

# Nationalism and Populism: An International Perspective

Fall 2022

---

*Instructor:* Jonas Brodin

*E-mail:* [jonas.brodin@swedishprogram.org](mailto:jonas.brodin@swedishprogram.org)

*Class hours:* Tuesday & Thursday 10.15–11.45

*Office hours:* Tuesday & Thursday 9.00–10.00, A987

---

The past several years have seen a powerful resurgence of both nationalism and populism. The goal of this course is to understand why that resurgence is happening and what it means for the future of democratic politics. The course will trace the historical origins and theoretical underpinnings of both nationalism and populism, as well as looking at recent examples of what can happen at the intersection of populist politics and ethnic nationalism—e.g., Yugoslavia and Rwanda—before moving on to examining the current wave of nationalist populism across the globe, from Brexit and the 2016 election in the U.S. to the rise of nationalist populist leaders in countries as diverse as Hungary, India, the Philippines, and Brazil. Because the recent resurgence of nationalism and populism is almost exclusively a right-wing phenomenon, the course will give particular focus to the rise of the radical right, but will also look at contemporary left-wing populism as well as past left-wing populist movements to help shed light on the present. The course takes an explicitly multidisciplinary approach, using economic, cultural, historical, and political perspectives to explain the nationalism and populist comeback—investigating, among other things, the role of social media, the global rise in economic inequality and its underlying causes, and the slow-motion collapse of the postwar system of international governing institutions. Nationalism and populism are not new phenomena, and this course aims to help students situate them in a larger context in order to better understand their current resurgence.

**Google Classroom:** The Swedish Program uses the Google Classroom platform for all its courses. On the course Classroom page, you will find the readings, assignments, and lecture notes, as well as links to useful resources for further study. The course platform is also where you will submit your assignments. It also functions as a discussion forum outside of class: you are highly encouraged to participate in extending class discussions by posting questions and links throughout the semester. I will use the course platform to post links to articles and books that are relevant to the class, as well as reminders of deadlines and questions I have for you as a group outside of class.

Readings: There are three assigned books, listed below. All the additional readings will be available on the course website. The three books are:

Jan-Werner Müller, *What Is Populism?*

Cas Mudde, *The Far Right Today*

Timothy Snyder, *On Tyranny*

Laptops & phones: I *strongly discourage* the use of laptops in the classroom, even for note-taking. [Current research](#) indicates that we are better able to pay attention and retain what we learn if we take notes by hand rather than typing. If you have an accommodation that allows you to take notes on your laptop, you are of course excepted: you should be able to use the note-taking method that best helps you learn. I will post all graphs and tables I put up on the board during class to Classroom so that you will have access to them. However, phone use is *strictly prohibited* during class time (unless I explicitly state otherwise). *If I see you using a phone during class, I will mark you as absent.*

Grading: Your grade will be calculated according to the following breakdown:

*Attendance and participation:* 20%

*Briefings:* 20%

*Research report:* 60%

**Attendance & Participation (20%):** Regular attendance is mandatory. An unexcused absence may negatively affect your final grade. Your grade will not be affected if you miss a class due to illness or in the case of a (documented) emergency situation. If you have a personal or family event that conflicts with a class, and cannot be rescheduled, you may ask your instructor for an excused absence. Such a request should be made at least one week prior to the class in question. In addition to attendance, your active participation in class discussions is essential. You should also participate by posting to the course stream in Google Classroom. Please prepare for seminar by writing down the questions you have about the reading or the topic of that day's class.

**Briefings (2 x 10%):** You will do two joint in-class briefings during the semester. Each briefing should introduce the rest of the class to a specific case study—either a country or cluster of countries, a particular nationalist or populist incident, or some other topic related to the class. The briefings should be about 20 minutes in length.

**Research project (60%):** All of the assignments outside of class time will be part of a semester-long individual research project on a topic of your choosing. You are required to come talk to me about the research project during the first two weeks of the course. This project should be an in-depth investigation of some aspect of nationalism and populism that we do not cover in class. The research project should use and incorporate what you have learned in lecture and through the class

readings. To help structure your research, you will have a written research task every few weeks. Guidelines for all of the research tasks will be available on the course website. The research tasks are as follows:

9/15: Research questions (5%). This is a 1–2-page report stating the questions that will guide your research, as well as a brief introduction to why you want to research this topic. The questions should define your topic and provide a road map for your research.

10/6: Prospectus (15%). The prospectus is a brief (5–7 pages) statement describing your intended research project. It includes not only a more developed research question, but also a description of your methodology and expected findings, in addition to a tentative bibliography. You will be given a detailed list of what to include to help guide you when writing your prospectus.

11/15: Literature review (5%). Here you will outline the existing research on your topic by giving short summaries of your most important sources as well as explaining how those sources have contributed to and advanced our understanding of your topic.

11/29: Outline (5%). At this point, you should have preliminary results for your project—enough to turn in an outline of your final product, focused on presenting your results to date.

12/6: Final report (30%). Your final research report should be 10–15 pages in length. I will give you a set of guidelines for structuring and formatting your paper, as well as an explanation of the criteria I will use to evaluate your final report.

Late assignments: Assignments that are submitted after the deadline and without prior agreement will be marked down. The late penalty will be progressively more severe the later the assignment is submitted.

Course learning outcomes: At the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate in-depth knowledge about both general theories and specific case studies of nationalism and populism
- Understand the process of research, from initial idea to final research report
- Prepare a clear and concise collaborative presentation
- Produce a long, rigorous, empirically based research paper

Schedule:

8/30	<i>Introduction: Patriotism, nationalism, populism</i>	328
9/1	<i>Democracy and populism in the 2022 Swedish and Brazilian elections</i>	328
	Reading: Krastev, " <a href="#">The Age of Populism</a> " Pelling, " <a href="#">Paving the Way for Radicalised Violence</a> " Kenes, " <a href="#">Per Jimmie Åkesson: A Smiling Wolf in Sheep's Clothing?</a> " Hunter & Power, " <a href="#">Bolsonaro and Brazil's Illiberal Backlash</a> " Nicas & Spigariol, " <a href="#">The Question Menacing Brazil's Elections: Coup or No Coup?</a> "	
9/6	<i>Theories of nationalism I</i>	536
	Reading: Renan, " <a href="#">What Is a Nation?</a> " Gellner, <i>Nations and Nationalism</i> , chapters 1 + 5 Hobsbawm, <i>Nations and Nationalism Since 1780</i> , Introduction + chapter 3 Anderson, <i>Imagined Communities</i> , chapter 1-3	
9/8	<i>Theories of nationalism II</i>	328
	Reading: Bonikowski, " <a href="#">Nationalism in Settled Times</a> " Malešević, <i>Grounded Nationalisms</i> , Introduction + chapter 10 Mylonas & Tudor, " <a href="#">Nationalism: What We Know and What We Still Need to Know</a> "	
9/13	<i>What is populism? I</i>	536
	Reading: Müller, Introduction + chapters 1 & 2 Brubaker, " <a href="#">Why Populism?</a> "	
9/15	<i>What is populism? II</i>	536
	Reading: Mudde, Introduction + chapters 1 & 2 Mansbridge & Mancedo, " <a href="#">Populism and Democratic Theory</a> "	

Research task: Research questions!

9/20 *The threat posed by migration* 536

Reading: Joppke, "[Immigration and the Identity of Citizenship: The Paradox of Universalism](#)"  
Schain, "[Radical-Right Populism and Immigration Policy in Europe and the United States](#)"  
Becker, "[The Global Machine Behind the Rise of Far-Right Nationalism](#)"

9/22 *Racism and nationalism* 536

Reading: TBA

9/27 *Ethnic conflict: Yugoslavia* 328

Reading: Gagnon, "[Ethnic Nationalism and International Conflict: The Case of Serbia](#)"  
Edmunds, "[Illiberal Resilience in Serbia](#)"

9/29 *Ethnic conflict: Rwanda* 328

Reading: Epstein & Gatebuke, "[The Roots of Rwanda's Genocide](#)"  
Yanagizawa-Drott, "[Propaganda and Conflict: Evidence from the Rwandan Genocide](#)"  
Clark, "[Rwanda: Tragic Land of Dual Nationalisms](#)"

10/4 *Why are populist leaders so often corrupt?* 328

Reading: TBA

10/6 *State capture: Russia* 328

Reading: Robinson & Milne, "[Populism and Political Development in Hybrid Regimes](#)"  
Rogoza, "[Russian Nationalism: Between Imperialism and Xenophobia](#)"  
Kolstø, "[The Ethnification of Russian Nationalism](#)"

Research task: Prospectus!

10/11 *State capture: Turkey* 536

- Reading: McKernan, "[From Reformer to 'New Sultan': Erdoğan's Populist Evolution](#)"  
 Yilmaz & Bashirov, "[The AKP after 15 Years: Emergence of Erdoganism in Turkey](#)"  
 Rogenhofer, "[Turkey, A Perfect Storm of Anti-Democratic Populism?](#)"
- 10/13 *The role of globalization* 328
- Reading: Rodrik, "[Why Does Globalization Fuel Populism?](#)"  
 Debaere, "[Globalization Under Fire](#)"  
 Dasgupta, "[The Demise of the Nation-State](#)"
- 10/18 *From liberal to illiberal democracy: Hungary and Poland* 350
- Reading: Müller, "[Homo Orbánicus](#)"  
 Enyedi, "[Paternalist Populism and Illiberal Elitism in Central Europe](#)"  
 Pasięka, "[Poland, a 'Normal' European Country](#)"
- 10/20 *Does inequality fuel nationalism and populism?* 320
- Reading: TBA
- 10/25  
 -11/7 Fall break: no class!
- 11/8 *The internal other: India* 328
- Reading: Heller, "[The Age of Reaction: Retrenchment Populism in India and Brazil](#)"  
 Rodenbeck, "[A Mighty Wind](#)"  
 Seervai, "[The Rising Tide of Intolerance in Narendra Modi's India](#)"
- 11/10 *The internal other: the Philippines* 542
- Reading: Coronel, "[The Vigilante President: How Duterte's Brutal Populism Conquered the Philippines](#)"  
 Fenton: "[Duterte's Last Hurrah: On the Road to Martial Law](#)"

- 11/15 *Western Europe: right, left, and Brexit* 536
- Reading: Garton Ash, "[Is Europe Disintegrating?](#)"  
 Berman & Snegovaya, "[Populism and the Decline of Social Democracy](#)"  
 Quintas da Silva, "[A Portuguese Exception to Right-Wing Populism](#)"  
 Lees, "[The 'Alternative for Germany': The Rise of Right-Wing Populism at the Heart of Europe](#)"  
 Stavrakakis, "[Left-Wing Populism in the European Periphery: The Case of SYRIZA](#)"  
 Kioupiolis, "[Podemos: The Ambiguous Promises of Left-Wing Populism in Contemporary Spain](#)"  
 Ford & Goodwin, "[A Nation Divided](#)"
- Research task: Literature review!
- 11/17 *Populism's gender politics* 538
- Reading: TBA
- 11/22 *The U.S.: past and present* Aula
- Reading: Mudde, chapters 3-10  
 Hochschild, *[Strangers in Their Own Land](#)* (excerpts)  
 Bonikowski & DiMaggio, "[Varieties of American Popular Nationalism](#)"  
 Silverstein, "[The 1619 Project and the Long Battle Over U.S. History](#)"
- 11/24 *The U.S.: what does the future hold?* 538
- Reading: Beauchamp, "[How Does This End?](#)"  
 Moynihan, "[Public Management for Populists](#)"  
 Homans, "[How 'Stop the Steal' Captured the American Right](#)"
- 11/29 *Conclusion: Democracy and authoritarianism I* 538
- Reading: Müller, chapter 3 + conclusion  
 Browning, "[The Suffocation of Democracy](#)"  
 Foa & Mounk, "[Youth and the Populist Wave](#)"  
 Levitsky & Ziblatt, "[This Is How Democracies Die](#)"

Research task: Outline!

12/1 *Conclusion: Democracy and authoritarianism II*

138

Reading: Snyder, all

12/6 Exam week: Final research report due!