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| *POPULISM IN PORTUGAL: A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH*

Why study populism? Because populism is on the rise, left and right. Talk of populism is all around us: countless talk shows, columns and op-eds have been devoted to it and everyone seems to have a strong opinion on its dangers. Yet, both outside and inside academia, what populism means remains elusive and how it works is poorly understood. Half a century of populist research has failed to reach a consensus about a minimal definition of populism. It has today several different meanings, an implicit normative duplicity, and its operationalization remains at the very least challenging.

In this project, we propose a fresh approach to populism and test it against the Portuguese case. The period in study is 2011-2015, the political agents are political parties, and the empirical corpus is parties' public discourses. Theoretically, it supersedes both ontic and ontological approaches, and focuses instead on the work of articulation of contents within the logic of resentment by certain key political agents. Methodologically, Portugal is conceived as a negative case. We hypothesise that the performative articulation of the populist logic of resentment by Portuguese political parties, turning a part of the Portuguese against another part in the name of the "people," failed to translate into electoral success. Our aim is the full identification and understanding of the distinctive features of the Portuguese case and of the reasons behind the relative underachievement of most populist strategies by political parties in Portugal. To shed further light on these dimensions, our study has a comparative dimension with Spain, where the *Podemos* party nearly tripled its share of the national vote between mid-2014 and late 2015.