

5.

A game of masks: the communicative performance of the Portuguese populist far-right

RUI NOVAIS (Universidade Católica Portuguesa, CEFH)¹

Abstract:

This chapter aims to unpack the game of masks involved in the stagecraft of the far-right populist communicative performance while building an image and messaging from the margins of the conventional political establishment to seek legitimization and integration in it. Indeed, an analysis ranging from the ground laying phase of the Chega party to being established as the third political force in the country's parliament reveals Ventura matching most of if not all far-right's populist multidimensional content framing and indicators of communicative style. The repertoire of the communicative performance also offers critical evidence of the chameleonic nature of both the ideational and performative populisms across different national contexts.

Keywords: Far-right populism, political communication, framing and style, Portugal, communicative performance, mask, and stagecraft

Portugal was not long ago one of the few longstanding European exceptions to the flourishing revival of right-wing populism and the growing tide of electoral success across the continent in countries as diverse as Poland, Hungary, Switzerland, Denmark, Austria, Finland, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Latvia, Bulgaria, Sweden and Germany (Lazar, 2021; Mendes and Dennison, 2020; Mudde, 2007; Mudde and Rovira-Kaltwasser, 2018). The Portuguese exceptionalism came to an end with the arrival of the Enough (Chega) party in April 2019, and even more so following the election of its leader, André Ventura, to the national parliament just a few months after being founded. Then, Ventura registered a symbolic growth in the Portuguese presidential ballot of 2021 before Chega achieved its largest success in the 2022 (early) elections becoming the third most voted political party with more than seven percent of voters, enough to secure 12 of the 230 seats in the country's parliament.

¹ CEFH – Centro de Estudos Filosóficos e Humanísticos.

This study has been carried out under the research project UIDB/00683/2020(Centre for Philosophical and Humanistic Studies), funded by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology.

Amongst the complex factors that usually account for the populist demand – such as the deleterious economic and cultural consequences of globalization and neoliberal policies or the xenophobic backlash to the rising migration with the potential loss of jobs and pressures on the welfare state, national security, and identity (Dai and Kustov, 2022; Mudde, 2019; Sandrin, 2021; Schmuck and Hameleers, 2020) – the specificities of the Portuguese case under analysis take into account Ventura’s communicative performance. Such a critical aspect of the behavior and choices of political actors in Portugal on the supply side of populism needs to extend beyond anecdotal evidence (Serrano, 2020). Against this background, the goal of the chapter is to explore Ventura’s opportunistic political communication strategy to advance the ideological agenda of his far-right party in a country that proved previously immune to populist tactics.

Communication-centered approach to populism

Amidst the different ideological conceptualizations of populism, one of the less contested claims is that politics should express the *volonté générale* of the people and conceives society as separated into two antagonistic groups - the pure or good people versus the corrupt elite (Mudde, 2004, p.534; Mudde and Rovira-Kaltwasser, 2017). Beyond such ‘thin-centered’ Manichean populist ideology view of politics and society, however, another somewhat consensual definition regarding the specificities of the far-right populism (Hunger & Paxton, 2021) further comprises two other elements: ‘nativism’ or the depiction of alien persons or ideas as a threat to the homogeneity of the nation-state (Minkenberg, 1998); and ‘authoritarianism’ as the belief in authority as the base of an ordered society (Mudde, 2007).

Aware of the debate prevailing in the literature surrounding the definition of the complex phenomenon of populism and its far-right variation, this work conceives it as a discursive manifestation of a thin-centered ideology articulated by political actors (Mudde, 2004; Stanyer et al., 2016). Moreover, it also avoids the confusion between populist ideology and populist style (Wirth et al., 2016) through merging the set of substantive content messages that communicate the core components of populist ideology with presentational discursive framing and stylistic elements like the us-versus-them rhetoric (De Vreese et al., 2018; Schmuck and Hameleers, 2020). Located within the ‘communication-centered’ research strand of populism (Aalberg et al., 2017; Aslanidis, 2016; Bracciale and Martella, 2017; De Vreese et al., 2018; Engesser et al., 2017; Jagers and Walgrave, 2007; Moffitt 2016; Reinemann et al., 2017; Rooduijn et al. 2014, Wirth et al., 2016, to name a few), my emphasis is upon the multidimensional communicative toolkit comprising the

not mutually exclusive strategies, styles, rhetoric and tactics employed for spreading the set of contemporary far-right populist assumptions or ideas (Aalberg et al., 2017).

Accordingly, it is critical to identify some of the core ideational characteristics of the populist far-right expected to translate into their political communication (De Vreese et al., 2018; Farkas et al., 2022; Schmuck and Hameleers, 2020; Schulz et al., 2017). Notwithstanding a degree of variation across cultures, there is also a consensus over the correspondence to three prime related content components of the far-right populist communicative framework (Bracciale and Martella, 2017; Hameleers and Vliegenthart, 2020; Schmuck and Hameleers, 2020; Schulz et al., 2017). The first frame is people-centrism and expresses the ‘potency of the demos’ (Rancière, 2012; Kapferer, 2017) through frequent references to the virtuous in-group of ordinary people and their importance to the political decision-making as the legitimate sovereign entity, despite being often neglected by governments and political elites (Aalberg et al., 2017; Albertazzi and McDonnell, 2008; Canovan, 1999; De Cleen and Stavrakakis, 2017; Krämer, 2014; Mudde, 2007). The second frame includes both ‘anti-elitism’, or the dichotomy between corrupt elites in opposition to the interests of the ordinary people (Bonikowski, 2017; Bos et al., 2013; Mudde, 2004; Taggart, 2000), and ‘anti-establishment’ in condemning the current dominant powerholders, the incumbents, and proponents for the existing malfunctioning system in which populists are spawn. Lastly, the ‘exclusionist’ frame involves the identification of societal out-groups as inferiors, such as problematic or ostracized minorities (immigrants), that are used as a scapegoat or portrayed as threats and enemies to the social identity cohesiveness (Albertazzi and McDonnell, 2008; Jagers and Walgrave, 2007).

Such a triadic content framework needs to be supplemented with the political style communicative features (Ekström et al., 2018). That being the case, a review of extant literature covering populist communication style reveals a set of indicators in the political performances that can manifest in different compositions across different socio-cultural contexts (Block and Negrine, 2017; Bos and Brants, 2014; Bossetta, 2017; Bracciale and Martella, 2017; De Vreese et al., 2018; Ekström et al., 2018; Farkas et al., 2022; Hunger and Paxton, 2021; Moffitt, 2016; Moffitt and Tormey, 2014; Nai, 2021; Pels, 2003; Schoor, 2017).

In line with that, I do not aspire to examine in detail all indicators of the communicative styles likely to manifest across different national contexts. For the purpose of this chapter, I concentrate on Bracciale and Martella’s typology of nine style indicators concerning the ‘stagecraft’ or the frontstage performance of political actors” (2017, p.1313), although with some adaptation. The Italian scholars convey, in a nutshell, that besides the use of vulgar language to reach ordinary people (‘vulgarism’), the populist style consists in narrating politics using popular wisdom

expressions - such as proverbs, stereotypes, and clichés - alongside exaggerations, allusions, puns and empty rhetoric to seduce and enchant interlocutors ('storytelling'). It may incur exploiting current events to the advantage of their political bias through incorrect inductive reasoning ('instrumental actualisation'). Or else dwelling on fear and on negative feelings for either arousing interest, alarming, or mobilizing purposes ('negative affect'). Then, in contraposition to the establishment and the elites, populist communication not rarely resorts to informal and plain language ('informality') while also oversimplifying issues and providing easy solutions to complex problems ('simplification'). Being marginal to the political order, the populist leader displays a disposition to break political correctness both in words and actions. Up to adopting an adversarial and abrasive language or being impolite and bad-mannered ('taboo breaker'). Finally, the disposition of sharing private life aspects ('intimisation') and emotions ('emotionalisation') might also come to play. Despite the salience of negative emotions – in 'negative affect' or through attacks against the elites and out-groups as well as crisis narrative centered around criticism of the financial system, capitalism, and austerity (Moffitt and Tormey, 2014; Rooduijn, 2014) – it can also resort to positive emotions such as nostalgia, national myths, in-group pride, loyalty to the heartland, and the achievements of ordinary citizens (Aalberg et al., 2017; Schmuck and Hameleers, 2020).

Against this backdrop, this work explores Ventura's behavior and strategies while building his political image and messaging from the margins of the conventional political establishment to seek legitimization and integration in it within both the Portuguese situated context and distinct life phases of the far-right Chega party (Stewart et al., 2003, pp. 219-224). While exploring Ventura's political communicative performance, it assumes (far-right) populism as a 'dimension of political culture' that manifests differently in distinct contexts (Worsley, 1969:245) and the inexistence of a single or exclusive populist style (Ekström et al., 2018).

The performative communication phenomenon of Ventura

Unlike other examples of the (re)emergence of contemporary populism elsewhere that occurred at points of historical crisis with the appeal coming from the outside of the democratic system, Portugal is an interesting case because the 'ground-laying' stage did not surge in the scenario of crisis, for instance during the severe economic austerity period between 2011 and 2015. It ironically burst from within the democratic established political order and was deeply rooted in ruling parties.

Indeed, the opportunity to advance a populist agenda and the decision to form a more radical party started during Ventura's political trajectory at the mainstream party of the center-right, the Social Democratic Party (Partido Social Democrata – PSD). While running as a candidate in the 2017 local elections in Loures, a municipality on Lisbon's outskirts, he emphasized his 'closeness to ordinary people' for the first time by speaking on behalf of the in-group when pointing the finger of accusation at the Roma community for being 'trouble-makers' and 'living on state welfare benefits' but with 'a Mercedes at their door' (Wise, 2022). At the time he took advantage of a lingering secular prejudice towards this population to construct an electoral narrative that reinforced stereotypes against those individuals.

As a result, he made the news headlines and stroke the chord of a segment of the voters that thought the same in private (Jornal Económico, 2017), confirming that addressing "politically incorrect" topics could be a successful political strategy. But it also led him to realize that it would be impossible to put forward such an exclusionist or nativism agenda vis-à-vis the gypsy community within PSD, a party that was unable to grant him the envisaged political pre-eminence. Hence, he resigned in October 2018 and founded Chega in mid-2019 to 'hone his divisive rhetoric and widen audience' (Heyne and Manucci, 2021; Livingstone and Quinn, 2021). Its first breakthrough came only a few months after being created and even before Chega had entered the 'insurgent' phase (Stewart et al., 2003, pp. 219-224). In that year's national legislative elections, Ventura managed to secure a seat in the Portuguese parliament, as did the single representatives of two other novel parties: the right-wing Liberal Initiative (Iniciativa Liberal-IL) and the left-wing Free (Livre-L).

Benefiting from his prior membership to PSD and media savviness as a football pundit, the first far-right elected deputy since the end of Estado Novo was capable of punching above his weight by capitalizing on the superficial anti-establishment discourse and the resolution to fight against corruption in a campaign dominated by socio-economic issues. But to broaden his party's appeal, Ventura was keen on emphasizing the salience of other topics to tactically 'blur his economic agenda' (Figueiredo, 2021). His campaigning evidenced the need to reform the political system coupled with 'instrumental actualization' through exploiting current events likely to resonate with the public. Whereas adopting an anti-statist stand that besides scaling down the state interventionism called for a tax reduction given the prevailing 'extortive' fiscal regime or requesting the suspension entitlements granted to former holders of public office convicted of criminal offenses seizing that two ex-MPs were jailed at the time and receiving state pensions (Carvalho, 2022). Ventura also campaigned for 'life term sentences' and the 'chemical castration' of convicted pedophiles and rapists, tapping into the widespread deep-seated public perception of the law-and-

order issues (Fernandes and Magalhães, 2020) His commemorating speech after being elected as deputy by the Lisbon district mostly comprised of self-references as the voice against the ‘rigged, corrupted, and miserably rooted system’ (Mendes, 2019:12), which besides signaling the ‘anti-establishment’ and ‘anti-elitism’ content of corruption being endemic among the political apparatus it already evidenced the ‘negative affect’ indicator of political style at play.

Outside of parliament, Ventura’s skills on the political stage matched the ‘informal’ communicative style - for ‘blending cabaret comedy, club’s flyers and sensationalist newscast – and the ‘storytelling’ one by ‘employing the salami method to everyone, serving rhetoric slices adapted to pensioners, teachers, police officers, firemen, and the of old regime nostalgic’ (Carvalho, 2020). In Parliament, Ventura was depicted as an ‘entertaining novelty’ or as someone ‘who says much needed harsh truths’ (Curado, 2021). His ‘vulgarism’ and ‘taboo breaker’ disposition quickly surfaced during a chamber debate on the repatriation of artifacts removed from former Portuguese colonies to its origins when Ventura suggested in a Facebook post that the proponent of the bill, an afro-descendent MP born in Guinea Bissau, Joacine Katar Moreira, ‘to be returned’ to Africa (Dantas, 2020).

Unable to replicate the typical talking point of the far-right towards refugees, given Portugal has become accustomed to a flow of migrants from former colonies, Ventura resumed his relentless campaign against the Roma people. On this occasion, he proposed a specific COVID-19 containment plan for the gypsy community because of their supposed systematic violation of the epidemic restriction rules (Madeira et al., 2021). The frequent use of hate discourse aimed at the Afro and gypsy community seems to have contributed to its normalization in Portuguese society and radicalization (Fernandes, 2021). Some scholars even posited a link between the surge of Ventura’s ‘racist and xenophobic’ public and political discourse and the increase of ‘attacks against Roma and colored people’ in Portugal (Da Silva et al., 2022; Santos and Roque, 2021).

In response to several of incidents of hate attacks, culminating in the racially-motivated killing of the black actor Bruno Candé by a former combatant in the Angolan colonial, Chega’s organized counter-protest to claim that ‘Portugal is not racist’ was also highly revealing of the communicative performance of Ventura. Apart from leading the parade while ambiguously gesturing with his arm like a Nazi salute, he took yet another stance against ‘political correctness’ and voiced the ideas of the ‘silent majority of ‘pure’ and ‘hard-working’ ‘ordinary people’ by uttering the need of a radical system change through the introduction of an ‘TV Republic’ (Cunha, 2020). Furthermore, not only did he display at that public event signs of ‘intimisation’ when disclosing his ‘closeness’ and ‘affinity’ to the ideals of the founder of the PSD party, Francisco Sá Carneiro, but he also resorted to ‘emotionalisation’ by conveying his conviction that ‘God was in command’ (Cunha, 2020).

Ventura's communicative strategy regarding the 'emotionalisation' style, in reality, consisted of messianic Christian references by selling himself as a 'God messenger' entrusted with the task of transforming and saving Portugal (Anjos, 2020; Figueiredo, 2021), on the one hand. And on the other, nostalgic appeals to Lusotropicalism (justifying the Portuguese non-racist nature on the grounds of a more tolerant colonizer in accommodating other values) featured alongside similar nostalgic references to the authoritarian populism period of the Estado Novo dictatorship in the country (Manucci, 2020; Santos and Roque, 2022).

Achieving legitimacy and status of a national political player at the 'established phase'

Chega's ongoing growth and consolidation process into Portuguese mainstream politics over a short period got confirmed at the 2021 Presidential elections, in which Ventura ranked third with 12 percent of the votes. Threatening to 'quit politics' if he didn't beat the center-left candidate, Ana Gomes, to second place (Curado, 2021), this proved to be but an illustrative example of the 'storytelling' style of empty rhetoric for enhancing his electoral chances of success. More importantly, he seized the opportunity to gain additional personal visibility fueled by his 'informal' enfant terrible stance and 'vociferous statements'. Among the most controversial claims during the campaign was the one that he 'would not be the President of all Portuguese', but only of the 'well-intended' or 'decent' ones (Fernandes and Teles, 2021). Or, when using a photo of Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa with an Afro family in the Jamaica neighborhood in the outskirts of Lisbon during the tv debate, he accused the incumbent candidate of 'siding with bandits' (Melo, 2021). Although the court ordered him to apologize to the family of African origin that he insulted in a TV debate, a decision later upheld by the Supreme Court, which found the remarks were in part racially motivated, Ventura repeatedly refused to accept the decision and continue to call them bandits (Câncio, 2021).

But Chega achieved its biggest success more recently and in somewhat exceptional circumstances. The collapse of the 'geringonça' alliance - an improvised solution on the left that made Portugal a rare beacon in Europe - between the minority Socialist government and its allies of the Portuguese Communist Party (Partido Comunista Português- PCP) and the Left Bloc (Bloco de Esquerda – BE) during the negotiations to pass the 2022 budget, triggered the need for early elections, set for late 2023. The ballot yielded Chega to become the third most voted political party with more than seven percent of voters, enough to secure 12 of the 230 seats in parliament, to the detriment of the virtually wiped out far-left.

Despite his known 'anti-establishment' stand, Ventura's narrative during the latest held campaign introduced Chega as 'the solution to a right-wing government', revealing his power ambitions despite the frequent confrontations with conventional politics. The remaining flagship topics regarded the party's all too familiar foundational emphasis on fighting corruption and subsidy dependence of certain minority groups or the drastic reduction of taxes and the size of parliament. The press signaled the tendency of his performative style of offering easy solutions to every situation that the democratic system does not meet when alluding that 'It's easy to promise everyone everything when you don't have the slightest intention of fulfilling this promise' (Câncio, 2022). Câncio went further by exposing Ventura's 'simplification' style, as continuing 'to lead people astray' by denouncing the easy solution that it would be enough to cut salaries to politicians and social benefits for the poor for financing his proposals.

Indifferent to the criticisms and the debunking from the press and political pundits, Ventura emphasized the new status of Chega as a legitimate national player. Or at least a quasi-legitimation given that it was nuanced by the newly elected Prime Minister, António Costa, refusal to meet with the far-right party before entering office confirming the political cordon sanitaire promised during the campaign. By self-proclaiming Chega as 'the real opposition' in Portugal about to change politics in Parliament (France24, 2022), he was also conveying clues about the perpetuation of his political communicative framing and style when recalling Costa once again that he was coming 'after him' (Céu, 2022). If Ventura will change his communicative performance, whether and when he gets into power remains to be seen. Given the recent continued and rapid rising of the far-right in Portugal, Ventura seems unlikely to fade away for the time being.

Conclusion

This chapter unpacked the game of masks involved in the far-right opportunistic populist communicative stagecraft while building his political image and messaging from the margins of the conventional political establishment to seek legitimization and integration into the Portuguese democratic system. Such game of masks refers to the communicative move by Ventura to transcend himself and embody a political persona with a respectable face to achieve recognition and enhance the chances of electoral success of the far-right. Aware of the importance of the communicative performance in a contemporary mediated context political world (Kapferer and Theodossopoulos, 2018), he endeavored to present a more a mask-mirror to the masses to be perceived as one of them. Through his unconventional 'clownish style of acting,' Ventura managed to embody a stereotype that synthesizes and solves the identity contradictions of his supporters

(Dematteo, 2019). It was the case by molding into every situation that the Portuguese democratic system does not meet and manufacturing an exclusionary dimension against marginalized or isolated out-groups of people, such as the Roma, that resonated with the public.

The stagecraft construction and circulation of narratives to frame himself and his message favorably to the public eye also encompassed a semblance of coherence through the dynamic of contradiction stemming from assuming an outsider role and providing the public with a 'side stage' view that exposes the constructed nature and inauthenticity of mainstream politicians' but only to mask his crafted performance. Or, while capturing the deep-seated hostility to the establishment and propagating the polarization between ordinary people and corrupt political elites without revealing that such confrontations with conventional politics were not decontaminated from power ambitions nor displaying his true face and empty rhetoric on magic solutions to solve the degradation of the nation.

Drawing on a 'communication-centered' research strand of populism, the analysis advanced in the chapter confirmed that Ventura matched most of if not all far-right's populist content framing and indicators of communicative style. Through the examination of the repertoire of the communicative performance spanning from the ground laying phase of Chega to being established as the third political force in the country's parliament, this work also offered critical empirical evidence of the chameleonic ideational and performative nature of populism across different national contexts and life cycles.

References:

- Aalberg T., Esser F., Reinemann C., et al. (eds) (2017). *Populist political communication in Europe*. Routledge, New York, NY, London
- Albertazzi D., McDonnell D. (eds) (2008). *Twenty-first century populism. The spectre of western European democracy*. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke.
- Anjos, M. (2020, May 21) Quanto vale Ana Gomes contra André Ventura? *Visão*. <https://visao.sapo.pt/opiniao/editorial/2020-05-21-quanto-vale-ana-gomes-contra-andre-ventura/>
- Aslanidis, P. (2016). Is populism an ideology? A refutation and a new perspective. *Political studies*, 64(1_suppl), 88-104.
- Block, E., & Negrine, R. (2017). The populist communication style: Toward a critical framework. *International Journal of Communication Systems*, 11, 178-197.
- Bonikowski, B. (2017). Ethno-nationalist populism and the mobilization of collective resentment. *The British journal of sociology*, 68, S181-S213.

- Bos, L., & Brants, K. (2014). Populist rhetoric in politics and media: A longitudinal study of the Netherlands. *European Journal of Communication*, 29(6), 703-719.
- Bos, L., Van Der Brug, W., & De Vreese, C. H. (2013). An experimental test of the impact of style and rhetoric on the perception of right-wing populist and mainstream party leaders. *Acta Politica*, 48(2), 192-208.
- Bossetta, M. (2017). Fighting fire with fire: Mainstream adoption of the populist political style in the 2014 Europe debates between Nick Clegg and Nigel Farage. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 19(4), 715-734.
- Bracciale, R., & Martella, A. (2017). Define the populist political communication style: the case of Italian political leaders on Twitter. *Information, Communication & Society*, 20(9), 1310-1329.
- Câncio, F. (2021, December 6) Supremo mantém condenação de Chega e Ventura no caso da família a quem chamaram "bandidos". *Diário de Notícias*. <https://www.dn.pt/politica/supremo-mantem-condenacao-de-chega-e-ventura-no-caso-da-familia-a-quem-chamaram-bandidos-14384954.html>
- Câncio, F. (2022, December 6) Sol na eira e chuva no nabal liberal. *Diário de Notícias*. <https://www.dn.pt/opiniao/sol-na-eira-e-chuva-no-nabal-liberal-14479300.html>
- Canovan, M. (1999). Trust the people! Populism and the two faces of democracy. *Political studies*, 47(1), 2-16.
- Carvalho, M. (2020, May 21) Carvalho, M. (2020) Chega, SA. Por dentro do Reino de “Deus” Ventura. *Visão*, no. 1420, pp. 28–39.
- Carvalho, J. (2022). Understanding the Emergence of Extreme Right Parties in Portugal in the Late 2010s. *Parliamentary Affairs*, gsac001,1-21.
- Céu, Beatriz (2022, January 31). "António Costa, eu vou atrás de ti agora": a celebração de André Ventura e o "grupo parlamentar fortíssimo" do Chega. *CNN Portugal*. <https://cnnportugal.iol.pt/legislativas-2022/legislativas/antonio-costa-eu-vou-atras-de-ti-agora-a-celebracao-de-andre-ventura-e-o-grupo-parlamentar-fortissimo-do-chega/20281231/61f733940cf2cc58e7e03061>
- Cunha, M. (2020, June 27) “Ó André, não levantes a mão assim que eles vão já fotografar”. A marcha de Ventura para chamar os “portugueses comuns”. *Expresso*. <https://expresso.pt/politica/2020-06-27-O-Andre-nao-levantes-a-mao-assim-que-eles-vaio-ja-fotografar.-A-marcha-de-Ventura-para-chamar-os-portugueses-comuns>
- Curado, M. (2021, February 23) The far-right returns to Portugal – how did this happen? *SOAS Blog*. <https://study.soas.ac.uk/the-far-right-returns-to-portugal-how-did-this-happen/>

- Da Silva, R., Ventura, J. P., de Carvalho, C. M., & Barbosa, M. R. (2022). "From street soldiers to political soldiers": assessing how extreme right violence has been criminalised in Portugal. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 1-19.
- Dai, Y., & Kustov, A. (2022). When Do Politicians Use Populist Rhetoric? Populism as a Campaign Gamble. *Political Communication*, 1-22.
- Dantas, M. (2020) André Ventura "propõe" que Joacine "seja devolvida ao seu país de origem". Livre acusa-o de racismo. *Público*. <https://www.publico.pt/2020/01/28/politica/noticia/andre-ventura-propoe-joacine-devolvida-pais-origem-livre-acusao-racismo-1902024>
- De Cleen, B., & Stavrakakis, Y. (2017). Distinctions and articulations: A discourse theoretical framework for the study of populism and nationalism. *Javnost-The Public*, 24(4), 301-319.
- De Vreese, C. H., Esser, F., Aalberg, T., Reinemann, C., & Stanyer, J. (2018). Populism as an expression of political communication content and style: A new perspective. *The international journal of press/politics*, 23(4), 423-438.
- Dematteo, L. (2019). The Mask and the Vanity Wound: Contemporary Populism through Canetti's Insight. In Schober, A. (Ed.) *Popularisation and Populism in the Visual Arts* (pp. 80-93). Routledge.
- Ekström, M., Patrona, M., & Thornborrow, J. (2018). Right-wing populism and the dynamics of style: a discourse-analytic perspective on mediated political performances. *Palgrave Communications*, 4(1), 1-11.
- Engesser, S., Ernst, N., Esser, F., & Büchel, F. (2017). Populism and social media: How politicians spread a fragmented ideology. *Information, communication & society*, 20(8), 1109-1126.
- Farkas, X., Jackson, D., Baranowski, P., Bene, M., Russmann, U., & Veneti, A. (2022). Strikingly similar: Comparing visual political communication of populist and non-populist parties across 28 countries. *European Journal of Communication*, 02673231221082238.
- Fernandes, J. and Magalhães, P. (2020) 'The 2019 Portuguese General Elections', *West European Politics*, 43, 1038–1050.
- Fernandes, R. C & Teles, F (2021), Country profile: Portugal. In J. Mulhall and S. Khan-Ruf (Eds) *State of hate. Far-right extremism in Europe* (pp.103-105). <https://www.amadeu-antonio-stiftung.de/wpcontent/uploads/2021/02/ESOH-LOCKED-FINAL.pdf>
- Fernandes, R. (2021, October 22) Deixa correr: como o jornalismo português noticiou a extrema-direita. *Setenta e quatro*. <https://setentaequatro.pt/enfoque/deixa-correr-como-o-jornalismo-portugues-noticiou-extrema-direita>
- Figueiredo, F. (2021, February 22) Chega: The worst of the Portuguese system now has a party. *European Left*. <https://www.european-left.org/chega-the-worst-of-the-portuguese-system-now-has-a-party-by-fabian-figueiredo/>

France24 (2022, January 30) Portugal's ruling Socialists win re-election with outright majority. France24. <https://www.france24.com/en/europe/20220130-portugal-s-ruling-socialists-and-far-right-party-chega-eye-gains-in-snap-legislative-elections>

Hameleers, M., & Vliegenthart, R. (2020). The rise of a populist zeitgeist? A content analysis of populist media coverage in newspapers published between 1990 and 2017. *Journalism Studies*, 21(1), 19-36.

Heyne, L., and Manucci, L. (2021). A new Iberian exceptionalism? Comparing the populist radical right electorate in Portugal and Spain. *Political Research Exchange*, 3(1), 1989985.

Hunger, S., and Paxton, F. (2021). What's in a buzzword? a systematic review of the state of populism research in political science. *Political Science Research and Methods*, 1-17.

Jagers, J., and Walgrave, S. (2007). Populism as political communication style: An empirical study of political parties' discourse in Belgium. *European journal of political research*, 46(3), 319-345.

Jornal Económico (2017, September 3) Portugueses concordam com acusações de André Ventura a ciganos. *Jornal Económico*. <https://jornaleconomico.sapo.pt/noticias/portugueses-concordam-com-acusacoes-de-andre-ventura-a-ciganos-204722>

Kapferer, B. and Theodossopoulos, D. 2018. 'Introduction: Populism and its paradox', in B. Kapferer and D. Theodossopoulos (eds.), *Democracy's Paradox: Populism and its contemporary crisis* (pp.1-34). New York and Oxford: Berghahn.

Kapferer, B. (2017). Ideas on populism: The wildness of democracy and emergence of the corporate state. *Arena Magazine (Fitzroy, Vic)*, (146), 31-34.

Krämer, B. (2014). Media populism: A conceptual clarification and some theses on its effects. *Communication Theory*, 24(1), 42-60.

Lazar, M. (2021, November 10) European Populism, From Left to Right. *Institute Montaigne*. <https://www.institutmontaigne.org/en/blog/european-populism-left-right>

Livingstone, K. and Quinn, C. (2021, January 26) Was Portugal's Election a Breakthrough for the Far-Right?, *Foreign Policy*. *Foreign Policy*. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/01/26/portugal-presidential-election-far-right-breakthrough-ventura-rebelo-sousa/>

Madeira, P. M. F., Silva, K. S. D. N., and Malheiros, J. S. M. (2021). The geography of the nationalist right in Portugal: outlines of an emerging process. *Cadernos Metrópole*, 23, 469-498.

Manucci, L. (2020). The shadow of the authoritarian past in the Iberian Peninsula – Failures and success of radical right populist parties. *Relações Internacionais*, Special issue, 45-59.

Melo, R. (2021, January 6). Marcelo vs André Ventura: da acusação "dos bandidos" às direitas que os distinguem. *TSF*. <https://www.tsf.pt/portugal/politica/marcelo-vs-andre-ventura-da-acusacao-dos-bandidos-as-direitas-que-os-distinguem-13202612.html>.

- Mendes, M. S. & Dennison, J. (2021) Explaining the emergence of the radical right in Spain and Portugal: salience, stigma and supply. *West European Politics*, 44(4), 752-775.
- Mendes, M. (2019) *The General Elections in Portugal 2019*, MIDEM-Report 2019-5, Dresden. https://forum-midem.de/cms/data/fm/user_upload/TUD_MIDEM_2019-5_DINA4_RZOnline.pdf
- Minkenberg, M. (1998). Context and consequence: the impact of the new radical right on the political process in France and Germany. *German Politics & Society*, 16(3 (48), 1-23.
- Moffitt, B., and Tormey, S. (2014). Rethinking populism: Politics, mediatisation and political style. *Political studies*, 62(2), 381-397.
- Moffitt, B. (2016). *The Global Rise of Populism: Performance, Political Style, and Representation*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press
- Mudde, C., and Kaltwasser, C. R. (2017). *Populism: A very short introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- Mudde, C., & Rovira Kaltwasser, C. (2018). Studying populism in comparative perspective: Reflections on the contemporary and future research agenda. *Comparative political studies*, 51(13), 1667-1693.
- Mudde, C. (2004). The populist zeitgeist. *Government and opposition*, 39(4), 541-563.
- Mudde, C. (2007). *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press
- Mudde, C. (2019). *The far right today*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Nai, A. (2021). Fear and loathing in populist campaigns? Comparing the communication style of populists and non-populists in elections worldwide. *Journal of Political Marketing*, 20(2), 219-250.
- Pels, D. (2003). Aesthetic representation and political style. In Corner, J., and Pels, D. (Eds.). *Media and the restyling of politics: Consumerism, celebrity and cynicism* (pp. 41-67). Sage.
- Rancière, J. (2012). Democracies against democracy. In Agamben, G., Badiou, A., Bensaid, D., Nancy, J. L., and Brown, W. (Eds) *Democracy in what state?* (76-81). Columbia University Press.
- Reinemann, C., Aalberg, T., Esser, F., Strömbäck, J., and de Vreese, C. H. (2017). Populist political communication: Toward a model of its causes, forms, and effects. In T. Aalberg, F. Esser, C. Reinemann, J. Strömbäck, and C. H. de Vreese (Eds.), *Populist political communication in Europe* (pp. 12–25). London: Routledge.
- Rooduijn, M., De Lange, S. L., and Van der Brug, W. (2014). A populist zeitgeist? Programmatic con- tagion by populist parties in Western Europe. *Party Politics*, 20(4), 563–575.
- Rooduijn, M. (2014). The mesmerising message: The diffusion of populism in public debates in Western European media. *Political Studies*, 62(4), 726–744

- Sandrin, P. (2021). The rise of right-wing populism in Europe: A psychoanalytical contribution. In De Souza Guilherme, B., Ghymers, C., Griffith-Jones, S., and Ribeiro Hoffmann, A. (Eds). *Financial Crisis Management and Democracy: Lessons from Europe and Latin America* (pp. 227-239). Springer Nature.
- Santos, R., & Roque, S. (2021). The populist far-right and the intersection of anti-immigration and antifeminist agendas: the Portuguese case. *DiGeSt: Journal of Diversity and Gender Studies*, 8(1), 41-58.
- Schmuck, D., & Hameleers, M. (2020). Closer to the people: A comparative content analysis of populist communication on social networking sites in pre-and post-election periods. *Information, Communication & Society*, 23(10), 1531-1548.
- Schoor, C. (2017). In the theater of political style: Touches of populism, pluralism and elitism in speeches of politicians. *Discourse & Society*, 28(6), 657-676.
- Schulz, A., Müller, P., Schemer, C., Wirz, D. S., Wettstein, M., & Wirth, W. (2018). Measuring populist attitudes on three dimensions. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 30(2), 316-326.
- Serrano, E. (2020). Populismo em Portugal. *Media and Jornalismo*, 20(37), 221-239.
- Stanyer, J, Archetti, C and Sorensen, L (2016) The United Kingdom: Hybrid Populisms, Mixed Fortunes, and Unstable Support. In: Aalberg, T, Esser, F, Reinemann, C, Stromback, J and de Vreese, C, (eds.) *Populist Political Communication in Europe*. (pp. 175-188)
London: Routledge.
- Stewart, J., Mazzoleni, G. and Horsfield, B. (2003), 'Conclusion: Power to the Media Managers', In G. Mazzoleni, J. Stewart, and B. Horsfield (2003) (Ed.) *The Media and Neopopulism. A Contemporary Comparative Analysis* (217–38). Westport: Praeger.
- Taggart, P. (2000). Populism. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Wirth, W., Esser, F., Wettstein, M., Engesser, S., Wirz, D., Schulz, A., ..., Schemer, C. (2016). *The appeal of populist ideas, strategies and styles: A theoretical model and research design for analyzing populist political communication*. Working Paper 88 of the NCCR Democracy at the University of Zurich.
<http://www.nccr-democracy.uzh.ch/publications/workingpaper/wp88>
- Wise, P. (2022, January 26) Far-right party's poll gains show Portugal not immune to populism. *Financial Times*. <https://www.ft.com/content/07bf67e8-7f23-48f1-ae1e-b7841aab72f0>
- Worsley, P. (1969). The concept of populism. In Ghita Ionescu and Ernest Gellner (EDs.) *Populism: Its meanings and national characteristics* (212-250). New York: Macmillan.