speech, Hungary was facing a rise in validated migrant permits. With this background discursive practices such as articulation can be addressed, exemplified by the statement: “Migration has revealed that we have taken in significant anti-semitic potential to Europe. Migration has revealed that the newcomers rather living in parallel societies instead of being integrated to the mainstream” (About Hungary, 2017). By repeatedly

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establishing associations between migration and the opposition to European values, these meanings are taken to be a truth, where migrants are seen as a threat to these values (Weldes, 1996: 284). Additionally, by contextualizing migration with anti-Semitism, the populist paradigm sees the speech as an outlet “[...] encouraging the actor’s vision about the future as the possible ‘death’ or ‘cure’ of democracy” (Lara, 2018: 379).

Furthermore, throughout the speech, Orbán references the EU as lacking efficiency in reference to the migration crisis, stating “We Hungarians are protecting the borders of the European Union over hundreds of kilometers – without any major contribution from the EU, in fact, but suffering from the backfire of Brussels” (About Hungary, 2017). Taking such a stance is a form of speech-act, where language is used to generate cultural or social meanings, thus Orbán encourages the view of a flawed and unjustified EU approach on migration. This is also expressed via poststructuralist disciplinary power, where identities of the Hungarian people as efficient and heroic (positive connotations) are contradictory to the flawed and inefficient EU (negative connotations) (Campbell and Bleiker, 2016: 208).

Consequently, addressing the context stage of CDA, an explanatory analysis comes into play. This stage aims to uncover any changes in ‘member’s resources’ or MR alluding to the position that the subject of whom is interpreting a text already has preconceived notions of a diverse collection of shapes of words, forms of grammar, properties of objects and persons, etc. – referred to as background knowledge (Fairclough, 1989: 11, 141). Analyzing the speech, it is evident that Orbán takes issue with the EU approach to the migration crisis. He alludes to the position that the EU neglects the will of the people, essentially prioritizing the migrants. Additionally, he views migration as a threat to the future of Europe, unless the EU institution reforms its foreign policy (About Hungary, 2017). Due to Orbán’s high position as PM, people tend to accept knowledge and beliefs from those whom they deem credible (van Dijk, 2001: 357). Thus, the change in MR could be considered ‘emergence’ as a negative association toward migrants as well as a negative perception on an institutionalized approach toward migration, so long as the EU refuses to reform its foreign policy (cf. Fairclough, 2005: 42-43; About Hungary, 2017).

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Speech in the European Parliament

The second speech addressed in reference to Hungary is PM Orbán's speech in the EU parliament. Following the same framework of the Faircloughian CDA, as presented above, firstly a descriptive analysis at the textual stage is presented. Locating linguistical practices at the vocabulary-level, Orbán begins the speech using terminology such as 'dispute' and 'falsehood' in reference to the duality between the Hungarian state and the EU (Website of the Hungarian Government, 2017). This builds upon the usage of experiential values where the common core/belief argues that the institution's practices do not reflect Hungary's best interests, specifically in relation to finances (see Fairclough, 1989: 114). This stance is furthered in relation to migration where Orbán utilizes relational values both within a vocabular and grammatical-level context; exemplified by his consistent usage of 'migrants', 'the institution', 'Brussels', 'you' as well as 'us versus them' terminologies (Website of the Hungarian Government, 2017). Grammatically, this is issued in the phrase, "*Our* position is clear: *we* do not want, and do not think it is in accordance with the founding treaties of *the Union*, to settle *migrants* in *our* country in a mandatory way" (Website of the Hungarian Government, 2017). By constituting these divisions, the competitive ideology encourages a unification of the Hungarian citizens at the expense of EU favoritism toward migrants.

Furthermore, Orbán makes use of metaphorical linguistics on a vocabular-level when comparing the Hungarian reputation to that of a wrongfully convicted individual (Website of the Hungarian Government, 2017). However, due to this not merely being positioned within terminology, but rather explored throughout a set of sentences, I argue that the metaphorical linguistics are as well practiced within the grammatical-level: "This charge is therefore baseless [...] It is like when someone is accused of murder and convicted, while the victim of the alleged crime is alive and well. And pointing and shouting "murderer" at the convict himself" (Website of the Hungarian Government, 2017). Consequently, I argue that the textual structure is categorized in three stages; the first aims at bettering the Hungarian reputation by rejecting claims made at its expense (Website of the Hungarian Government, 2017). The second stage aims at identifying migration as the core issue at hand, placing the Hungarian state within a 'victimhood' due to faults within EU policy (Website of the Hungarian Government, 2017). This is furthered in the third stage where Orbán addressed the EU stating that people "[...] will only support the European Union if it is fair and built on open debates, capable of admitting that it needs reform from time to time" (Website of the Hungarian Government, 2017).

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Attributing an interpretive analysis at the discursive practices stage, the situational context demonstrates a debate at the European Parliament, discussing (migration) issues within Europe, where Orbán acts as the voice for the Hungarian people. Additionally, with the speech being presented in 2017, the values from the above-executed quantitative analysis suggest that the Hungarian state had seen an increase in validated migrant permits, situated within the intertextual context. Adapting this foundation, the text can be analyzed by its discursive practices. Orbán states in his speech that George Soros encourages the migration movement, a movement which the PM argues would only ‘increase the burdens of people’ as well as ‘lead to a drastic prices increase’ (Website of the Hungarian Government, 2017). Consequently, this references the use of speech acts where Orbán manages to construct migration as a threat to the economy (see Campbell and Bleiker, 2017: 337; Hardy, 2001: 26). Tying such statements to the intertextual context, Orbán can draw upon MR generating *schemata* (activity), *frames* (subject matter) and *scripts* (subjects/members) (Fairclough, 1989: 158-159). The awareness of increase in migration following the migrant crisis (*schemata*), can hold negative impact on the state’s finance (*frame*), burdening the Hungarian ‘people’ (*scripts*).

Consequently, within the context stage of CDA, the explanatory analysis encourages a change in MR. By using the poststructuralist concept of disciplinary power, Orbán manages to present migration within a self/other contextualization, where migrants harm the Hungarian ‘people’. Similarly, disciplinary power conceives a neglectful EU (them), lacking empathy toward Hungary (us). These identities are then constituted within the populist paradigm, where the increase of migrants is a threat to the economy, ‘Christian values’ and ergo democracy. As previously explained, the high-ranking position of Orbán advocates these perceptions as truths (van Dijk, 2001: 357). Thereupon, the change in MR can be determined as ‘operationalization’ with a negative attitude toward migrants in coherence with a negative perception on an institutionalized migration approach, as long as the EU refrains from admitting that it needs to reform (cf. Fairclough, 2005: 42-43; Website of the Hungarian Government, 2017).

4.2.2 The Czech Republic

Speech of Prime Minister Andrej Babiš at Prague European Summit

As executed within the Hungarian speeches, the same framework of CDA is applied to the speeches concerning the Czech Republic. Specifically, the first speech to be addressed in response to the state, is PM Babiš's speech at the Prague European Summit. Identifying the linguistical practices at the vocabulary-level, the text utilizes experiential values when referencing wordage such as *'illegal migration'*, *'crisis/crises'*, and *'problem'* (Government of the Czech Republic, 2018). Consequently, this generates a common core/belief that migration acts as a catalyst for some of Europe's largest concerns, complicating the institution's efficiency. This sentiment is furthered when looking upon relational-values of the vocabulary-level in reference to *'migrants'*, *'Europe'*, *'the EU'*, and references to *'us versus them'* terminology (Government of the Czech Republic, 2018). However, it is particularly within relational-values at the grammatical-level where these notions come into play, exemplified in the stance *"The EU belongs to its citizens. It influences the life of us all on a daily basis"* (Government of the Czech Republic, 2018). By contextualizing these divisions, the competitive ideology encourages a unification of the EU, at the expense of favoritism toward migrants (see Fairclough, 1989: 128).

Following, Babiš utilizes metaphorical discourse at the vocabular-level when referencing a *'tide of illegal migrants'* and *'waves of migration'* (Government of the Czech Republic, 2018). As addressed by Charteris-Black, *'tide'* and *'waves'* are defined as *'natural disaster'* metaphors and are used in order to heighten fears and *'discourage empathy with immigrants by treating them as objects, rather than as the subjects of life stories'* (Charteris-Black, 2006: 563, 569; Halperin and Heath, 2017: 342). However, metaphorical linguistics is also present at the grammatical-level of the text, where Babiš states, *"[...] we'll manage to protect ourselves against the security threats that spring up like mushrooms at our common European borders"* (Government of the Czech Republic, 2018). The idea here is to convey that issues are rising hastily, just like fungi evolves, and that this should be manageable in reference to the EU. Additionally, the text utilizes logical connectors between sentences (see Fairclough, 1989: 131) such as, *"We shall not allow for the proposals that the citizens strongly disagree with to be adopted, even if it'll be citizens from a single Member State"* (Government of the Czech Republic, 2018). This suggests that the will of singular states is not being met by the EU but deserves equal significance to the institute at whole. Thus, I argue that the text can be seen as divided into two primary

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sections; the first, addressing the issue of migration and its influence on the EU, and the second, a warning to the EU that it needs to favor its citizens or its support will be lacking.

Embarking on the discursive practices stage, an interpretive analysis is conducted. In reference to the situational context, the speech discusses migration at an EU political summit, where Babiš acts as the voice of ‘the people’ in reference to the issue of migration. Additionally, by addressing the quantitative analysis, the intertextual context sees that at the time of the speech (2018) the Czech Republic had witnessed an extensive increase in validated migrant permits, as well as a lack of trust in the EU. Consequently, this basis allows us to interpret the discursive practices at play within the text. To exemplify, speech acts can be witnessed in the phrase “In the past couple of years we’ve been witnessing the crisis of the public trust across the whole Europe” (Government of the Czech Republic, 2018). Babiš implies that the EU is not meeting its commitments to its citizens, ultimately generating a rift between the institution and ‘the people’. From a poststructuralist position, Babiš utilizes disciplinary power, generating a self/other identity between the two groups, where EU favoritism of migrants does not match the interests of ‘the people’. Additionally, from a populist perspective, the clashing interests emphasize a threat to democracy, essentially condemning the EU as the ‘elitist other’.

Adapting an explanatory analysis within the context stage of CDA, the change in MR is addressed. As previously stated, the audience of the speech would have the presupposed position of an increase in migration at the intertextual context. Thus, the speech would only solidify any negative preconceived notions of migration. With Babiš dominating the influential position of PM, his statements would easily be ‘credible’ in the eye of the audience (van Dijk, 2001: 357). By utilizing references such as “[...] EU still does not know if its goal is to prevent illegal migration or send to Europe everyone, who jumps to a boat few meters from an African Coast” Babiš presents a helter-skelter type situation, where the EU (them) does not take the interest of ‘the people’ (us) sincerely (Government of the Czech Republic, 2018). Consequently, the change in MR is seen as ‘hegemony’ witnessing a negative perception on migrants as well as on an institutionalized migration approach, if the EU does not begin to address the interest of the people (cf. Fairclough, 2005: 42-43; Government of the Czech Republic, 2018).

Prime Minister's Speech at the Conference 15 Years of Czech Republic's Membership in the European Union

The second speech analyzed in reference to the Czech Republic, features PM Babiš discussing 15 years of the state's membership within the EU. Providing a descriptive analysis at the textual stage of CDA, the speech can be seen adapting experiential values at the vocabulary-level, when referencing protection, 'hypocrisy', and '*illegal migration*' (Government of the Czech Republic, 2019). By reiterating these words through the speech, Babiš encourages a common core/belief of migration as a handicap in the efficiency of EU agency. A similar tone is found within the relational-values at the vocabulary-level, with recognition to '*illegal migrants*', 'citizens of Europe', 'the European Union', 'Europe' and referencing of 'us versus them' terminology (Government of the Czech Republic, 2019). Yet, it is at the grammatical-level where such terminology is at play; this is exemplified in the discussion of the Schengen area, stating "*We* have to make sure it is protected from *the outside* and *we* decide *who we* let in" (Government of the Czech Republic, 2019). Via contextualization between 'the outside' and 'we', Babiš generates a competitive ideology aiming to unify those within the Schengen area, at the expense of those existing within the deemed 'outside' (cf. Fairclough, 1989: 128).

Furthering the debate of the descriptive analysis, the grammatical-level also provides examples of logical connectors as exemplified in the statement "We should end up with that hypocrisy and I do not understand why, when some Member States are defending the Schengen area against illegal migration, such as Bulgaria, even better than some Schengen members who allow illegal migration, they are not there" (Government of the Czech Republic, 2019). Ultimately, this suggests that those who are protecting the Schengen area should not be at the receiving-end of backlash, since they are merely working in favor of Europe, in comparison to those who vow their support for migration. Consequently, I argue that the text is separated into three primary divisions, the first discussing the Czech Republic's contentment with its EU-membership, followed by the second division criticizing the institution's handling of migration. However, it is the third division which highlight's Babiš main sentiment of the speech, a reforming of the EU.

As previously stated, Fairclough (1989: 138) argues that the structuring of a text ideologically 'sets and closes agendas', thus in order to address these agenda, the paper embarks on the interpretive analysis of the discursive practices. Firstly, the situational context involves the presenting of a speech at an EU-themed conference, discussing the

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pros-and-cons of the EU institution at present-day with Babiš portraying ‘the voice’ of the European citizens. Furthermore, in reference to the intertextual context, the speech was held at a time when the Czech Republic saw an overwhelming disapproval of a common European asylum system, suggesting a general distrust in the EU approach toward migration (see Figure 8). Such sentiments are realized within stances such as “We need to be able to speak loudly where something bothers us and where the Union goes beyond its powers” (Government of the Czech Republic, 2019). This sentiment builds upon speech-acts, whereby addressing the EU as demonstrating its powers over ‘the people’ or *we*, the institution is provided a threat-like position. Additionally, this is reflected within poststructuralist disciplinary power, implying a self/other notion between the interests of the people (protection) and the interests of the institution (favoritism of migration).

Finally, pertaining to the explanatory analysis at the context stage, changes in MR are addressed. As previously stated, the intertextual context sees an opposition toward an institutionalized approach toward migration. Thus, building upon the populist paradigm, I argue that in stances such as, “For me, Schengen is an area of peace and security and we must keep this peace and security [...] This is the only way to preserve one of the most important achievements of European integration, which is a common value”, Babiš encourages the vision of migration as hindrance to ‘common value’ of integration, essentially a threat to democracy. Additionally, his implications of the EU as favoring migration emphasize a hostility toward the institution’s migration approach. Thus, the change in MR can be recognized as ‘hegemonic’ where people will be more trusting toward a state-led approach toward migration rather than an institutionalized (cf. Fairclough 2005: 42-43).

4.2.3 Slovakia

Speech by Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico in the European Parliament

Following the same narrative and framework of the Faircloughian CDA, the speech by former Slovak PM Fico is first addressed at the textual stage via a descriptive analysis. The speech utilizes multiple experiential values at the vocabulary-level with terminology such as ‘failure’, ‘elitism’, ‘fear’ and ‘Europessimism’ (SKEU, 2016a). Through the consistent negativity directed at the EU and the migration crisis, Fico establishes a common core/belief that the EU is not managing the issue of migration in a manner which is up to European citizens’ standards. A similar stance is perceived within the relational-values at the vocabulary-level, where Fico makes reference to ‘the EU’, ‘people’, ‘our citizens’, and implications of ‘us versus them’ terminology (SKEU, 2016a). However, it is at the grammatical-level where these relational-values can truly be addressed, such is the example “*Slovakia* has always been one of the greatest supporters of the *EU* project, although *our* confidence in the EU has also diminished in the wake of the [...] *migration crisis* and other difficulties” (SKEU, 2016a). By contextualizing a battle between EU interests and those of the member-states, Fico generates a competitive ideology unifying the Slovak, and ultimately European, citizens at the expense of trust toward the EU institution.

Continuing the discussions of the descriptive level, the speech is found to utilize metaphorical linguistics at the vocabulary-level when referencing ‘the ‘cement’ of Europe’ referring to the history of the region and its perceived sense of identity (SKEU, 2016a). By utilizing such wordage, the speech manages to further enhance the unification of the Europeans, by constituting a shared background and encouraging the audience to oppose the welcoming of migration as to not inflict any threats upon this stance. This is furthered, in the speech’s usage of repetitive sentence cohesion at the grammatical-level where in the primary stages of the speech, ‘fear’ is referenced eight times within a passage of five sentences discussing migration (SKEU, 2016a). The repetitiveness stimulates an association between ‘fear’ and ‘migration’, where the audience is left viewing migration as a threatful notion (cf. Weldes 1996: 285). Consequently, I pose that the speech is parted into two main divisions, where the first division addresses the issue of migration and the EU’s flawed approach, followed by the second division encouraging a reproduction of the discourse used within the institution, as well as a strengthened strategy (SKEU, 2016a).

Addressing, the discursive practices stage of CDA at an interpretive analysis, it is evident that the situational context pertains to a speech addressing the issue of migration at

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the European Parliament, where PM Fico is acting as the voice of ‘the people’ and making suggestions as to what changes need to occur within the institution. Additionally, the intertextual context is adapted from the quantitative analysis where Slovakia was witnessing a majority ‘lack of trust’ in the EU as well as an increase in validated migrant permits (see Figure 6 and Table 6). With his high position as PM, Fico can build upon these backgrounds throughout the speech, where utterances are likely perceived as factual due to peoples’ acceptance of knowledge from those they deem authoritative (van Dijk, 2001: 357). This is exemplified by the speech-acts found in the statement, “The EU has to get rid of its characteristic elitism and its obscureness for ordinary people who perceive it as distant and too far removed from their daily problems,” whereby referencing the institution as elitist, Fico constructs a negative account of the institution (SKEU, 2016a). This is represented via the populist paradigm where Mudde (2004: 544) argues that populism constitutes a normative distinction between the people and the elite, where the elite ‘corrupt the purity’.

These sentiments are furthered in the explanatory analysis at the context stage, where changes in MR are looked upon. As previously stated, the intertextual context informs us that at the time of the speech, Slovakia was witnessing a lack of trust in the EU. Ultimately, by utilizing poststructural disciplinary power, Fico manages to solidify this stance by generating a self/other perception between the EU and ‘the people’. Exemplified by the statement, “But we must also overcome our fear – which is the fear of political leaders who are afraid that they won’t be able to deal with the current crisis. And I guess that this is what our citizens fear the most. That is one reason why they are quickly losing trust in the EU” Fico addresses a neglectful EU, inefficient in attaining the interest of the citizens. Thus, the change in MR is perceived as ‘operationalization’ seeing discourse with the inculcation of generating a negative perception of the EU approach on migration and evidently determining an opposition to an institutionalized migration approach (cf. Fairclough, 2005: 42-43).

Speech by Foreign Minister M. Lajčák at the EP Committee AFET

The second speech acting as a representative of Slovakia, is by former FM Lajčák at the EP Committee AFET. Applying CDA, and providing a descriptive analysis at the textual stage, the speech finds itself utilizing expressive values at the vocabulary-level, something Fairclough (1989: 118-119) distinguishes as a practice of discourse where the speaker expresses evaluations by drawing on classifications with attached ideologies encompassing different values of each discourse type. To exemplify, Lajčák references ‘European identity’, ‘mutual empathy’, and ‘common project’ which all imply a positive unitary notion at the European-level (SKEU, 2016b). Contradicting, Lajčák utilizes experiential values at the vocabulary-level such as ‘message of discontent’, ‘migration *crisis*’, and ‘fear’ initiating a common core/belief that the current state of the European region is in a crisis and management of migration is not meeting citizens’ demands (SKEU, 2016b). The sentiment is furthered in the usage of relational-values such as ‘migration’, ‘EU elites’, ‘citizens’ and further references to ‘us versus them’ terminology. Yet these relational-values are clearer at the grammatical-level exemplified by “What *we* observe is the increasing gap between *people* and *EU elites*” whereby the competitive ideology solidifies an unanimity between the people at the expense of trust toward the EU (SKEU, 2016b).

Continuing the analysis of the textual stage, the speech uses metaphorical linguistics at the vocabulary-level when stating that the Presidency program cannot perform a ‘prescription’ for the EU issues – they are unable to vow for any solutions. This is followed by coordination between sentences at the grammatical-level, i.e. where the simple sentences have equal weight (Fairclough, 1989: 131) featuring assertions in the stance “[...] the Presidency intends to be: Pragmatic – because it is high time to deliver very concrete and tangible results. Uniting – since we must overcome fragmentation and individual approach in Europe. People’s voice – as we need to deal with real problems of our people” (SKEU, 2016b). The stances encourage a trust in the Slovak approach and consequently, I argue that the text is found delivering two major sections. The first addresses the concerns of the EU citizens speaking as the voice for the people, whereas the second favors the Slovak approach to these concerns.

At the discursive practices stage, the situational context is recognized as a discussion of issues at the European-level, addressing the topics such as migration where FM Lajčák acts as the voice of ‘the people’. At the intertextual context, the quantitative analysis helps generate the understanding that at the time of the speech the migration crisis was active, and

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Slovakia was facing an increase in validated migrant permits as well as a lack of trust for the EU. With this background the speech manages to utilize speech acts in the previously mentioned stance “What we observe is the increasing gap between people and EU elites. But also fear of losing job, cultural identity or safety stems from fear that we, the leaders, will fail in dealing with them” where the EU becomes portrayed as an entity which does not take serious the concerns of the people. Additionally, the referencing of the ‘EU elites’ is situated within the populist paradigm where the elite is considered the anti- of the people, lacking empathy to its citizens (Mudde, 2004: 544).

These positions are furthered in the context stage’s explanatory analysis where the changes in MR are addressed. As registered by the intertextual context, the audience is aware of the migration crisis at large, and a lack of trust in the EU. By utilizing poststructural disciplinary power, Lajčák generates a self/other identity between the EU and the citizens building upon migration as a catalyst. By implying such a rift, yet also recognizing the benefits of the institution, a position mirrored by that of a Stockholm syndrome scenario is iterated. However, with Lajčák consistently making references such as the need to “comprehend the message of discontent EU citizens convey to us” the contrapositions between the institution’s and the peoples’ interests are solidified. Consequently, the MR can be interpreted as ‘operationalized’ where the EU approach on migration is deemed dissatisfactory, opting for a resistance to an institutionalized migration approach.

5. Conclusion

Reemphasizing the research question, *how do national populist movements perceive an institutionalized approach to migration on an EU level?* As previously stated, the question holds roots within IR scholarship where Webber (2014: 352) labels national-populist politics as a ‘tectonic plate’ in reference to EU disintegration. Furthermore, Bulmer and Joseph (2016: 726) pose that domestic social relations need be recognized within global developments in order to classify the process by which European integration is shaped. Consequently, the paper’s puzzle illustrates the importance of acknowledging national-populist parties in relation to EU collaboration, specifically in reference to the issue of migration. As discussed throughout the paper, populist narratives maintain the potential of establishing the EU as an ‘elitist’ institution, detaching it from a common association with ‘the people’ (Mudde, 2004: 543). Encouraging contra-camp identities between the institution and its citizens, whilst simultaneously addressing issues at the EU level, ultimately influences transnational relations. Thus, it is significant to recognize populist discourses in order to understand positions of opposition toward an institutionalized migration approach.

The main argument poses that populist discourse establishes the EU as a constituent of the elite, projecting a nationalist agenda on migration rather than cooperating and maintaining a collective identity through the institution. Thus, the paper recognizes the IR relevancy of the puzzle by acknowledging previous scholarship addressing the three themes of populism, EU stability, and migration politics. Additionally, the paper implements justification of the theoretical paradigm, incorporating poststructuralism and a populist ‘theory’ or paradigm into the research. With both theoretical perspectives adapting an interpretivist framework, scientific knowledge is wholly adopted by ‘interpreting the meanings which give people reasons for acting; thus, the social world has to be analyzed as a text, uncovering ‘hidden meanings and subtexts’ (Halperin and Heath, 2017: 50). Therefore, the paper predominantly employs Faircloughian CDA analyzing two speeches per Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, with each state arguably maintaining populist leadership during or following the migration crisis 2015/2016. Yet, prior, the paper utilizes quantitative means of data as a ‘backdrop’ helping to understand the relationship between populism and EU migration cooperation in practice, at the context and discursive practices stages of CDA.

Firstly, the quantitative data, primarily the PCCs per state, witness an increased trust in the EU as validated permits rose within Hungary; however, the Czech Republic and Slovakia

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either recognize a lack of trust in the institution as permits develop or witness no significant correlation, respectively. Nonetheless, within the CDA the general tone remains critical with Orbán criticizing the EU for a perceived inefficiency in the handling of the migration crisis, encouraging the motive of a reform (About Hungary, 2017; Website of the Hungarian Government, 2017). Furthermore, the interplay within the states' discourses uncovers three constituted identities with the EU-perceived 'elite' carrying opposing values to 'the people' and maintaining favoritism toward the threatening 'migrants'. Thus, the MR is encouraged to adopt a negative perception of the EU position on migration (Fairclough, 2005: 42-43). Comprehensively, these discursive practices build upon the poststructural understanding of disciplinary power, where the speakers manage to dictate the self/other identities via applied wordage, pertaining to the main argument of the paper that populist discourse establishes the EU as a constituent of the elite, projecting a nationalist agenda on migration rather than cooperating and maintaining a collective identity through the institution.

Conclusively, the research contributes to the field of IR by addressing studies of regional cooperation by analyzing populist narratives in relation to an institutionalized migration approach at the EU level. The research should be recognized as a foundational building-block in reference to further debates of populist discourse and regional cooperation processes. This is exemplified by Bulmer and Joseph (2016: 732) who pose that by facilitating conversations on domestic politics and social relations, an 'umbilical cord' is generated between domestic interests and the EU institution. However, as previously stated, the utilization of an interpretivist framework requires transparency; thus, it is significant to recognize that the results within this paper may vary in relation to other interpretations. Yet, notably, the paper has refrained from incorporated bias when executing the research.

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