

## From the Desk of the Editor

TPQ's Fall 2019 issue, published in collaboration with the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, titled *Populism and the Age of Upheaval*, examines the rise of populism and its impact on the international order — from governance issues to the environment to gender ideology.

Since 2016, the world has been monitoring and trying to forecast the turnout of a series of events that started with Brexit and the election of President Trump. Not surprisingly, a populist breeze started blowing from both the West and East, and new leaders quickly emerged from their shells in support of the already proud populists around the world. From Latin America to Turkey, populism and populist leaders have been the center of politics for almost four years, and continue to remain in the limelight. The past few years, societies have been more expressive in displaying their discontent that had been escalating amidst the world's long list of troubles including growing inequality, corruption, climate change, lack of economic opportunity, uneven migration, and terrorism. In that sense, we are proud to include insights from a diverse group of authors that elucidate on these troubles and assess a variety of their implications.

Kicking off the issue is Dr. Berk Esen, Assistant Professor and Vice Chair of the Department of International Relations at Bilkent University. Esen provides an overview on how populism fuels democratic backsliding across Latin America and Europe, and includes analyses on both left-wing and right-wing approaches to populism. The author touches upon recent political backlashes across different regions in the world and exemplifies how populist leaders exploit voter frustrations to attain power. Esen concludes with Turkey's municipal elections in 2019 and whether it can serve as a blueprint in dampening populism's currency.

Providing a view from Indonesia, Umar Juoro, Senior Fellow at The Habibie Center, discusses the mobilization of Islamic populism in the country. Highlighting the recent presidential and general elections in 2019, Juoro elaborates on the dynamics of the election processes and claims that populist Islamism is on the rise because it provides an alternative to formal political parties, where ideology and platform are mainly symbolic. Juoro ultimately claims that populist Islamists can influence mainstream Muslims to push for their social and political agenda.

Dr. Ranabir Samaddar, Director of the Calcutta Research Group, argues that the landslide victory of Prime Minister Narendra Modi last spring spells trouble for India's democracy. Both the pre and post-election climate were punctuated by

violence, points out the author. Additionally, Dr. Samaddar argues that this has led to an emergence of a “new model of power” in which different legal, judicial, and administrative forms have originated. Although the author states that only populists can oppose this new model, he adds that populists are not holistic and that their naivety will drive them into a corner when faced with the realities of “social war”.

Delving in to the Filipino context, Mikael De Lara Co, Deputy General for Communications of the Liberal Party of the Philippines, details Duterte’s highly affective social media campaign and its influence over public perception despite the grotesque allegations against his administration. Co points out that Duterte benefited from social tension and the polarizing language of social media by focusing his campaign strategy on high social media usage controlled by communication experts that attack opposition in moments of crises. The author provides readers with an overview of how political agendas are managed by disinformation, ultimately allowing the President’s popularity to thrive.

Adam Bartha, Director of EPICENTER Network, provides an overview of realignment theory, arguing that developed democracies are experiencing a fundamental realignment of politics and the dissolution of established political identities. As a result of this shift, classical liberals no longer have a place in the current political constellation, which necessitates a rethink of liberal strategies, argues Bartha. However, opportunities exist for liberals, posits Bartha, one of which is attracting globalists from conservative left leaning camps. The author also outlines four new policy strategies for liberals to pursue, starting with liberalizing reforms in international institutions.

In a co-authored article, Dr. Péter Krekó, Executive Director of Political Capital and Attila Juhász, Senior Affiliate of Political Capital, examine the implications of their research on the tribalist phenomena in Poland and Hungary. The authors ultimately argue that tribalism is a better identifier for these societies because it describes radicalization, polarization, and the demolition of democratic institutions better than populism. Ultimately, the authors suggest that the use of the term “populism” in this case should be abandoned, as tribalist characteristics reflect the realities of these societies more accurately.

Dr. Markos Troulis, adjunct lecturer at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, assesses the pressures of the international system on EU domestic politics and populism’s impact on EU structures. Dr. Troulis points out that a net result of declining political participation in Europe has been populism’s continued rise across the continent. The author states that the EU

legacy stands today because of its anti-hegemonic nature and its supremacy of the inter-governmentalist principle, but also questions if state bureaucracies can accommodate the people today.

In a joint article, Emma Galli and Giampaolo Garzarelli, both affiliated with Sapienza University, seek to answer the question of why populist ideology has become so popular. The authors point to four ideological regularities that have manifested itself across the world, both on a macro level in the West and in the specific case of Italy. Galli and Garzarelli argue that there is a loss of trust in democracy and that traditional parties face the challenge of re-inventing themselves quickly enough to adapt to an ever-changing political environment.

Touching upon populism from a gender angle, Dr. Nick Galasso, senior researcher at Oxfam America, analyzes the far-right's war on gender ideology. The author opens a discussion on how NGO efforts are affected in their broader agenda, including matters of gender wage parity and the feminization of economy. Galasso underlines the dangers of the far-right's rhetoric, arguing that it normalizes obedience to authoritarians and invokes a sense of duty to cleanse the nation of its "impurities"—a particularly dangerous notion given ethnic differences.

Elaborating on the environmental implication of populist policies, Sanjeev Kumar, founder of Change Partnership, argues that the fight against global warming is intentionally decelerated by countries—a plausible argument given the fact that fossil fuel interest of corporate companies is secured by lobbyists, particularly in the US. The author stresses that the populist agenda revolves around removing barriers for oil and gas corporations at the expense of the environment. Kumar expresses his conviction that climate change is unavoidable in today's political debate.

In their article, Hamdi Fırat Büyük, PhD Candidate at the University of Sarajevo, and Ahmet Erdi Öztürk, Assistant Professor at the London Metropolitan University, focus on the leadership-oriented relationship model between Turkey and the Balkans. The authors expound on Turco-Balkan dynamics, opining that while Turkey's political and economic influence has indeed expanded in the Balkans, Turkish soft power may be reaching its limits. In order to continue to project influence, Turkey needs to shore up democratic institutions and refrain from shifting its state identity, conclude the authors.

On an editorial note, the preparation of this issue has especially been thrilling for me personally. Not only is it my first as Editor-in-Chief, but the scope of the issue has come at a time when we, as a country, have started to question our position in

the world, and have become more vocal not only about our individual rights but our economic and social expectations as well. To that extent, populism has been the catalyzing factor in bringing long-hidden concerns and escalating fears to the surface. In Turkey's case, an alarming populist trend is the bias against immigrants and refugees, which I find particularly distressing given Turkey's position as the world's top refugee hosting country. It is incumbent upon both left and right-wing leaders to address this bias and implement practical assimilation and settlement policies, rather than relocate, isolate, and ultimately radicalize vulnerable minorities who have escaped formidable circumstances in their homelands.

This September, we were delighted to partner with the East-West Center, a Hawaii-based think-tank, on their Senior Journalist Seminar (SJS) 2019 in Istanbul. TPQ hosted 13 international journalists for the four-day seminar, which covered topics ranging from secularism and religion in Turkey to freedom of speech, and included subjects such as the protection and integration of Syrian refugees, women's rights, and Turkey's security challenges. As always, TPQ is committed to encouraging open debate and looks forward to collaborating with the East-West Center in the future.

Finally, I want to thank Süreya Köprülü, who has been the journal's Editor-in-Chief for the past five years. Moving forward, we are fortunate to have her on board as the Chief Editorial Advisor. Not only has she supported me individually in preparation for my role, but she has had a substantial influence in shaping the journal. I would also like to extend my appreciation to Cemile Çetin, who has dearly supported me in my new role and during TPQ's transition phase over the past six months, and also to Rana Ünal, for stepping up and taking on extraordinary responsibility. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Hans Georg Fleck, FNF Head of Turkey Office since 2012, for his support throughout our countless partnerships and to welcome Dr. Ronald Meinardus, the new FNF director as of November 2019.

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As always, we look forward to your feedback.

Ayşegül Erdem Ventura