

WITH SOCIAL MEDIA TOWARDS DEMOCRATIC EMPOWERMENT? NATIONALIST POPULISM ON CZECH FACEBOOK

Barbora Veselá

4190173

Supervisor: dr. Anne Kustritz

Second Reader: dr. Karin van Es

Master's Thesis

Utrecht University

August 21, 2017

Chicago

“In the fifteen century, the printing press revolutionized the accumulation and dissemination of information, enabling the Renaissance, the Protestant Reformation, and the scientific revolution. On these foundations, modern democracy emerged. But the printing press also facilitated the rise of the centralized state and prompted the movement towards censorship. A century and a half ago, the telegraph was hailed as a tool to promote peace and understanding. Suddenly, the world shrank; news that once took weeks to travel across the world could be conveyed instantly. What followed was not peace and freedom but the bloodiest century in human history. Today’s enthusiasts of liberation technology [such as social media] could be accused of committing the analytic sins of their Victorian forebearers (...).”¹

– Larry Diamond

¹ Larry Diamond , “Liberation Technology,” *Journal of Democracy* 21, no. 3 (2010): 71.

Table of Contents

Abstract	3
Introduction	4
Theoretical Framework	8
Method	21
Empirical Analysis	24
Conclusion.....	40
Bibliography: Secondary Sources	46
Bibliography: Primary Sources	55

Abstract

With the rise of social media, debates concerning its implications on the society and democracy have emerged. While some perceive it as means of civil empowerment and democratic enhancement, others worry about its role in spreading unhinged information and undemocratic ideologies. Moreover, in the wake of the Brexit vote and Donald Trump's presidential victory, there are rising concerns regarding the apparent surge of nationalism and populism – also on social media. Nationalist populism undermines the principle of pluralism in democracy, and may lead to so-called “tyranny of the majority.” This thesis examines how social media – specifically Facebook – is used in political communication to convey nationalist populist rhetoric and how this relates to the academic debates on the topic of the democratic potentials of social media. This is done in the context of the Czech Republic, a Central-Eastern European country, by examining Facebook posts of the four leaders of the four main political parties from two time periods in 2016. These leaders include Bohuslav Sobotka, Andrej Babiš, Petr Fiala, and Tomio Okamura. The Facebook posts are analysed against a framework of 6 articulations of nationalist populism derived from international as well as Czech scholarly works. These articulations include: rejection of elites; rejection of economic globalism; support of a demarcation of the country; opposition to “outsiders;” opposition to minority groups; and evoking the notion of Czech “heartland.” Qualitative content analysis is used to find these articulations in the political communication on Facebook.

This thesis finds all six articulations in the Facebook posts of some of the Czech politicians in the selected time periods. The main finding therefore is that, at least in the Czech Republic, open-space political discourse on social media may lend itself not only to pluralist speech but frequently also to speech against pluralist democracy. Social media may facilitate the articulation and entrenchment of nationalist populist discourses that may over time in fact lead to the opposite of pluralist democracy, namely the tyranny of the majority.

Introduction

New media scholar José van Dijck claims that social media has transformed human communication. This is because it enables endless possibilities for establishing online connections and information interactions.² Moreover, the author argues that with this transformation came the aspiration for a greater democratic engagement and mobilisation through social media.³ Indeed, a lot of attention has been paid to social media's role in recent democratic revolutions, such as the Arab Spring of 2011.⁴ For example, Tunisian blogger Lina Ben Mhenni told the *The Guardian* in 2011 that “it was through Facebook that the first support groups (...) were set up and the first demonstrations organized.”⁵ These demonstrations eventually led to the dethronement of Tunisian president Zine Alabidine Ben Ali, and Mhenni concludes that “social media was critical at a time when everything else was censored.”⁶ This shows that social media through its revolutionisation of communication become perceived by some as means of democratic emancipation.

According to journalist Fareed Zakaria, two major nationalist populist events shook the world in 2016, signalling an apparent increase in the appeal of nationalist populism.⁷ Firstly, the United Kingdom voted in the so-called “Brexit” vote for terminating its membership in the European Union. Then, Donald Trump won the presidential election and became the 45th president of the United States.⁸ These events can be seen as culmination of the growing popularity of nationalist populist politicians in many Western countries, such as Marie Le Pen in France and Geert Wilders in the Netherlands. Despite both losing their

² José van Dijck, *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 5; José van Dijck and Thomas Poell, “Understanding Social Media Logic,” *Media and Communication* 1, no. 1 (2013): 8; Emma Price, “Social Media and Democracy,” *Australian Journal of Political Science* 48, no. 4 (2013): 519; Larry Diamond, “Liberation Technology,” *Journal of Democracy* 21, no. 3 (2010): 70-1; Sarah Joseph, “Social Media, Political Change, and Human Rights” *Boston College International & Comparative Law Review* 35, (2012): 152.

³ José van Dijck, *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 11; Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy?” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011): 757; Jamie Bartlett, “Populism, Social Media, and Democratic Strain,” in *European Populism and Winning the Immigration Debate*, ed. by Clara Sandelind (Stockholm: Fores, 2014), 100.

⁴ Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy? Social Media Innovations and Participatory Politics,” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011): 757; Philip N. Howard et al., “Opening Closed Regimes: What Was the Role of Social Media during the Arab Spring?” *Projects on Information Technology & Political Islam*, (2011): 2-3; Nahed Eltantawy and Julie B. Wiest, “Social Media in the Egyptian Revolution: Reconsidering Resource Mobilization Theory,” *International Journal of Communication* 5, (2011): 1.

⁵ Peter Beaumont, “The truth about Twitter, Facebook and the uprisings in the Arab world,” *The Guardian*, February 25, 2011, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/25/twitter-facebook-uprisings-arab-libya>.

⁶ Peter Beaumont, “The truth about Twitter, Facebook and the uprisings in the Arab world,” *The Guardian*, February 25, 2011, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/25/twitter-facebook-uprisings-arab-libya>.

⁷ Fareed Zakaria, “Populism on the March: Why the West is in Trouble,” *Foreign Affairs* November/December, (2016): 13-4.

⁸ Fareed Zakaria, “Populism on the March: Why the West is in Trouble,” *Foreign Affairs* November/December, (2016): 13-4; “Trump, Brexit and the Future of Nationalist Populism in the US and Europe,” YouTube video, posted by “Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies,” September 16, 2016, <https://ces.fas.harvard.edu/recordings/trump-brexit-and-the-future-of-nationalist-populism-in-the-us-and-europe>; Ronald F. Inglehart and Pippa Norris, “Trump, Brexit, and the Rise of Populism: Economic Have-Nots and Cultural Backlash,” *Harvard Kennedy School Research Working Paper Series*, (August 2016): 9.

respective national elections recently, journalists of *The Guardian* and Isaac Stanley-Becker of *The Washington Post* believe that these protagonists have nonetheless boosted the appeal of nationalism and populism within and beyond their countries.⁹

Nationalist populism is currently not only a phenomenon of the West but thrives also in Central and Eastern Europe. This is most notably embodied by Viktor Orbán in Hungary¹⁰ and Jarosław Kaczyński in Poland.¹¹ Experts such as political and communication scholars Claudia Alvarez and Peter Dahlgren argue that there are two reasons for this surge of nationalist populism in the region: economic and cultural. Firstly, the global economic crisis of 2008-2009 led to increased socio-economic uncertainty in the world.¹² According to Czech sociologist Ondřej Císař, the economic crisis was highly salient in Eastern Europe as it interrupted post-1989 increases in living standards. This experience directly contrasted with the high expectations and enthusiasm in the region associated with the switch towards democracy and a market economy after the fall of the Iron Curtain and the accession to the EU in 2004. As a result, there has been a backlash against democracy in Central and Eastern Europe.¹³ Secondly, Grzegorz Ekiert, political scholar, asserts that Eastern European countries are experiencing a cultural shock. He claims that under the Soviet regime, the countries have been largely ethnically and culturally homogenous.¹⁴ However, he explains that “the last 30 years was a period of very dramatic cultural change, and the traditional societies of Eastern

⁹ “The Guardian view on Geert Wilders’ defeat: good news, to be treated with caution,” *The Guardian*, March 16, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/mar/16/the-guardian-view-on-geert-wilders-defeat-good-news-to-be-treated-with-caution>; Isaac Stanley-Becker, “Marine Le Pen falls short in far-right bid for the presidency of France,” *The Washington Post*, May 7, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/marine-le-pen-congratulates-emmanuel-macron-on-his-victory-in-french-presidential-race/2017/05/07/afe9064e-3021-11e7-a335-fa0ae1940305_story.html?utm_term=.bc066ccfc0c2.

¹⁰ Eszter Zala, “Hungary is too small for Viktor Orban,” *Foreign Policy*, October 1, 2016, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/10/01/hungary-is-too-small-for-viktor-orban/>; Sarah Sheet, “The Myths of Far-Right Populism: Orbán’s Fence and Trump’s Wall,” *Berkeley Political Review*, February 28, 2017, <https://bpr.berkeley.edu/2017/02/28/the-myths-of-far-right-populism-orbans-fence-and-trumps-wall/>.

¹¹ Gašper Zavrnšnik, “Brexit and Trump encouraged Eastern Europe populism: report,” *Politico*, April 4, 2017, <http://www.politico.eu/article/brexit-and-trump-encouraged-eastern-europe-populism-report-hungary-poland-democracy/>; Henry Foy, “Jaroslaw Kaczynski: Poland’s Kingmaker,” *Financial Times*, February 26, 2016, <https://www.ft.com/content/8238e15a-db46-11e5-a72f-1e7744c66818>.

¹² Joel Havemann, “The Financial Crisis 2008: Year in Review 2008,” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, February 2, 2009, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Financial-Crisis-of-2008-The-1484264>; Claudia Alvarez and Peter Dahlgren, “Populism, Extremism, and Media: Mapping an Uncertain Terrain,” *European Journal of Communication* 31, no. 1 (2016): 47; Christina Pazzanese, “In Europe, Nationalism Rising,” *Harvard Gazette*, February 27, 2017, <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2017/02/in-europe-nationalisms-rising/>.

¹³ Ondřej Císař, “Czech Republic: From Post-Communist Idealism to Economic Populism,” *Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung*, (2017): 6; Christina Pazzanese, “In Europe, Nationalism Rising,” *Harvard Gazette*, February 27, 2017, <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2017/02/in-europe-nationalisms-rising/>; Ondřej Císař and Jiří Navrátil, “At the Ballot Boxes or in the Streets and Factories: Economic Contention in the Visegrad Group,” in *Austerity and Protest: Popular Contention in Times of Economic Crisis*, ed. Marco Giugni and Maria Grasso (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2015), 37.

¹⁴ Christina Pazzanese, “In Europe, Nationalism Rising,” *Harvard Gazette*, February 27, 2017, <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2017/02/in-europe-nationalisms-rising/>; Ronald F. Inglehart and Pippa Norris, “Trump, Brexit, and the Rise of Populism: Economic Have-Nots and Cultural Backlash,” *Harvard Kennedy School Research Working Paper Series*, (August 2016): 29-30.

Europe were not really ready to embrace that change.”¹⁵ The rise of nationalist populism is thus a reaction to the cultural changes, most recently fuelled by increasing immigration from non-European cultures.¹⁶ According to these scholars, economic and cultural factors are hence the main reasons for the rise of nationalist populism in Central and Eastern Europe.

Beyond these two factors, many experts also argue that social media contributes to this process. Indeed, after Trump’s victory social media fell under scrutiny in terms of filter bubbles and echo-chambers in articles such as *Your Filter Bubble is Destroying Democracy* by Mostafa M. El-Bermawy from *Wired*.¹⁷ Next, Philip M. Napoli and Robyn Caplan, in the light of the 2016 election, call for companies such as Facebook and Google to be recognized and regulated as media companies due to their influence on information consumption, including distribution – and filtering – of content.¹⁸ Along these lines, a group of British MPs recently released a statement that “social media multinationals are more concerned with commercial risks than public protection,” and called for a greater control over the content.¹⁹ These allegations are in a stark contrast to the initial aspiration of – or hopes attached to – the Internet as a democratic emancipatory tool, as believed by scholars such as Daniel Miller and Don Slater who herald the Internet as a “Utopian future.”²⁰ It is therefore necessary to get a deeper understanding of how social media is used in political communication.

This research paper examines the ways in which social media – Facebook specifically – is used to convey nationalist populist messages, with the Czech Republic as a case study. It does it by analysing Facebook posts of the leaders of four popular Czech political parties: Bohuslav Sobotka, Andrej Babiš, Petr Fiala, and Tomio Okamura.²¹ The analysis is based on a framework of six articulations of nationalist populism derived from scholarly literature focusing on this ideology in the world and in the country itself. The research question is: *How do the six articulations of nationalist populism in political communication, as manifested by the use of Facebook by four Czech political leaders, speak to academic debates about democratic emancipation through social media?* To answer this question, it is necessary to understand how social media has become perceived as facilitating democratic emancipation,

¹⁵ In Christina Pazzanese, “In Europe, Nationalism Rising,” *Harvard Gazette*, February 27, 2017, <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2017/02/in-europe-nationalisms-rising/>.

¹⁶ Claudia Alvarez and Peter Dahlgren, “Populism, Extremism, and Media: Mapping an Uncertain Terrain,” *European Journal of Communication* 31, no. 1 (2016): 47; Christina Pazzanese, “In Europe, Nationalism Rising,” *Harvard Gazette*, February 27, 2017, <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2017/02/in-europe-nationalisms-rising/>; Ronald F. Inglehart and Pippa Norris, “Trump, Brexit, and the Rise of Populism: Economic Have-Nots and Cultural Backlash,” *Harvard Kennedy School Research Working Paper Series*, (August 2016): 29-30.

¹⁷ Mostafa M. El-Bermawy, “Your Filter Bubble is Destroying Democracy,” *The Wired*, November 18, 2016, <https://www.wired.com/2016/11/filter-bubble-destroying-democracy/>.

¹⁸ Philip M. Napoli and Robyn Caplan, “Why Media Companies Insist They’re Not Media Companies, Why They’re Wrong, and Why It Matters,” *First Monday* 22, no. 5 (2017), <http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/7051/6124>.

¹⁹ Owen Bowcott, “Social Media Firms Must Face Heavy Fines over Extremist Content – MPs,” *The Guardian*, May 1, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2017/may/01/social-media-firms-should-be-fined-for-extremist-content-say-mps-google-youtube-facebook>.

²⁰ Daniel Miller and Don Slater, *The Internet: An Ethnographic Approach*, (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2000), 12.

²¹ “Volební Preference (březen 2017),” *SANEP s.r.o.*, March 8, 2017, <http://www.sanep.cz/pruzkumy/volebni-preference-brezen-2017-publikovano-8-3-2017/>.

and how the cotemporary nationalist populist climate has come about and become a threat to democracy. The sub-questions are: How do the six articulations of nationalist populism appear on Czech Facebook in the context of Brexit and Donald Trump's victory? And what does the presence of nationalist populist messages may suggest about the limits of democratic potential of social media – Facebook specifically?

The academic relevance of this research lies in contribution to the scholarly debate regarding the role of social media in (political) communication. Added value also arises from examining this question from a largely neglected perspective of a Central-Eastern European country. On the one hand, according to technological innovation author Charles Leadbeater, the Internet has the potential to “spread democracy, promote freedom, [and] alleviate inequality.”²² This is facilitated through its open and collaborative character.²³ Moreover, scholars like anthropologist Jeffrey S. Juris believe that social media have enhanced civic engagement and activist mobilisation – particularly with regards to political revolutions and movements in early 2010s.²⁴ On the other hand, as believed by a technology researcher Evgeny Morozov, the Internet and social media may also enable creating and spreading of ideologies against democratic principles.²⁵ Besides, there is a growing research questioning this, such as studies examining hate speech on Twitter, done by scholars like Pete Burnap and Matthew L. Williams.²⁶ Considering that Facebook is the world's most popular social media platform,²⁷ used by a very broad group of people from various socio-economic backgrounds,²⁸ it too should be examined with regards to its supposed emancipatory potential. Next, social media is increasingly being used by politicians. They use it to reach their potential voters and supporters.²⁹ Some scholars hence call for a greater examination of political communication

²² Charles Leadbeater, *We-Think: Mass Innovation, Not Mass Production*, (London: Profile Books, 2009), 6.

²³ Charles Leadbeater, *We-Think: Mass Innovation, Not Mass Production*, (London: Profile Books, 2009), 6.

²⁴ Jeffrey S. Juris, “Reflections on #Occupy Everywhere: Social Media, Public Space, and Emerging Logic of Aggregation,” *American Ethnologist* 39, no. 2 (2012): 271; Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy?” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011): 757; Gadi Wolfsfeld, Elad Segev, and Tamir Sheafer, “Social Media and the Arab Spring: Politics Comes First,” *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 18, no. 2 (2013): 115.

²⁵ Evgeny Morozov, *The Net Delusion*, (New York: Public Affairs, 2011), xiv-v; Claudia Alvarez and Peter Dahlgren, “Populism, Extremism, and Media: Mapping an Uncertain Terrain,” *European Journal of Communication* 31, no. 1 (2016): 53-4; Sven Engesser et al., “Populism and Social Media: How Politicians Spread a Fragmented Ideology,” *Information, Communication, and Society*, (2016): 2; Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy?” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011):761.

²⁶ Pete Burnap and Matthew L. Williams, “Cyber Hate Speech on Twitter, An Application of Machine Classification and Statistical Modeling for Policy and Decision Making,” *Policy & Internet* 7, no. 2 (2015): 223; Irfan Chaudhry, “#Hashtagging hate: Using Twitter to track racism,” *First Monday* 20, no. 2 (2015), <http://uncommonculture.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/5450/4207>; Imran Awan, “Islamophobia and Twitter: A Tyology of Online Hate Against Muslims on Social Media,” *Policy and Internet* 6, no. 2 (2014): 147.

²⁷ Elise Moreau, “The Top Social Networking Sites People Are Using,” *Lifewire*, May 12, 2017, <https://www.lifewire.com/top-social-networking-sites-people-are-using-3486554>.

²⁸ Rasmus Kleis Nielsen, “Keynote Speech,” (presentation, Group Conference on Democratic Discourse 2.0: Potentials and Challenges in a New Era of Communication from European Free Alliance, Brussels, Belgium, June 7, 2017).

²⁹ David Pettersson and Petter Karlström, “Reputation as a Product, Politicians in Social Media,” *The Second International Conference on Reputatio, ICORE 2011*, (2011): 1; Stefan Stieglitz and Linh Dang-Yuan, “Social Media and Political Communication: A Social Media Analytics Framework,” *Social Network Analysis and Mining* 3, no. 4 (2013): 1278; Daniel Gayo Avello, “Politics and Social Media,” (2016): 42, http://danigayo.info/publications/Gayo-Avello_Politics_and_Social_Media/.

on social media channels and how such communication influences the entire political discourse. However, existing research in this field mainly focuses on Western countries, such as the UK, Switzerland, Austria, Italy,³⁰ Finland,³¹ or Germany.³² With some exceptions, the political dynamics of Central and Eastern Europe have been largely neglected.³³ This research therefore contributes to the growing research into the emancipatory power of social media, Facebook specifically, and provides a fresh perspective from one country in Central-Eastern Europe.

In addition to examining Facebook posts as a primary source, a number of scholarly works is consulted to form the theoretical background for the analysis. Scholars such as Charles Leadbeater, José van Dijck, and Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea provide an insight into social media's democratic aspirations and capacities. On the other hand, works of Sven Engesser et al. and Kieron O'Hara are drawn upon to illustrate how social media can in fact undermine democratic pluralism. Notions of populism and nationalism are derived from works of Cas Mudde and Benedict Anderson. Etienne Balibar and Verena Stolcke are consulted to explain how the notion of the "Other" is founded and constructed in nationalism. The work of Klaus Krippendorff informs the main method of this research, content analysis. Norman Fairclough elucidates the relation between language/discourse and power and politics. Finally, the empirical analysis section shows how nationalist populism is articulated in six forms on Facebook by four Czech politicians.

Theoretical Framework

The main theoretical axis of this research consists in the debate on the democratization potential of social media vs. their potential role as catalysts of nationalist populism. This project provides one very small contribution to the existing research on the political tenor of content actually available on social media, and as such it enriches this debate from one specific perspective of a Central-Eastern European country. The opening part of this section explains how social media has been conceived as a tool for a democratic empowerment due to its innovative qualities, which are in line with democratic principles. Then, the argument that social media can also subvert democracy is outlined, particularly with regards to facilitating an uncontrolled spread of information and ideologies in political communication. This is followed by an outline of the chief characteristics of populism, such as primarily opposing the

³⁰ Sven Engesser et al., "Populism and Social Media: How Politicians Spread a Fragmented Ideology," *Information, Communication, and Society*, (2016): 1.

³¹ Karina Horsti and Kaarina Nikunen, "The Ethics of Hospitality in Changing Journalism: A response to the rise of the anti-immigrant movement in Finnish media," *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 16, no. 4 (2013): 489.

³² Jamie Bartlett, "Populism, Social Media, and Democratic Strain," in *European Populism and Winning the Immigration Debate*, ed. by Clara Sandelind (Stockholm: Fores, 2014), 108-9.

³³ Alena Macková and Václav Štětka, "Walking the Party Line? The Determinants of Facebook's Adoption and Use by Czech Parliamentarians," *Medijske Studije* 7, no. 14 (2016): 158; Pawel Baranowski, "Online Political Campaigning during the 2014 Regional Elections in Poland," *Media and Communication* 3, no. 4 (2015): 35; Václav Štětka, Alena Macková, and Marta Fialová, "A Winding Road from 'Likes' to Votes: The Role of Social Media in the 2013 Presidential Election," *Social Media in Politics* 13, (2014): 228.

elites in power and advocating “the (good) people”. The same is done with nationalism, explaining how it is based on an imagined notion and how it constructs the “Other.” Then, six articulations of nationalist populism in the Czech political context are identified. The final section explains the method of content analysis, used for the empirical part of this research.

Media scholars Andreas M. Kaplan and Michael Haenlein define social media as a “group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content.”³⁴ The authors argue that these applications form a complex aggregation of many different information and communication and media technologies. In this sense, the term social media encompasses many different platforms.³⁵ According to the law scholar Sarah Joseph the most popular of them are social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter. Facebook is characterised by Joseph as enabling “users to create a profile page and share information with an unlimited number of virtual ‘friends.’”³⁶ Despite the variety in social media, this research uses the terms “social media” and “social networking sites” interchangeably.

According to media scholar Jan A.G.M. van Dijk, two perspectives on the democratic implications of social media have emerged over time: Utopian and Dystopian.³⁷ Due to their direct causality of the outcomes of technology, these perspectives fit what a professor of history of technology Melvin Kranzberg understands as technological determinism.³⁸ According to technology historian Merritt Roe Smith, technological determinism views technological development as governing the society and causing social, political, and economic changes. To put differently, technology determines the societal outcome.³⁹ This notion of technology-driven social changes is reflected in the perception of social media as a Utopian tool for enhancing democracy, as theorised by Leadbeater or Internet scholar Clay Shirky.⁴⁰ This view also extended into a popular debate, as articulated by journalist Leo

³⁴ In Sarah Joseph, “Social Media, Political Change, and Human Rights” *Boston College International & Comparative Law Review* 35, (2012): 146.

³⁵ Daniel Trotter and Christian Fuchs, *Social Media, Politics and the State: Protests, Revolutions, Riots, Crime and Policing in the Age of Facebook, Twitter and YouTube*, (Abingdon-on-Thames: Routledge, 2014), 7; Sarah Joseph, “Social Media, Political Change, and Human Rights” *Boston College International & Comparative Law Review* 35, (2012): 146; José van Dijk, “Facebook as a Tool Producing Sociality and Connectivity,” *Television and New Media* 13, no. 2 (2012): 161.

³⁶ Sarah Joseph, “Social Media, Political Change, and Human Rights” *Boston College International & Comparative Law Review* 35, (2012): 148.

³⁷ Jan A.G.M. van Dijk, “Digital Democracy: Vision and Reality,” in *Public Administration in the Information Age: Revisited*, ed. by Ig Snellen and Wim van de Donk (Amsterdam: IOS – Press, 2013), 2-3.

³⁸ Melvin Kranzberg, “Technology and History: ‘Kranzberg’s Laws,’” *Technology and Culture* 27, no. 3 (1986): 545.

³⁹ Merritt Roe Smith, “Technological Determinism in American culture,” in *Does Technology Drive History? The Dilemma of Technological Determinism*, ed. by Merritt Roe Smith and Leo Marx, (Cambridge, MIT Press, 1994), 2; Bruce Bimber, “Karl Marx and the Three Faces of Technological Determinism,” *Social Studies of Science* 2, no. 2 (1990): 334.

⁴⁰ Charles Leadbeater, *We-Think: Mass Innovation, Not Mass Production*, (London: Profile Books, 2009), 6; Clay Shirky, *Cognitive Surplus: Creativity and Generosity in a Connected Age*, (New York: Penguin Books, 2011), 78; Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy?” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011): 575; Larry Diamond, “Liberation Technology,” *Journal of Democracy* 21, no. 3 (2010): 70-1;

Mirani in his article for *The Guardian*, titled *Sorry, Malcolm Gladwell, the Revolution May Well Be Tweeted*.⁴¹ Media and sociology scholars Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea argue that social media is seen as such due to its inherent differences from mass media in terms of accessibility, capacity of its content, and user-involvement. They claim that with the digitalisation of mass media came the vision of enhancement of democracy. In fact, traditional democracy is seen as undergoing a transformation into a “digital democracy.”⁴² Digital democracy is defined by van Dijk as “the pursuit and the practice of democracy in whatever view using digital media in online and offline political communication.”⁴³ Loader and Mercea assert that the optimism surrounding digital democracy has peaked with the emergence of social media.⁴⁴ One of the reasons for this is the accessibility of social media. Unlike mass media, social media is accessible to most people across the socio-economic divide.⁴⁵ This accessibility is not only grounded in the wide reach of the Internet but also, as specified by the authors, in the availability and affordability of technology, such as computers or smartphones, and in a loose legal framework.⁴⁶ Secondly, unlike mass media, social media serves as an unlimited space for expressing different viewpoints and sharing information. In fact, it enables people to contest mainstream discourses that are constructed by the media and political institutions in power. Simultaneously, social media facilitates the creation and sharing of alternative opinions and viewpoints to this mainstream,⁴⁷ because, as articulated by

José van Dijck, *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 5; José van Dijck and Thomas Poell, “Understanding Social Media Logic,” *Media and Communication* 1, no. 1 (2013): 8; Emma Price, “Social Media and Democracy,” *Australian Journal of Political Science* 48, no. 4 (2013): 519; Sarah Joseph, “Social Media, Political Change, and Human Rights” *Boston College International & Comparative Law Review* 35, (2012): 152.

⁴¹ Leo Mirani, “Sorry, Malcolm Gladwell, the revolution may well be tweeted,” *The Guardian*, October 10, 2010, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/cifamerica/2010/oct/02/malcolm-gladwell-social-networking-kashmir>.

⁴² Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy?” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011): 757-758; Jan A.G.M. van Dijk, “Digital Democracy: Vision and Reality,” in *Public Administration in the Information Age: Revisited*, ed. by Ig Snellen and Wim van de Donk (Amsterdam: IOS – Press, 2013), 1; Stephen Ward and Thierry Vedel, “Introduction: The Potential of the Internet Revisited,” *Parliamentary Affairs* 56, no. 2 210 (2006): 210.

⁴³ Jan A.G.M. van Dijk, “Digital Democracy: Vision and Reality,” in *Public Administration in the Information Age: Revisited*, ed. by Ig Snellen and Wim van de Donk (Amsterdam: IOS – Press, 2013), 3.

⁴⁴ Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy?” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011): 757-758; José van Dijck, *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 11-12; Sarah Joseph, “Social Media, Political Change, and Human Rights” *Boston College International & Comparative Law Review* 35, (2012): 148-9; José van Dijck, “Facebook as a Tool Producing Sociality and Connectivity,” *Television and New Media* 13, no. 2 (2012): 161.

⁴⁵ Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy?” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011): 759; William H. Dutton, “The Fifth Estate Emerging through the Network of Networks,” *Prometheus* 27, no. 1 (2009): 5; Sarah Joseph, “Social Media, Political Change, and Human Rights” *Boston College International & Comparative Law Review* 35, (2012): 149; José van Dijck, “Facebook as a Tool Producing Sociality and Connectivity,” *Television and New Media* 13, no. 2 (2012): 164.

⁴⁶ Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy?” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011): 759.

⁴⁷ Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy?” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011): 759; William H. Dutton, “The Fifth Estate Emerging through the Network of Networks,” *Prometheus* 27, no. 1 (2009): 6; Jan A.G.M. van Dijk, “Digital Democracy: Vision and Reality,” in *Public Administration in the Information Age: Revisited*, ed. by Ig Snellen and Wim van de Donk (Amsterdam: IOS – Press, 2013), 6; José van Dijck, “Facebook as a Tool Producing Sociality and Connectivity,” *Television and New Media* 13, no. 2

media scholar Emma Price, anyone is able to “equally” and “immediately” express them.⁴⁸ In other words, as believed by van Dijk, social media fuels pluralism in social and political discussions.⁴⁹ Lastly, in contrast to mass media, social media enables “mass-collaboration.” By this, Loader and Mercea mean the creation of a vast cooperation network of individuals and groups.⁵⁰ These individuals and groups then “become the source of new innovations and ideas in democratic practices.”⁵¹ In this perspective, the role of users is active not only within the network but also within the technology itself. The users help to co-develop the platforms, which is another democratic feature of social media.⁵² The accessibility and the facilitation of creating alternative contents and forming cooperative networks of social media have contributed to the perspective of it as revolutionary means of democratic emancipation. Indeed, in line with technological determinism, the development of the Internet and social media as such led to digital democracy and democratic empowerment as a societal change.⁵³

It should be noted that van Dijk believes that many social media platforms themselves encourage this perception. They do it by emphasising their foundation in the principles of Web 2.0. These principles include sharing of information and knowledge and building of a democratic community. Social media platforms present themselves as the extension of these principles, and as such attain this appearance.⁵⁴ This is best illustrated by a statement by Barry Schnitt, the director of corporate communication and public policy at Facebook. Schnitt claims that “by making the world more open and connected, [Facebook is] expanding understanding between people and making the world a more empathetic place.”⁵⁵

(2012): 163; Emma Price, “Social Media and Democracy,” *Australian Journal of Political Science* 48, no. 4 (2013): 519-520.

⁴⁸ Emma Price, “Social Media and Democracy,” *Australian Journal of Political Science* 48, no. 4 (2013): 520.

⁴⁹ Jan A.G.M. van Dijk, “Digital Democracy: Vision and Reality,” in *Public Administration in the Information Age: Revisited*, ed. by Ig Snellen and Wim van de Donk (Amsterdam: IOS – Press, 2013), 4-5.

⁵⁰ Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy?” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011): 759; Sarah Joseph, “Social Media, Political Change, and Human Rights” *Boston College International & Comparative Law Review* 35, (2012): 147; José van Dijck, *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 12.

⁵¹ Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy?” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011): 759; Sarah Joseph, “Social Media, Political Change, and Human Rights” *Boston College International & Comparative Law Review* 35, (2012): 147.

⁵² Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy?” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011):760; José van Dijck, *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 7; José van Dijck, “Facebook as a Tool Producing Sociality and Connectivity,” *Television and New Media* 13, no. 2 (2012): 172-3; José van Dijck, “Facebook and the Engineering of Connectivity, A Multi-layered Approach to Social Media Platforms,” *Convergence* 19, no. 2 (2012): 152-3.

⁵³ Charles Leadbeater, *We-Think: Mass Innovation, Not Mass Production*, (London: Profile Books, 2009), 3; Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy?” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011):757-758; Jan A.G.M. van Dijk, “Digital Democracy: Vision and Reality,” in *Public Administration in the Information Age: Revisited*, ed. by Ig Snellen and Wim van de Donk (Amsterdam: IOS – Press, 2013), 1.

⁵⁴ José van Dijck, *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 5; Emma Price, “Social Media and Democracy,” *Australian Journal of Political Science* 48, no. 4 (2013): 519; Jerry Michalski, “How Facebook Could Actually Make The World A Better Place,” *The Forbes*, May 11, 2012, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jerrymichalski/2012/05/11/what-if-zuck-meant-it/>; Joe Miller, “Zuckerberg: Facebook’s mission is to ‘connect the world’,” *BBC*, February 24, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-26326844>.

⁵⁵ Barry Schnitt in José van Dijck, *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 46.

In this sense, social media is not only perceived from the outside as a bridge to a democratic society but also consciously presents itself as such.

At the same time, van Dijck contends that despite this self-representation, Facebook still can determine – or “govern” – what can and what cannot be created and shared on its pages.⁵⁶ Research by new media scholars Karin van Es, Daniela van Geenen, and Thomas Boeschoten finds that content and participation on Facebook is shaped by “socio-cultural and technological forces.”⁵⁷ In line with this finding, Facebook asserts that sharing of information and knowledges on its pages is constrained by “evolving social norms,” according to van Dijck. However, the author also states that Facebook can shape these norms through its Terms of Service rules. Furthermore, she emphasises that these rules are particularly influenced by Facebook’s interests in financial gains. In other words, the way information and knowledge is shared on Facebook is among other also shaped by the monetary value it may generate.⁵⁸ Therefore, one has to acknowledge that Facebook, as a corporation seeking profits, has some governance over sharing of information and knowledges.

In contrast to the Utopian view on the potentials of social media, other writers such as Morozov argue that social media can actually undermine democracy.⁵⁹ The argument here is, as articulated by communication and media scholars Sven Engesser et al., that despite its unprecedented emancipatory qualities, social media is not merely a utopian democratic tool but can also serve as rather dystopian means of diminishing the principle of pluralism in democracy. This is because of its inherent lack of “restrictions” that are typical to mass media.⁶⁰

Zakaria writes that the fundamental definition of democracy is the “rule of the people.”⁶¹ At the same time, however, academics assert that it also has other core principles. As argued by political science scholars Koen Abts and Stefan Rummens, democracy also means equality of representation, upholding individual human rights, and balancing interests

⁵⁶ José van Dijck, *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 60.

⁵⁷ Karin van Es, Daniela van Geenen, and Thomas Boeschoten, “Mediating the Black Pete Discussion on Facebook: Slacktivism, Flaming Wars, and Deliberation,” *First Monday* 19, no. 12 (2014), <http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/5570/4180>.

⁵⁸ José van Dijck, *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 61-2; José van Dijck, “Facebook and the Engineering of Connectivity: A Multi-layered Approach to Social Media Platforms,” *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies* 19, no. 2 (2012): 152; Tim O’Reilly, “What Is Web 2.0: Design Patterns and Business Models for the Next Generation of Software,” *International Journal of Digital Economics*, no. 65 (2007): 26.

⁵⁹ Evgeny Morozov, *The Net Delusion*, (New York: Public Affairs, 2011), xiv-v; Claudia Alvarez and Peter Dahlgren, “Populism, Extremism, and Media: Mapping an Uncertain Terrain,” *European Journal of Communication* 31, no. 1 (2016): 53-4; Sven Engesser et al., “Populism and Social Media: How Politicians Spread a Fragmented Ideology,” *Information, Communication, and Society*, (2016): 2; Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy?” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011):761.

⁶⁰ Claudia Alvarez and Peter Dahlgren, “Populism, Extremism, and Media: Mapping an Uncertain Terrain,” *European Journal of Communication* 31, no. 1 (2016): 53-4; Sven Engesser et al., “Populism and Social Media: How Politicians Spread a Fragmented Ideology,” *Information, Communication, and Society*, (2016): 2; Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy?” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011):761.

⁶¹ Fareed Zakaria, “The Rise of Illiberal Democracy,” *Foreign Affairs* 76, no. 6 (1997): 24.

and powers.⁶² The constitutional framework of democratic states typically involves a separation of legislative, executive and judicial powers, a system of checks and balances and a set of fundamental rights of all citizens and other inhabitants.⁶³ These mechanisms aim to prevent a slide towards authoritarianism or towards a “tyranny of the majority”, which was identified as a risk inherent in democratic societies already by Tocqueville and Madison in the late 18th century.⁶⁴ John Stuart Mill, a political theorist, defined the tyranny of the majority as the majority of the people in a state putting their interests above those people in minority. In other words, the majority holds power while minority groups are oppressed. Mill argues that the notion of “power of the people” is in fact one of the greatest threats to democracy.⁶⁵ As theorised by Engesser et al,⁶⁶ social media may be used to share content that excludes those in minority while advocates the majority, in accordance with the tyranny of the majority.⁶⁷

According to Tocqueville and Madison, democratic pluralism is essential to prevent the tyranny of the majority.⁶⁸ In a contemporary context, Abts and Rummens consider democratic practices to be defined by striving to “generate inclusive policies that have been influenced by the participation of all citizens.”⁶⁹ These values are based in the notion of democratic pluralism. In fact, scholars like Frank Bealey and Allan G. Johnson argue that pluralism is an inherent feature of democracy. Without the former, the latter cannot exist.⁷⁰ Furthermore, political theorist Robert Alan Dahl recognizes the manifestation of pluralism in democracy in organizational pluralism of democratic system. He specifically defines this as the “existence of a plurality of relatively autonomous (independent) organizations

⁶² Frank Bealey and Allan G. Johnson, *The Blackwell Dictionary of Political Science: A User's Guide to Its Terms*, (New Jersey: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 1999), 98-99; Robert Alan Dahl, *Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy: Autonomy vs. Control*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 6; Koen Abts and Stefan Rummens, “Populism versus Democracy,” *Political Studies* 55, (2007): 405; Jan A.G.M. van Dijk, “Digital Democracy: Vision and Reality,” in *Public Administration in the Information Age: Revisited*, ed. by Ig Snellen and Wim van de Donk (Amsterdam: IOS – Press, 2013), 4.

⁶³ “Checks and Balances,” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, July 27, 2016, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/checks-and-balances>; Charter of Fundamental Rights – Constitutional Law of the Czech Republic No. 2/1993, (1992), <https://www.psp.cz/docs/laws/listina.html>.

⁶⁴ “Tyranny of the Majority,” *Encyclopaedia.com*, <http://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/applied-and-social-sciences-magazines/tyranny-majority>; James Madison, “Federalist Paper Number 10,” in *The Federalist Papers*, ed. Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, (Auckland: The Floating Press, 2011): 92-3.

⁶⁵ John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, (Ontario: Batoche Books, 2001), 8-9; “Tyranny of the Majority,” *Encyclopaedia.com*, <http://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/applied-and-social-sciences-magazines/tyranny-majority>.

⁶⁶ Claudia Alvarez and Peter Dahlgren, “Populism, Extremism, and Media: Mapping an Uncertain Terrain,” *European Journal of Communication* 31, no. 1 (2016): 53-4; Sven Engesser et al., “Populism and Social Media: How Politicians Spread a Fragmented Ideology,” *Information, Communication, and Society*, (2016): 2; Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy?” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011):761.

⁶⁷ Koen Abts and Stefan Rummens, “Populism versus Democracy,” *Political Studies* 55, (2007): 410.

⁶⁸ “Tyranny of the Majority,” *Encyclopaedia.com*, <http://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/applied-and-social-sciences-magazines/tyranny-majority>; James Madison, “Federalist Paper Number 10,” in *The Federalist Papers*, ed. Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, (Auckland: The Floating Press, 2011): 92-3.

⁶⁹ Koen Abts and Stefan Rummens, “Populism versus Democracy,” *Political Studies* 55, (2007): 411.

⁷⁰ Frank Bealey and Allan G. Johnson, *The Blackwell Dictionary of Political Science: A User's Guide to Its Terms*, (New Jersey: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 1999), 243; Robert Alan Dahl, *Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy: Autonomy vs. Control*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 5; Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox*, (New York: Verso, 2000): 19.

(subsystems) within the domain of a state.”⁷¹ Democratic power, in other words, does not belong to one exclusive group or the majority but is actually equally distributed among ever-changing and competing groups or minorities.⁷²

While democracy is in this perspective based on deliberation and consensus-making, some academics, such as computer and political scholar Kieron O’Hara, claim that the Internet actually debilitates these processes.⁷³ O’Hara asserts that the content on the Internet, “often blandly characterized as ‘information,’ consists of a rumbustious mixture of truth and lies, often slanted and often placed in suggestive context (...).”⁷⁴ Focusing on social media specifically, Engesser et al., demonstrate this with political communication. They claim that social media is becoming for political groups and individuals an every-day tool for effective promotion and reaching new supporters.⁷⁵ They see this as problematic because there is a lack of “control” over this. In fact, the authors argue that social media allows politicians to share sensationalistic and personal messages without any (immediate) journalistic scrutiny and fact-checking.⁷⁶ In contrast to this, traditional mass media requires politicians to adhere to the rules of factuality and etiquette. Furthermore, it exposes them to journalistic inspection and moderation.

The risks inherent in the increasing transfer of political discourse towards social media have also been addressed at the conference *Democratic Discourse 2.0* in the European Parliament on June 7, 2017. Expert on search engines Joris van Hoboken pointed out that traditional media used to perform communication quality control, but these “gatekeepers [have now] lost their monopoly.”⁷⁷ As a result, there is fake news and deceptive content shared on social media, presented as quality news and trustworthy messages.⁷⁸ This shows that social media, instead of facilitating connections and understanding through easily shared

⁷¹ Robert Alan Dahl, *Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy: Autonomy vs. Control*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 5.

⁷² André Munro, “Robert A. Dahl,” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, February 16, 2016, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Robert-A-Dahl>; Jan A.G.M. van Dijk, “Digital Democracy: Vision and Reality,” in *Public Administration in the Information Age: Revisited*, ed. by Ig Snellen and Wim van de Donk (Amsterdam: IOS – Press, 2013), 4-5.

⁷³ Kieron O’Hara, “The Internet: A Tool for Democratic Pluralism,” *Science as Culture* 11, no. 2 (2002): 287-8; Stephen Ward and Thierry Vedel, “Introduction: The Potential of the Internet Revisited,” *Parliamentary Affairs* 56, no. 2 210 (2006): 217; Larry Diamond, “Liberation Technology,” *Journal of Democracy* 21, no. 3 (2010): 80.

⁷⁴ Kieron O’Hara, “The Internet: A Tool for Democratic Pluralism,” *Science as Culture* 11, no. 2 (2002): 287-8.

⁷⁵ Daniel Gayo-Avello, *Politics and Social Media*, December 12, 2016, 49; David Pettersson and Petter Karlström “Reputation as a Product: Politicians in Social Media,” *The second International Conference on Reputation*, (2011): 1; Stefan Stieglitz and Linh Dang-Yuan, “Social Media and Political Communication: A Social Media Analytics Framework,” *Social Network Analysis and Mining* 3, no. 4 (2013): 1278; William H. Dutton, “The Fifth Estate Emerging through the Network of Networks,” *Prometheus* 27, no. 1 (2009): 8.

⁷⁶ Sven Engesser et al., “Populism and Social Media: How Politicians Spread a Fragmented Ideology,” *Information, Communication, and Society*, (2016): 5.

⁷⁷ Joris van Hoboken, “New Trends in the Digital News Landscape – Alternative Media Outlets, Fake-News and the Crisis of Traditional Journalism,” (presentation, Group Conference on Democratic Discourse 2.0: Potentials and Challenges in a New Era of Communication from European Free Alliance, Brussels, Belgium, June 7, 2017.

⁷⁸ Joris van Hoboken, “New Trends in the Digital News Landscape – Alternative Media Outlets, Fake-News and the Crisis of Traditional Journalism,” (presentation, Group Conference on Democratic Discourse 2.0: Potentials and Challenges in a New Era of Communication from European Free Alliance, Brussels, Belgium, June 7, 2017.

content, enables users, such as politicians, to avoid any restriction and scrutiny. Consequently these actors can directly share content that can encourage intolerance, discrimination and authoritarian tendencies as opposed to pluralistic democracy.⁷⁹

One of the ideologies that limit democratic plurality is populism. As claimed by Abts and Rummens populism is in line with the notion of the “tyranny of the majority” as it creates a sense of popular sovereignty and discards considerations of democratic pluralism. In their words, populism “gives voice to the desire to restore power to the people (...) [and] thus challenges constitutional democracy from within, in the name of democracy itself.”⁸⁰ In this perspective, if social media enables unrestricted spread of political ideologies such as populism, it can undermine democratic pluralism and thus it can facilitate a tyranny of the majority. For example, an ethnic, religious, political, or racial minority that is unpopular may be purposefully oppressed and ostracised by the majority⁸¹ on social media.⁸² Another instance of undermining pluralistic democracy can arise if social media strengthen the appeal of authoritarian leaders.⁸³ This phenomenon was anticipated, among others, by Alexander Hamilton who argued during the US Constitutional Convention in 1787 that direct democracy can lead to a majority vote for an incompetent despot who might favour interests of one group against the rights of minority groups, instead of benefiting all the people.⁸⁴

This research therefore challenges the assumption that social media is exclusively an emancipatory and democracy-enhancing force. While it is conceived and presents itself as such, it also has the capacity to do the opposite. This dual capacity can be explained by the theory of social constructivism. According to philosophy and technology scholar Philip Brey, technological development is produced and shaped by social and cultural choices and negotiations.⁸⁵ As believed by social science and technology scholar Wiebe Bijker et al., these choices and negotiations include the design, technical content, and the use of technology.⁸⁶ In

⁷⁹ Claudia Alvarez and Peter Dahlgren, “Populism, Extremism, and Media: Mapping an Uncertain Terrain,” *European Journal of Communication* 31, no. 1 (2016): 53-4; Sven Engesser et al., “Populism and Social Media: How Politicians Spread a Fragmented Ideology,” *Information, Communication, and Society*, (2016): 2; Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy?” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011):761.

⁸⁰ Koen Abts and Stefan Rummens, “Populism versus Democracy,” *Political Studies* 55, (2007): 410.

⁸¹ Fareed Zakaria, “The Rise of Illiberal Democracy,” *Foreign Affairs* 76, no 6 (1997): 35.

⁸² Inari Sakki and Katarina Pattersson, “Discursive Construction of Otherness in Populist Radical Right Political Blogs,” *European Journal of Social Psychology* 46, no, 2 (2016): 157; Karina Horsti and Kaarina Nikunen, “The Ethics of Hospitality in Changing Journalism: A response to the rise of the anti-immigrant movement in Finnish media,” *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 16, no. 4 (2013): 500-1.

⁸³ Daniel Gayo Avello, “Social Media and Authoritarianism,” *SSRN*, (July 22, 2015): 7; Ora John Reuter and David Szakonyi, “Online Social Media and Political Awareness in Authoritarian Regimes,” *British Journal of Political Science* 45, (2013): 31.

⁸⁴ Lisa Blomgren Bingham and Rosemary O’Leary, “Federalist No. 51: Is the Past Relevant to Today’s Collaborative Public Management?” *Public Administration Review*, (December 2015): 580; Alexander Hamilton, “Federalist Paper Number 51,” in *The Federalist Papers*, written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, (Auckland: The Floating Press, 2011): 481.

⁸⁵ Philip Brey, “Philosophy of Technology Meets Social Constructivism,” in *Readings in the Philosophy of Technology*, ed. by David M. Kaplan (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009), 100.

⁸⁶ Wiebe Bijker, “General Introduction,” in *The Social Construction of Technological Systems: New Directions in the Sociology and History of Technology*, ed. by Wiebe Bijker, Thomas Hughes, and Trevor Pinch,

other words, the social and cultural use of social media (among other) shapes the technology and influences the societal outcomes and change – be it “positive” or “negative.”⁸⁷ Furthermore, van Dijck balances between determinism and constructivism in defining social media as “techno-socio-cultural manifestations of connectivity,”⁸⁸ consisting of technologies as well as people. In this perspective, content is created and controlled by both people and technology.⁸⁹ Linking it to this research, while users may politically express themselves on social media, social media’s underlying algorithms, bots, and personalization filters spread and connect this content with other users on a new scale.⁹⁰ By using social media as a tool to contain and spread uncontested populist messages, social media might subvert the democratic principle of pluralism and facilitate the tyranny of the majority. While this is suggested in the findings of this research, it should be noted that this study is small in scope and based on very limited and geographically unique evidence.

This study builds on the definition of populism as expressed by political scientists Cas Mudde and Paul Taggart. They contend that the core principle of populism, across contexts and times, is a versatile ideology rooted in the construction of a division between an “enemy” elite and the “good” people. According to Mudde, populism is one of the dominant political ideologies, despite the fact that it is difficult to provide a single comprehensive definition.⁹¹ This is because it is thin-centred and chameleonic. Firstly, Mudde claims that for its lack of core values, populism can be easily attached to more complex and better established ideologies across the political spectrum.⁹² Moreover, Taggart claims that the nature of populism is context-specific: while different instances of populism may be triggered by similar impulses, the individual contexts determine their content, form, and language.⁹³ In this

(Cambridge: MIT Press, 1987), 4; Branislav Djordjevic, Omer Spirtovic, and Danilo Acomovic, “Social Constructivism and Technology,” *International Journal of Business and Social Sciences* 7, no. 11 (2016): 179.

⁸⁷ Philip Brey, “Philosophy of Technology Meets Social Constructivism,” in *Readings in the Philosophy of Technology*, ed. by David M. Kaplan (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009), 100; Leah Lievrouw and Sonia Livingstone, *Handbook of New Media: Social Shaping and Social Consequences*, (London: Sage, 2006), 4. Leah Lievrouw, “New Media Design and Development: Diffusion of Innovations v Social Shaping of Technology,” in *Handbook of New Media: Student Edition*, ed. by Leah Lievrouw and Sonia Livingstone, (London: SAGE, 2006), 248; Melvin Kranzberg, “Technology and History: ‘Kranzberg’s Laws,’” *Technology and Culture* 27, no. 3 (1986): 545.

⁸⁸ José van Dijck, “Facebook and the Engineering of Connectivity, A Multi-layered Approach to Social Media Platforms,” *Convergence* 19, no. 2 (2012): 149.

⁸⁹ José van Dijck, “Facebook and the Engineering of Connectivity, A Multi-layered Approach to Social Media Platforms,” *Convergence* 19, no. 2 (2012): 150.

⁹⁰ José van Dijck, “Facebook and the Engineering of Connectivity, A Multi-layered Approach to Social Media Platforms,” *Convergence* 19, no. 2 (2012): 149; Eli Pariser, *The Filter Bubble: What the Internet is Hiding from You*, (New York: Penguin, 2012), 10-11.

⁹¹ Cas Mudde, “The Populist Zeitgeist,” *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (2004): 542-3; Sergiu Gherghina and Sorina Soare, “Introduction: Populism – A Sophisticated Concept and Diverse Political Realities, in *Contemporary Populism: A Controversial Concept and Its Diverse Forms*,” ed. by Sergiu Gherghina, Sergiu Micolu, and Sorina Soare, (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), 3; Ernesto Laclau, “On Populist Reason,” (London: Verso, 2005), 3.

⁹² Cas Mudde, “The Populist Zeitgeist,” *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (2004): 544; Claudia Alvarez and Peter Dahlgren, “Populism, Extremism, and Media: Mapping an Uncertain Terrain,” *European Journal of Communication* 31, no. 1 (2016): 49; Paul Taggart “The Populist Turn in the Politics of the New Europe” (paper presented at European Union Studies Association conference, Nashville, Tennessee, March 27-29, 2003): 7.

⁹³ Paul Taggart “The Populist Turn in the Politics of the New Europe” (paper presented at European Union Studies Association conference, Nashville, Tennessee, March 27-29, 2003): 8; Sven Engesser et al., “Populism

sense, due to its inherent characteristics, a universal definition of populism is hard to articulate.

Despite this, these scholars agree that the core of populism lies in encouraging social antagonism. Mudde argues that populism distinguishes between two basic groups of individuals: the people and the elites in power.⁹⁴ This distinction, according to Mudde, is not based on empirical evidence, and as such is normative: the people are always “pure” and “good,” whilst the elites are always “evil” and “corrupted.”⁹⁵ This division emerges in periods of crisis - it attacks political leadership and blames it for failing to tackle the crises. These crises are often based on great social changes⁹⁶ or threats to the “native” ways of life.⁹⁷ In this sense, while being highly flexible and adaptive, populism is essentially concerned with advocating for the people and identifying culprits, the ones in power, who harm them. Furthermore, research shows that populism is also spread on social media.⁹⁸ A large study by Engesser et al. finds that populism is expressed on social media by politicians in Austria, Italy, Switzerland, and the UK in five forms: emphasizing the sovereignty of the people, advocating for the people, attacking the elites, ostracising the “Others”, and invoking the heartland.⁹⁹ In fact, the authors conclude that “social media [is] particularly well-suited to meet the communicative preferences of populist actors” and “provide[s] them with a convenient instrument to spread their messages.”¹⁰⁰ Social media therefore poses as a fertile ground for populist politicians to share their ideology.

As Mudde theorizes, populism is easily attached to other ideologies, such as nationalism.¹⁰¹ This research understands nationalism as an imagined notion advocating supposed unity of the people based on their national membership.¹⁰² Simultaneously,

and Social Media: How Politicians Spread a Fragmented Ideology,” *Information, Communication, and Society*, (2016): 5.

⁹⁴ Cas Mudde, “The Populist Zeitgeist,” *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (2004): 544; Cas Mudde, “In the Name of the Peasantry, the Ploretariat, and the People: Populism in Eastern Europe,” *East European Politics and Societies* 14, no. 2, (2000): 37; Sven Engesser et al., “Populism and Social Media: How Politicians Spread a Fragmented Ideology,” *Information, Communication, and Society*, (2016): 5; Fareed Zakaria, “Populism on March: Why the West is in Trouble,” *Foreign Affairs*, (November/December 2016): 9; Christina Pazzanese, “In Europe, Nationalism Rising,” *Harvard Gazette*, February 27, 2017, <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2017/02/in-europe-nationalisms-rising/>.

⁹⁵ Cas Mudde, “The Populist Zeitgeist,” *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (2004): 544.

⁹⁶ Paul Taggart “The Populist Turn in the Politics of the New Europe” (paper presented at European Union Studies Association conference) Nashville, Tennessee, March 27-29, 2003): 8.

⁹⁷ Cas Mudde, “The Populist Zeitgeist,” *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (2004): 547; Cas Mudde, “In the Name of the Peasantry, the Ploretariat, and the People: Populism in Eastern Europe,” *East European Politics and Societies* 14, no. 2, (2000): 49.

⁹⁸ Sven Engesser et al., “Populism and Social Media: How Politicians Spread a Fragmented Ideology,” *Information, Communication, and Society*, (2016): 6-12; Claudia Alvarez and Peter Dahlgren, “Populism, Extremism, and Media: Mapping an Uncertain Terrain,” *European Journal of Communication* 31, no. 1 (2016): 53-4.

⁹⁹ Sven Engesser et al., “Populism and Social Media: How Politicians Spread a Fragmented Ideology,” *Information, Communication, and Society*, (2016): 6-12.

¹⁰⁰ Sven Engesser et al., “Populism and Social Media: How Politicians Spread a Fragmented Ideology,” *Information, Communication, and Society*, (2016): 15.

¹⁰¹ Cas Mudde, “The Populist Zeitgeist,” *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (2004): 544.

¹⁰² Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London: Verso, 2006), 6-7; Christian Fuchs, “Racism, Nationalism, and Right-Wing Extremism Online: The Austrian

nationalism scapegoats the “Other” as the cause of injustices and inequalities. It should be noted that nationalism too is in line with the principle of tyranny of the majority. According to Abts and Rummens, one of the inherent prerequisites of the tyranny of the majority is the distinction between who belongs to the people and who does not.¹⁰³ This corresponds with nationalism and the principle of the “Other.” According to Benedict Anderson, political scientist and expert on nationalism, the notion of nationalism is imagined. In fact, the supposed comradeship of the people of a nation, the physical limitation bordering this nation, and in the sovereignty of the nation is abstractly created.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, Anderson links the construction and rise of nationalist sentiment from the 16th century onwards with the rise of media, in particular print. He argues that print was initially exclusively created and distributed in Latin.¹⁰⁵ However, with the improvement of printing technologies and the increasing capitalist drive, the publishers began exploring new markets: non-Latin vernaculars and languages-of-states.¹⁰⁶ Exploring these new language markets contributed not only to the “dethronement of Latin” but more importantly to the emergence of imagined national communities and consciousness.¹⁰⁷ Linking this to social media nowadays, some of the research shows that social media too facilitates national or ethnic connection and consciousness.¹⁰⁸ A study by communication scholars Lee Komito and Jessica Bates shows that migrants predominantly interact on social media with their national diasporas in the receiving country or citizens in their country of origins. Social media is then not necessarily used to integrate into the wider society of the receiving country. To put it differently, according to research by Komito and Bates, social media tends to be used for national instead of cross-national communication.¹⁰⁹ In this sense, it contributes to the imagined notion of national belonging.

According to French philosopher Etienne Balibar, a key component of nationalism is cultural racism, which constructs the notion of the “Other.” Balibar believes that racism in

Presidential Election 2016 on Facebook,” *Momentum Quarterly* 5, no. 3 (2016): 175-6; Stuart Hall, “Culture, Community, Nation,” *Cultural Studies* 7, no. 3 (1993): 355.

¹⁰³ Koen Abts and Stefan Rummens, “Populism versus Democracy,” *Political Studies* 55, (2007): 410

¹⁰⁴ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London: Verso, 2006), 6-7; Benedict Anderson, “The Nation and the Origin of National Consciousness,” in *The Ethnicity Reader: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Migration*, ed. Montserrat Guibernau and John Rex, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010), 57.

¹⁰⁵ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London: Verso, 2006), 37-8.

¹⁰⁶ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London: Verso, 2006), 40-1.

¹⁰⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London: Verso, 2006), 43; Yasuko Kanno and Bonny Norton, “Imagined Communities and Educational Possibilities: Introduction,” *Journal of Languages, Identity, and Education* 2, no. 4 (2003): 246; Aneta Pavlenko and Bonny Norton, “Imagined Communities, Identity, and English Language Learning,” *International Handbook of English Language Teaching* 15, (2007): 670.

¹⁰⁸ Lee Komito and Jessica Bates, “Virtually Local: Social Media and Community among Polish Nationals in Dublin,” *Aslib Proceedings* 61, no. 3 (2009): 232; Rianna Dekker, Warda Belabas, and Peter Scholten, “Interethnic Contact Online: Contextualising the Implications of Social Media Use by Second-Generation Migrant Youth,” *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 36, no. 4 (2015): 364-5; Barbara Láštiová, “New Media, Social Capital, and Transnational Migration: Slovaks in the UK,” *Human Affairs* 24, (2014): 418-9.

¹⁰⁹ Lee Komito and Jessica Bates, “Virtually Local: Social Media and Community among Polish Nationals in Dublin,” *Aslib Proceedings* 61, no. 3 (2009): 232.

nationalism has shifted from biologically determined during the colonial era to being primarily culturally determined in the contemporary post-colonial era.¹¹⁰ In Balibar's words, this racism emphasises "cultural insurmountability (...) the harmfulness of abolishing frontiers, the incompatibility of life-styles and traditions."¹¹¹ In line with this is the notion of the "Other." Many scholars, like anthropologist Verena Stolcke, claim that the notion of a nation inherently creates a division between two groups. The first group is the supposedly culturally homogenous (European) native citizens, who then see themselves as holding identical values, interests, and beliefs. In this sense, they form the norm, the "Us." The second group encompasses the (non-European) rest, which seemingly does not hold the same values and interests. They are seen as abnormal, the "Them" or the "Other."¹¹² Based on their "Otherness," the latter group can be seen as potentially dangerous to the natives, which can lead to the exclusion and discrimination of the "Other."¹¹³ Moreover, some authors, such as migration scholar Karen Wren, argue that the notion of the "Other" is often constructed in the media.¹¹⁴ Scholars like Shahram Akbarzadeh and Bianca Smith in fact claim that in the post-9/11 era this particularly concerns refugees and migrants from the Middle East. They argue that these people are stereotyped as Muslims and in the next step as terrorists.¹¹⁵ The news media specifically often presents them as "fundamentalist, terrorist, sexist, militant, undemocratic, violent, suicide bombers, hijackers, orthodox/ scripturalist and fanatic."¹¹⁶ Nationalist sentiment thus "others" those perceived as not belonging to the imagined national community on account of cultural difference, particularly Muslims.

To learn how social media enable politicians to spread nationalist populism in the Czech Republic, six articulations of nationalist populism in the Czech context are composed.

¹¹⁰ Etienne Balibar, "Is There a 'Neo-Racism,'" in *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, ed. Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, (London: Verso, 1991), 21-22; Verena Stolcke, "Talking Culture: New Boundaries, New Rhetorics of Exclusion in Europe," *Current Anthropology* 36, no. 1 (1995): 4; Karen Wren, "Cultural Racism: Something Rotten in the State of Denmark?" *Social and Cultural Geography* 2, no. 2 (2001): 143-4.

¹¹¹ Etienne Balibar, "Is There a 'Neo-Racism,'" in *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, ed. Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, (London: Verso, 1991), 22.

¹¹² Verena Stolcke, "Talking Culture: New Boundaries, New Rhetorics of Exclusion in Europe," *Current Anthropology* 36, no. 1 (1995): 1-2; Karen Wren, "Cultural Racism: Something Rotten in the State of Denmark?" *Social and Cultural Geography* 2, no. 2 (2001): 143-4.

¹¹³ Verena Stolcke, "Talking Culture: New Boundaries, New Rhetorics of Exclusion in Europe," *Current Anthropology* 36, no. 1 (1995): 4; Karen Wren, "Cultural Racism: Something Rotten in the State of Denmark?" *Social and Cultural Geography* 2, no. 2 (2001): 144; Inari Sakki and Katarina Pattersson, "Discursive Construction of Otherness in Populist Radical Right Political Blogs," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 46, no. 2 (2016): 157-8.

¹¹⁴ Karen Wren, "Cultural Racism: Something Rotten in the State of Denmark?" *Social and Cultural Geography* 2, no. 2 (2001): 144; Karina Horsti, "Asylum Seekers in the News: Frames of Illegality and Control," *Observatorio Journal*, (2007): 155; Alena Kluknavská, "Enemies Among Us: The Anti-elitist and Xenophobic Discourses in the Czech Republic and Slovakia," *Rexter* 2 (2014): 46.

¹¹⁵ Shahram Akbarzadeh and Bianca Smith, "The Representation of Islam and Muslims in the Media: The Age and Herald Sun Newspapers," *School of Political and Social Inquiry*, (2005): 25; Rusi Jaspal and Marco Cinnirella, "Media representations of British Muslims and hybridised threats to identity," *Cont Islam* 4, (2010): 303; Scott Poynting et al., "Bin Laden in the Suburbs: Criminalising the Arab Other," (Sydney: Sydney Institute for Criminology Studies, 2004), 2.

¹¹⁶ Shahram Akbarzadeh and Bianca Smith, "The Representation of Islam and Muslims in the Media: The Age and Herald Sun Newspapers," *School of Political and Social Inquiry*, (2005): 25.

They are derived from international scholars, such as Mudde, Alvarez and Dahlgren, Taggart, and Sakki and Pattersson. These scholars theorise the general aspects of nationalist populism across the world. Moreover, scholars such as Císař and Kluknavská theorise nationalist populism in the context of the Czech Republic. *Firstly*, nationalist populists criticize and reject the “elites.”¹¹⁷ The elites consist of the leadership in power, such as the government or political parties. At the same time, they can also be formed by big businesses, civil servants, bureaucrats, intellectuals or academics.¹¹⁸ Nationalist populists seek to replace the political elite with direct democracy, which in their view restores the power of the people.¹¹⁹ *Secondly*, nationalist populists criticise and reject foreign global corporations and economic globalism in general. They emphasize the negative impacts on the economy, individual companies, and people’s lives. In contrast, they uphold and praise domestic companies and home-grown economic success. *Thirdly*, they support a clear demarcation of the country. This includes criticism and disapproval of various international political superstructures, such as the EU. These superstructures are blamed for various socio-economic ills, whilst it is believed that the nation would do better if it were more autonomous.¹²⁰ *Fourthly*, nationalist populists oppose the “outsiders.” They blame them for the effects of the “forces of globalisation” on the country. These groups include migrants and refugees, who generally cannot publicly defend themselves against these accusations.¹²¹ Muslim outsiders are particularly prone to being presented as barbaric, criminal, and terrorist “Others.”¹²² *Fifthly* and similarly, nationalist populists “other” various minorities living in the country. They emphasize the stereotypical differences of these groups in contrast to the “Czech whole,” and present them as harming the native Czech population. These minorities include Muslims and Roma people.¹²³ *Finally*, they evoke notion of a Czech heartland. The heartland symbolises an ideal place, created by populist romantic fantasies. It is based on a constructed vision of the past, in which nations were supposedly ethnically and culturally homogenous, and state control over the people was limited.¹²⁴ This notion is invoked by referring to the good people of the nation.¹²⁵ Finding this

¹¹⁷ Cas Mudde, “The Populist Zeitgeist,” *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (2004): 542-3; Sergiu Gherghina and Sorina Soare, “Introduction: Populism – A Sophisticated Concept and Diverse Political Realities, in *Contemporary Populism: A Controversial Concept and Its Diverse Forms*,” ed. by Sergiu Gherghina, Sergiu Micolu, and Sorina Soare, (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), 3; Ernesto Laclau, “On Populist Reason,” (London: Verso, 2005), 3.

¹¹⁸ Christina Pazzanese, “In Europe, Nationalism Rising,” *Harvard Gazette*, February 27, 2017, <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2017/02/in-europe-nationalisms-rising/>

¹¹⁹ Paul Taggart “The Populist Turn in the Politics of the New Europe” (paper presented at European Union Studies Association conference) Nashville, Tennessee, March 27-29, 2003): 6; Cas Mudde, “The Populist Zeitgeist,” *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (2004): 543-7)

¹²⁰ Ondřej Císař, “Czech Republic: From Post-Communist Idealism to Economic Populism,” *Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung*, (2017): 7.

¹²¹ Inari Sakki and Katarina Pattersson, “Discursive Construction of Otherness in Populist Radical Right Political Blogs,” *European Journal of Social Psychology* 46, no, 2 (2016): 147.

¹²² Scott Poyting et al., *Bin Laden in the Suburbs: Criminalising the Arab Other* (Sydney: Sydney Institute of Criminology Series, 2004), 11-2.

¹²³ Alena Kluknavská, “Enemies Among Us: The Anti-elitist and Xenophobic Discourses in the Czech Republic and Slovakia,” *Rexter* 2 (2014): 43-4.

¹²⁴ Paul Taggart “The Populist Turn in the Politics of the New Europe” (paper presented at European Union Studies Association conference) Nashville, Tennessee, March 27-29, (2003): 6; Cas Mudde, “The Populist Zeitgeist,” *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (2004): 546; Sven Engesser et al., “Populism and Social Media: How Politicians Spread a Fragmented Ideology,” *Information, Communication, and Society*, (2016): 5.

nationalist populist rhetoric in the Facebook posts of the selected politicians in the two time periods suggests that Facebook may be used to solely undermine democratic plurality, instead of encouraging democratic empowerment, at least in the Czech Republic.

Method

To learn how these six articulations are represented in political discourse on Czech Facebook, content analysis is applied. Klaus Krippendorff, professor of communication, recognizes content analysis as a well-established method in social sciences as well as in humanities.¹²⁶ He defines this method as a “Systematic reading of a body of texts, images, and symbolic matter, not necessarily from an author’s or user’s perspective.”¹²⁷ In other words, its purpose is to excavate any phenomena, ideas, or attitudes in texts that go beyond the indented meanings by the authors and their culture.¹²⁸ This is done by establishing a particular context¹²⁹ or coding frames¹³⁰ that are conditioned by the research question prior to the research.¹³¹ These serve as a base for what is being analysed in the texts. In this research, this coding frame is embodied by the aforementioned six articulations of nationalist populism in the Czech Republic.

According to Paul D. Skalski, professor of communication, content analysis has had to adapt to the digital age. Skalski claims that prior to the digitalisation of communication, scholars using content analysis could assume that the end products of traditional mass media, be it a film or a news article, were in a “Fixed, objective form that could be documented.”¹³² Moreover, they could also easily identify their source, be it an individual or a group. With the existence of digital interactive media, however, these assumptions had to adapt. This is because this media, including some of the social media platforms such as Facebook, enables a vast number of people to produce, adapt, change, and delete some of the content they generate

¹²⁵ Paul Taggart “The Populist Turn in the Politics of the New Europe” (paper presented at European Union Studies Association conference) Nashville, Tennessee, March 27-29, (2003): 6.

¹²⁶ Klaus Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology* (London: Sage, 2004), 44; Paul D. Skalski et al., “Content Analysis in the Interactive media Age,” in *The Content Analysis Guidebook*, ed. Kimberley A. Neuendorf (London: Sage, 2017), 201.

¹²⁷ Klaus Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology* (London: Sage, 2004), 3;

¹²⁸ Klaus Krippendorff, “Content Analysis,” in *International Encyclopedia of Communication*, ed. Wolfgang Donsbach, (2008): 404; Margrit Schreier, “Qualitative Content Analysis,” in *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*, ed. Uwe Flick (London: Sage, 2014), 170; Philipp Mayring, “Qualitative Content Analysis,” *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 1, no. 2 (2000), <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1089/2385>.

¹²⁹ Klaus Krippendorff, “Content Analysis,” in *International Encyclopedia of Communication*, ed. Wolfgang Donsbach, (2008): 406.

¹³⁰ Margrit Schreier, “Qualitative Content Analysis,” in *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*, ed. Uwe Flick (London: Sage, 2014), 170.

¹³¹ Klaus Krippendorff, “Content Analysis,” in *International Encyclopedia of Communication*, ed. Wolfgang Donsbach, (2008): 406; Margrit Schreier, “Qualitative Content Analysis,” in *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*, ed. Uwe Flick (London: Sage, 2014), 170.

¹³² Paul D. Skalski et al., “Content Analysis in the Interactive media Age,” in *The Content Analysis Guidebook*, ed. Kimberley A. Neuendorf (London: Sage, 2017), 208-9.

in real time.¹³³ Furthermore, social media also puts into question of the real authorship of media messages. This is because reposting has become a common practice and tracing down the true authors of some of the messages becomes difficult.¹³⁴ Content analysis of social media thus nowadays needs to acknowledge that some of the posts may not be in their original form and be altered/ deleted.

Social media content matters, because it contains discourses that pertain to power. As described by Norman Fairclough, ideological workings of language in discourses serve to attain and maintain power. Cultural theorist Stuart Hall defines discourse as a construction of knowledge and of understanding of the world through language.¹³⁵ Michel Foucault, social theorist and philosopher, also clearly links discourse to power. He argues that owning the production and form of discourse is a key prerequisite to achieving power in the society.¹³⁶ This is because a discursive description reinforces the description, which in turn can become seen as the “truth” by the people subjected to it.¹³⁷ Linguist Norman Fairclough builds on this notion by considering ideologies. He claims that ideologies are the underlying assumptions behind discourses; they are created by special groups of people (or social institutions) in accordance with their particular interests. Furthermore, these groups each strive to establish the dominant ideology through their discourse.¹³⁸ When an ideology becomes dominant, it is “naturalised.” By this, Fairclough means that the ideology becomes “correct” and “invisible” part of people’s language norms and “common-sense” knowledge about the world.¹³⁹ Moreover, naturalization of ideology is the key focus of politics. Fairclough describes democratic politics and governments as a form of contest between different discourses and underlying ideologies.¹⁴⁰ This applies to (nationalist) populists, who through the ideological workings of their language seek to challenge the dominant and established political discourses.

Two time periods are chosen for examination of Czech politicians’ Facebook posts in this study. They were selected to coincide with two major nationalist populist events in the

¹³³ Paul D. Skalski et al., “Content Analysis in the Interactive media Age,” in *The Content Analysis Guidebook*, ed. Kimberley A. Neuendorf (London: Sage, 2017), 202.

¹³⁴ Paul D. Skalski et al., “Content Analysis in the Interactive media Age,” in *The Content Analysis Guidebook*, ed. Kimberley A. Neuendorf (London: Sage, 2017), 209.

¹³⁵ Stuart Hall, “The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power,” in *Formations of Modernity*, ed. Stuart Hall and Bram Gieben (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 201.

¹³⁶ Michel Foucault, “The Order of Discourse,” in *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader*, ed. Robert Young (London: Routledge, 1981), 53; Derek Hook, “Discourse, knowledge, materiality, history; Foucault and discourse analysis,” *LSE Research Online* (2001): 1-2; Linda J. Graham, “Discourse analysis and the critical use of Foucault,” *Australia Association for Research in Education* 11 (2005): 4.

¹³⁷ Stuart Hall, “The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power,” in *Formations of Modernity*, ed. Stuart Hall and Bram Gieben (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 205; Derek Hook, “Discourse, knowledge, materiality, history; Foucault and discourse analysis,” *LSE Research Online* (2001): 2.

¹³⁸ Norman Fairclough, “Critical and Descriptive Goals in Discourse Analysis,” *Journal of Pragmatics* 9, no. 6 (1985): 746; Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power*, (Essex: Longman Limited, 1989), 84-8.

¹³⁹ Norman Fairclough, *Language and Power*, (Essex: Longman Limited, 1989), 92; Norman Fairclough, “Critical and Descriptive Goals in Discourse Analysis,” *Journal of Pragmatics* 9, no. 6 (1985): 746.

¹⁴⁰ Norman Fairclough, *New Labour, New Language?* (London: Routledge, 2000), 157-8.

world, namely Brexit and Donald Trump's victory in the US presidential election.¹⁴¹ This choice allows examining local Czech nationalist populism vis-à-vis global nationalist populism.¹⁴² The first period dates from June 16 to July 2, 2017. The second period dates from November 2 to November 15, 2017. In these time periods, the Facebook posts of the chairs of four leading Czech political parties are examined. This choice is informed by the exit poll predictions of the upcoming parliamentary elections, released in March 2017 by the SANEP agency.¹⁴³ The politicians include, in the order of the poll rankings of their parties: Andrej Babiš, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance (until May 2017) and leader of the centrist party ANO 2011 (Association of Dissatisfied Citizens/YES 2011); Bohuslav Sobotka, Prime Minister and Chair of the centre-left party Česká Strana Sociálně Demokratická (Czech Social Democratic Party/ČSSD); Petr Fiala, chair of an opposition centre-right party Občanská Demokratická Strana (Civic Democratic Party/ODS); and Tomio Okamura, chair of an opposition right-wing party Svoboda a Přímá Demokracie (Freedom and Direct Democracy/SPD).¹⁴⁴ Moreover, the four politicians generate 189 posts from both time periods; 115 and 74 posts from the first and the second period, respectively. These posts were collected from the politicians' public Facebook profiles by scrolling down their individual timelines and copying all the posts from the two selected time periods into a Microsoft Word document. Then, the contents of these posts were manually coded, in accordance with qualitative content analysis approach described below.

Qualitative content analysis is used to show the presence of the six articulations of nationalist populism in the political discourse. Firstly, qualitative content analysis is conducted, following the approach designed by Margrit Schreier, professor of psychology and methods. She composes eight steps to the analysis: deciding on research question; selecting material; building a coding frame; segmentation; trial coding; evaluating and modifying the coding frame; main analysis; and presenting and interpreting findings.¹⁴⁵ These steps are followed accordingly in this analysis. The six articulations of nationalist populism serve as the coding frames, and each of the articulations is illustrated with a quote.

This research does not attempt to undertake a political science assessment of why different politicians use populist messages or what explains the differences in their respective use of populist messages. A quantitative assessment is likewise beyond the scope of this study. Some differences in the frequency or intensity with which different politicians make populist statements are inevitably apparent from the qualitative content analysis undertaken,

¹⁴¹ Christina Pazzanese, "In Europe, Nationalism Rising," *Harvard Gazette*, February 27, 2017, <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2017/02/in-europe-nationalisms-rising/>.

¹⁴² Fareed Zakaria, "Populism on the March: Why the West is in Trouble," *Foreign Affairs* November/December, (2016): 13-4.

¹⁴³ "Volební Preference (březen 2017)," *SANEP s.r.o.*, March 8, 2017, <http://www.sanep.cz/pruzkumy/volebni-preference-brezen-2017-publikovano-8-3-2017/>.

¹⁴⁴ It should be noted that neither of the two representatives of the left-wing KSČM (Communist Party of Czechia and Moravia), which ranks third in most polls of voter preferences, has an active Facebook profile. As such the party had to be excluded from the research.

¹⁴⁵ Margrit Schreier, "Qualitative Content Analysis," in *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*, ed. Uwe Flick (London: Sage, 2014), 174.

but in general the focus of this research is on *what* is being said, not so much on *by whom*, *how often* or *why*.

Empirical Analysis

The two time periods examined here both encompass a major political event on a global level but they are also marked by preparations for elections in the Czech Republic. The first time period includes a week prior and after the Brexit vote, which took place on June 23, 2016. On a local level, this first period predates the Czech regional elections held between October 7 and 8, 2016. The second period includes a week before and after the victory of Donald Trump in the US presidential elections, which took place on November 8, 2017. It is also less than a year before the Czech parliamentary elections, which are scheduled to be held in October 2017. In this perspective, both time periods cover a major a nationalist populist breakthrough in international politics as well as a moment of political competition with a view to upcoming elections in the country.

This research finds all six articulations of nationalist populism in the Facebook posts from both time periods. Firstly, some of the politicians studied clearly distinguish between the “good” people and various elites, while siding with the former. Secondly, some of them express criticism or explicit opposition towards economic globalism and the global market as a threat to the Czech people and economy. Thirdly and similarly, some of them also criticize or oppose international superstructures. These are particularly embodied by the EU: some of the politicians are critical towards it and call for a reform while some others demand that the Czech Republic leaves the Union completely in order to regain its national sovereignty. Fourthly, with regards to the society’s outsiders, some of the politicians studied either show resistance towards them, namely towards refugees, or they altogether “other” them as a cultural and security threat to the Czech people. Fifthly and similarly, some of the politicians studied “other” minorities living in the Czech Republic, namely the Roma people. Finally, the politicians evoke the notion of the Czech heartland in various forms: by mentioning significant figures of Czech culture and history, upholding noteworthy deeds from the Czech history and well-known traditions, and by emphasising involvement with the people.

It should be noted, however, that the expressions of these articulations and the intensity of nationalist populist messages vary from one politician to another. These differences may be explained by differences between the political schools of thought represented by the respective politicians, but the observed variety is also in line with the conclusions of Engesser’s et al. research, finding that populism on social media appears in a fragmented form. The authors explain that on the one hand this is because of the intrinsic thin-centeredness and incompleteness of populism. On the other hand, they list three reasons for which politicians may purposefully use only some aspects of populist rhetoric. Firstly, they may use populism in fragments to make it even more comprehensible for the people; secondly, to let the people themselves “fill in the gaps” with their own ideologies; thirdly, to

make their use of populism less noticeable to journalists and political opponents. Engesser et al. thus conclude that populism “can be easier reached on social media without the interference of the mass media’s journalistic gatekeepers and filter mechanisms.”¹⁴⁶ In other words, since populism is a flickering ideology that can be implemented in different intensity by different persons or groups, and some politicians can be more populist than others, this research assumes that social media can contain fragments of this ideology due to the lack of restrictions and as such may in a limited sense contribute to undermining democratic pluralism.

The first articulation of nationalist populism which this qualitative analysis looks for, is a distinction between “bad” elites and the “good” common people, as formulated by Mudde.¹⁴⁷ Christina Pazzanese from *Harvard Gazette* adds that in nationalist populism, many different groups can come to be perceived as an elite. In fact, powerful groups such as politicians or big-business owners can be recognized as elites as much as academics and intellectuals.¹⁴⁸ This variety of elites is reflected in Czech politicians’ posts in both time periods, where the total of five different elites is constructed. These are: political elite; EU leadership elite; economic elite; media elite; and intellectual elite called “Pravdoláskaři” (“People of truth and love”) or “Pražská kavárna” (“Prague café”). Firstly, the government and politicians in general are presented as an elite protecting mainly its own financial interests instead of the well-being of the citizens. In the first period, this message is expressed by Babiš, Fiala and Okamura. To illustrate, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Babiš claims that “traditional political parties”¹⁴⁹ treat “all public resources as their own.”¹⁵⁰ Likewise, Fiala from the centre-right opposition criticises the government coalition for “their lavish politics that is threatening our future.”¹⁵¹ The right-wing opposition protagonist Okamura does the same, though he is noticeably more explicit and blunt. For example, he refers to the government as “ruling political elites,”¹⁵² “selected party elites,”¹⁵³ and “bureaucratic elites.”¹⁵⁴ Furthermore, he states that these elites are “not accountable to the

¹⁴⁶ Sven Engesser et al., “Populism and Social Media: How Politicians Spread a Fragmented Ideology,” *Information, Communication, and Society*, (2016): 13-4.

¹⁴⁷ Cas Mudde, “The Populist Zeitgeist,” *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (2004): 543.

¹⁴⁸ Christina Pazzanese, “In Europe, Nationalism Rising,” *Harvard Gazette*, February 27, 2017, <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2017/02/in-europe-nationalisms-rising/>.

¹⁴⁹ Andrej Babiš’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/photos/a.324695871000397.1073741832.214827221987263/788929584577021/?type=3>.

¹⁵⁰ Andrej Babiš’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/photos/a.324695871000397.1073741832.214827221987263/789891131147533/?type=3>.

¹⁵¹ Note that he uses the term “our future” to show that he is with the people, not with the government Petr Fiala’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1055801141167435>.

¹⁵² Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1254206887923457/>.

¹⁵³ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1255875451089934/?type=3>

¹⁵⁴ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1251063841571095/>.

people, but with impunity steal and destroy this republic.”¹⁵⁵ In contrast to the political elite, Okamura puts the people. He does this by calling them the “true masters of their country.”¹⁵⁶ Interestingly, he specifies that the people are “pensioners,”¹⁵⁷ “families with children,”¹⁵⁸ or “normal decent working dads and mums,”¹⁵⁹ while the political elite is vaguely described as merely an “elite.” This is significant as it shows that Facebook enabled some of the politicians, namely Babiš, Fiala and Okamura, to use nationalist populist rhetoric by differentiating between bad political elite and the “good” people.

The same rhetoric pitting “good” people against elites is found in the second period, and it is also done by Babiš, Fiala and Okamura. Unlike in the first period, however, the actions of the political elite are negatively linked to the Czech national identity. To illustrate, Babiš claims that the Czech healthcare system is “still controlled by a corrupt group led by Marek Šnajdr [a former Minister of Healthcare from the centre-right ODS],” which causes unfair healthcare fees for the people.¹⁶⁰ Similarly, Fiala accuses the current government of “supporting only ‘big’ businesses,”¹⁶¹ while it is “complicating the lives of decent and active people.”¹⁶² Okamura is more explicit in this narrative. For instance, he dubs the government a “rule of self-proclaimed elites, of partisan oligarchies and of their godfathers.”¹⁶³ Like this, the three politicians portray the political elite as a mafia-based group that is solely concerned with its own profits. Moreover, while this elite is portrayed as bad, the common people are favoured. To demonstrate, Babiš argues that he always strives to benefit the “common people,”¹⁶⁴ or that “ANO 2011 reaches out to everybody.”¹⁶⁵ On the same note, Okamura claims that political elites “neglect the common people,”¹⁶⁶ or that “what an ordinary person in a 4th price rate pub has known for ages, elites learn only today.”¹⁶⁷ Interestingly, Okamura

¹⁵⁵ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1254206887923457/>.

¹⁵⁶ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1255745714436241/>.

¹⁵⁷ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1254206887923457/>.

¹⁵⁸ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1254206887923457/>.

¹⁵⁹ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1252282524782560/>.

¹⁶⁰ Andrej Babiš’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/posts/870259396444039>.

¹⁶¹ Petr Fiala’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1166601690087379>.

¹⁶² Petr Fiala’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1163910240356524>.

¹⁶³ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1366328670044611/>.

¹⁶⁴ Andrej Babiš’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/posts/865282316941747>.

¹⁶⁵ Andrej Babiš’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/posts/866960300107282>.

¹⁶⁶ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1366328670044611/>.

¹⁶⁷ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1375976925746452/>.

also accuses the political elite of destroying the Czech identity. For example, he claims that the politicians are “selling out the Czech nationhood,”¹⁶⁸ or act like “we [the nation] are a province of Germany.”¹⁶⁹ In both time periods, there is a distinction between the people and the political elite: the people are good and the elite fraudulently profits on the people. To put differently, through the discourse on social media the politicians identify and resent a specific group outside the majority. Therefore, these examples are suggestive that while social media facilitates diverse speeches and discourses, it may also facilitate a speech against democratic pluralism.

The Czech political leadership is not the only political body recognized as elite. The same representation is also used in relation to the EU leadership, though it differs between the two periods studied. Around the time of the Brexit referendum, Babiš, Fiala and Okamura present the EU leadership as disrespecting and terrorising the individual member states and their citizens, whom they side with. In the second period, around the time of Donald Trump’s election, the EU leadership is portrayed as dangerous, totalitarian, and diminishing the Czech national identity. In the first time period, Babiš portrays this group as such by using a metaphor of the EU leaders acting as the masters. For example, he claims that Jean-Claude Juncker “plays at being the master of Europe,” while the “voices of the sovereign states” are missing.¹⁷⁰ Similarly, Fiala states that, for instance, the politicians in Brussels “do not listen to people’s opinions and are separated from the reality.”¹⁷¹ Okamura uses more explicit terms. He refers to the EU leadership as, for instance, “centralist dictatorship;”¹⁷² “self-proclaimed elites;”¹⁷³ “pro-European elites;”¹⁷⁴ and “Euro-federalist dictators.”¹⁷⁵ He also condemns their “utmost ignorant and arrogant behaviour.”¹⁷⁶ In contrast to this elite Okamura puts the Czech people. For instance, he claims that the Czechs merely “wish to live in their country in accordance with their own judgements,”¹⁷⁷ and to “exercise their self-preservation instinct.”¹⁷⁸ This shows that the EU leadership is portrayed by the politicians as despotic and disrespecting

¹⁶⁸ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1366328670044611/>.

¹⁶⁹ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1367229479954530/>.

¹⁷⁰ Andrej Babiš’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/posts/791978387605474>.

¹⁷¹ Petr Fiala’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1057128707701345>.

¹⁷² Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1250033191674160/>.

¹⁷³ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1252282524782560/>.

¹⁷⁴ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1252282524782560/>.

¹⁷⁵ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1252818884728924/>.

¹⁷⁶ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1255875451089934/?type=3>.

¹⁷⁷ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1252282524782560/>.

¹⁷⁸ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1252282524782560/>.

the individual nations and their citizens. This is significant because this elite is an “outsider” to the Czech people and this representation presupposes a sense of Czech nationalist sovereignty.

In the second period, the EU leadership is not portrayed only as despotic but also as dangerous and as diminishing the Czech national identity. This is done by Fiala and Okamura. With regard to the despotism of the EU elite, Okamura calls the EU leadership a “one-sided dictatorship,”¹⁷⁹ for instance. Fiala also presents the EU elite as dangerous. To demonstrate, he dubs “Jean-Claude Juncker and all those who keep him in his position,” as the “true threat for Europe.”¹⁸⁰ Next, Okamura also links this group with the decay of Czech nationhood. For example, he argues that the EU leadership is trying to “ban Czech traditions,”¹⁸¹ which they do “behind our backs, of the citizens of Czech Republic.”¹⁸² This is significant because it shows that the politicians on Facebook in this time period distinguish between the EU leadership and the people, and represent the former as dangerous, despotic, and anti-Czech. Thus, these examples offer evidence that social media may not facilitate pluralism and understanding but rather create a division between majority and a minority – in line with the ideology of nationalist populism, and the notion of the tyranny of the majority.

Apart from the country’s political establishment and the EU political leadership, the media too is represented as elite. In both time periods the media in general is depicted as manipulating its messages and purposefully misinforming the people. In mid-2016, this is done by Babiš and Okamura. Babiš claims, for illustration, that Czech online news website *Aktualne.cz* “deleted and changed an interview,” which was “disliked” by a certain lobby group.¹⁸³ On a more explicit note, Okamura repeatedly describes the Czech media as “manipulated and untruthful,”¹⁸⁴ and as serving “pro-Brussels propaganda.”¹⁸⁵ Moreover, according to Okamura, the media directly harms the people by providing them censored information. He claims that the state media is “cheating the citizens,”¹⁸⁶ by “ruthlessly censoring.”¹⁸⁷ This shows that Babiš¹⁸⁸ and Okamura present the media as serving other

¹⁷⁹ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1367229479954530/>.

¹⁸⁰ Petr Fiala’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1167515253329356>.

¹⁸¹ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1366328670044611/>.

¹⁸² Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1376322845711860/>.

¹⁸³ Andrej Babiš’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/posts/787898374680142>.

¹⁸⁴ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1255745714436241/>.

¹⁸⁵ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1255875451089934/?type=3>.

¹⁸⁶ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1241482022529277/>.

¹⁸⁷ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1254206887923457/>.

groups' agenda instead of truthfully informing the Czech people. In this sense, they evoke the notion of the media is against the people - against the nation.

Anti-media populism appears also in the second period, this time with specific connection to Donald Trump's victory. The media is portrayed as an elite that manipulates its content to deceive the people by misrepresenting Trump. This is done by Fiala and Okamura. Okamura states that media "artificially accelerates" certain topics.¹⁸⁹ In this view, the media purposefully sways the people with untruthful information. Next, Fiala claims that "Trump's victory is no tragedy as some commentators are trying to suggest."¹⁹⁰ On a similar note, Okamura claims that the media purposefully misrepresents Trump. To illustrate, he asserts that the negative picture of Trump that some people have "is constructed by the media."¹⁹¹ Elsewhere he claims that Trump "is facing an immense pressure from the majority of media and manipulation with the polls."¹⁹² In fact, Okamura call it a "tactic" of the media to make Trump appear as an extremist.¹⁹³ This is important because it shows how these politicians in the study period use Facebook to bash the traditional media as the "enemy" of the people. Facebook in this case is used to undermine the integrity of traditional media as favouring an elite group instead the people.

Anti-elite messages also invoke economic elite, presented as preying on the economic system and the Czech people. This is done by Okamura in both time periods. He describes these people in general as "boys with white collars, residing at Cayman Islands (...) [and] committing tax evasions."¹⁹⁴ More specifically, he targets Zdeněk Bakala, one of the wealthiest people in the country. He claims Bakala is "standing above the law," due to his "money and political connections." Furthermore, Okamura also specifies that Bakala "wears fashionable glasses," and "laughs on TV," despite "putting into trouble thousands of workers in the Ostrava region."¹⁹⁵ In this sense, Okamura contrasts the "highly-fashionable" Bakala with the sorrow of the people - highlighting the former's immorality. In contrast to this elite Okamura puts small Czech business owners. He refers to them as those who "profit 8 CZK on

¹⁸⁸ From the perspective of mid-2017 this may appear somewhat ironic given that Babiš was dismissed from the coalition government in May 2017 partly due to a scandal with tapes recording how he had been giving instructions to a journalist from a newspaper he owned on the best timing for the release of various defamatory articles about political opponents (Erik Tabery, "Winners and Losers," *Respekt*, June 27, 2017, <https://www.respekt.cz/tydenik/2017/22/vitezove-a-porazeni>).

¹⁸⁹ Tomio Okamura's Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1376340792376732/>.

¹⁹⁰ Petr Fiala's Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1164622073618674>.

¹⁹¹ Tomio Okamura's Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1380672668610211/?type=3>.

¹⁹² Tomio Okamura's Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1376592862351525/>.

¹⁹³ Tomio Okamura's Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1376592862351525/>.

¹⁹⁴ Tomio Okamura's Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/?fref=nf>.

¹⁹⁵ Tomio Okamura's Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/?fref=nf>.

one beer,” and as those who “do not burden the state budget and are self-employed.”¹⁹⁶ Okamura therefore constructs an opposition between the rich and the common Czech people: the economic elite is unjustly better off while the people are poor.

A similar portrayal of the economic elite is observed also in the second period. The economic elite is presented as taking advantage over the people. This is done by Okamura. For instance, he claims that the corporation owners only aim for “profits, the bigger the profits are, the better it is for them.”¹⁹⁷ Elsewhere, he claims that the elite profits on the people even when it is “against the interests of the state and the citizens.”¹⁹⁸ Like this, Okamura uses social media to assert that big-business owners merely prey on the people, in accordance with the principle of nationalist populism. This shows that discourse by these politicians on Facebook in both time periods separates people into two conflicting groups, which in line with the principle of elites in nationalist populism, instead of solely facilitating pluralism.

In addition to these four elites in both time periods, one elite appears in the second period only. This group consists of so-called “Pravdoláskaři” (“People of truth and love”) or “Pražská kavárna” (“Prague café”). These two names commonly refer to cosmopolitan and liberal Czechs inspired by former Czech president Václav Havel.¹⁹⁹ In Facebook discourse, this intellectual elite is portrayed as causing harm to the society and as based on a depraved ideology.²⁰⁰ This is done by Okamura. He writes, for example, that “these groups spread hatred in the society and are striving to divide the society at any cost.”²⁰¹ He also emphasises their evilness by claiming that they mistreat their opposition, such as Okamura himself. For example, he claims that they “lynch,”²⁰² “vilify,”²⁰³ “civilly destroy,”²⁰⁴ “spat on,”²⁰⁵ or

¹⁹⁶ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1255732874437525/>.

¹⁹⁷ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1368568833153928/>.

¹⁹⁸ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1368568833153928/>.

¹⁹⁹ Havel was a dissident philosopher and playwright during the Communist era, imprisoned for several years. He led the ‘Velvet Revolution’ of 1989 and subsequently became Czechoslovak and Czech President (until 2003), championing human rights, liberal democracy and accession to NATO and the EU. His motto as President was that “Truth and love must prevail over lie and hatred” (“Pravdoláskař,” *Čeština 2.0*, July 16, 2011, <https://cestina20.cz/slovník/pravdolaskar>).

²⁰⁰ The term Prague café is frequently used in a condescending way by the populist President of the Czech Republic, Miloš Zeman, and his spokesperson, who use this designation in order to dismiss or discredit criticism addressed to them by liberal intellectuals (Lucie Sulovká, “Why not to applaud president’s war with the Café,” *Forum 24*, August 18, 2016, <http://forum24.cz/proc-netleskat-prezidentove-valce-s-kavarnou/>.)

²⁰¹ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1366328670044611/>.

²⁰² Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1380672668610211/?type=3>.

²⁰³ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1380672668610211/?type=3>.

²⁰⁴ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1380672668610211/?type=3>.

“doom,”²⁰⁶ those who disagree with them. Next, Okamura also negatively connects this group with extreme political ideologies. He describes them as “extremist,”²⁰⁷ “fascist,”²⁰⁸ “activist,”²⁰⁹ and “aggressively populists.”²¹⁰ In this way, Okamura constructs an elite consisting of intellectuals, and claims that they are an evil and ideologically-driven enemy of the people. This fits the pattern of all the elite groups found in this study. In fact, the five elite groups found here are presented as deceiving or profiting or harming the supposedly good Czech people – embodying the division between the bad elites and the good people. This division based on the principle of nationalist populism of advocating the majority – the people – against the supposed elite minority group. These examples are suggestive of the ability of the use of Facebook by the politicians in this study not only to facilitate pluralism of interests and ideas, but also to spread notions that undermine pluralist democracy.

Nationalist populism is not only pronounced in the antagonism between the people and the elites but also in the contempt and rejection of global corporations and economic globalism, as articulated by Čísař.²¹¹ In the first period, this opposition is observed in varying degrees in Facebook posts of two politicians: Babiš both criticizes and praises economic globalism; Okamura only opposes it. On the one hand, Babiš warns that giving China the status of a market economy would have a “really catastrophic impact on steel companies in the Moravian-Silesian Region.”²¹² At the same time, however, he praises the 6000 German companies in the country. He calls them the “key foreign investors,”²¹³ in the country. Okamura, on the other hand, is exclusively negative towards economic globalism. To illustrate, argues that Western Europe gains the “market and a cheap labour” from the Czech Republic, while “underpaying the citizens.”²¹⁴ This is significant because Babiš and Okamura in varying degrees criticise the global market – the global world. They blame the global trade for the ongoing and possible future Czech economic issues that harm the people.

²⁰⁵ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1366328670044611/>.

²⁰⁶ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1366328670044611/>.

²⁰⁷ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1366328670044611/>.

²⁰⁸ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1366328670044611/>.

²⁰⁹ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1369491763061635/?type=3>.

²¹⁰ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1380672668610211/?type=3>.

²¹¹ Ondřej Čísař, “Czech Republic: From Post-Communist Idealism to Economic Populism,” *Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung*, (2017): 7.

²¹² Andrej Babiš’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/posts/785468134923166>.

²¹³ Andrej Babiš’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/photos/a.214830678653584.56598.214827221987263/789401391196507/?type=3>.

²¹⁴ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1252282524782560/>.

The same is found in the second period. Economic globalisation is criticised and denounced by Babiš and Okamura to varying degrees: Babiš overtly mentions foreign companies' over-profiting in the country; and Okamura overtly opposes foreign companies. Interestingly, Okamura also claim that the activities of foreign companies diminish Czech national identity. Firstly, Babiš suggests that foreign companies make excessive profits in the country. For example, he writes that he prefers to “give money to pensioners than to foreign banks in interest”²¹⁵ In this sense, Babiš nods to the notion that foreign bank corporations make huge turnovers while the people are poor. He also simultaneously expresses his allegiance to the Czech people. Secondly, Okamura explicitly criticizes privatisation and profits of foreign companies in the country. To illustrate, he complains about “water in towns and villages having been sold out to (...) Western European corporations.”²¹⁶ Moreover, he equates the water with the Czech nationhood. For instance, he deliberates that “water (...) is a legacy and an asset of our entire nation.”²¹⁷ This shows that Okamura in this period emphasises the negative implications of economic globalism on the Czech national identity. This suggests that the Facebook pages of these politicians in this case may therefore not be used to encourage pluralism but to actually undermine pluralism of democracy by narrowly focusing on the interests of the Czech people.

Apart from rejecting economic globalism, nationalist populism also opposes international superstructures and supports national demarcation, according to Císař.²¹⁸ In both time periods, this sentiment is manifested in the debate regarding the Czech membership in the EU. In the first period, it is also notable in the reactions to the Brexit vote, which is an outcome of nationalist populist campaign.²¹⁹ The sentiments it appear in two ways: Sobotka, Babiš, and Fiala assert the Czech Republic must remain in the EU but that the Union needs to drastically change to continue; Okamura demands the country to leave the EU. Firstly, Sobotka, Babiš, and Fiala combine advocacy and criticism of the EU. For instance, Prime Minister Sobotka states that the EU is essential in “securing the safety of its citizens,” and as such beneficial for the country.²²⁰ However, he also argues that it “must change quickly.”²²¹ By the same token, Babiš claims that “we” should not leave the EU, because “our situation is radically different,” from the UK.²²² Nonetheless, he states that the EU must “vigorously react

²¹⁵ Andrej Babiš's Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/posts/865281910275121>.

²¹⁶ Tomio Okamura's Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1368568833153928/>.

²¹⁷ Tomio Okamura's Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1368568833153928/>.

²¹⁸ Ondřej Císař, “Czech Republic: From Post-Communist Idealism to Economic Populism,” *Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung*, (2017): 7.

²¹⁹ “Trump, Brexit and the Future of Nationalist Populism in the US and Europe,” YouTube video, posted by “Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies,” September 16, 2016, <https://ces.fas.harvard.edu/recordings/trump-brexit-and-the-future-of-nationalist-populism-in-the-us-and-europe>.

²²⁰ Bohuslav Sobotka's Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/sobotka.bohuslav/posts/10153569811180776>.

²²¹ Bohuslav Sobotka's Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/sobotka.bohuslav/posts/10153558577615776>.

²²² Andrej Babiš's Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/videos/790602281076418/>.

and visibly reform itself.”²²³ Along the same lines, Fiala asserts that the EU should remain intact,²²⁴ but that “there is no doubt that the EU needs a fundamental change.”²²⁵ Interestingly, while Babiš and Sobotka express regret towards the Brexit result, Fiala becomes noticeably more critical towards the EU after the vote. For example, Sobotka mentions “the disappointment felt by many of us regarding the result of the referendum (...).”²²⁶ Likewise, Babiš writes that the “British citizens have decided. We must respect it.”²²⁷ Contrastingly, Fiala claims before the UK referendum that “on behalf of the Czech Republic, I wish the UK to remain.”²²⁸ After the vote, however, he writes that the EU “leads from crisis to crisis;”²²⁹ he calls for immediate resignation of Juncker, Martin “Schlulze[sic],” and Donald Tusk,²³⁰ and he lists examples of “nonsensical regulations (...) that are absurd beyond all imagination,” of the EU.²³¹ While Sobotka and Babiš are consistent in their position towards Brexit, be it positive or negative, Fiala seems to shift his tone towards a more negative stance. Nevertheless, considering all three politicians, even though they do not support a withdrawal of the Czech Republic from the EU, they clearly nod to Euro-scepticism and demand a change of the EU. In this perspective, they engage in the criticism without providing any deeper rationale or explanation of their position.

By contrast, Okamura consistently urges to leave the EU. He claims that it is non-democratic and unrealistic. He repeatedly calls for the termination of the Czech membership in the EU.²³² He describes the EU as a “pan-European dictatorship,”²³³ and a “totalitarian”²³⁴ system. Like this he brands the EU as despotic. Moreover, he also describes it as “utopian,”²³⁵

²²³ Andrej Babiš’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/posts/789356801200966>.

²²⁴ Petr Fiala’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1056436357770580>.

²²⁵ Petr Fiala’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1056436357770580>.

²²⁶ Bohuslav Sobotka’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/sobotka.bohuslav/posts/10153558577615776>.

²²⁷ Andrej Babiš’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/posts/789356801200966>.

²²⁸ Petr Fiala’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1056436357770580>.

²²⁹ Petr Fiala’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1056985204382362>.

²³⁰ Petr Fiala’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1057052037709012>.

²³¹ Petr Fiala’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/notes/petr-fiala/evropa-nem%C5%AF%C5%BEE-popadnout-dech-bude-sta%C4%8Dit-r%C3%A1na-do-zad/1059574357456780>.

²³² Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1255875451089934/?type=3>.

²³³ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1250834901593989/>.

²³⁴ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1254390141238465/>.

²³⁵ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1255875451089934/?type=3>.

“unrealistic,”²³⁶ “lying,”²³⁷ or “propagandistic.”²³⁸ This way he makes the EU appear as naïve and deceitful. In contrast to the EU, he positions himself and his party SPD as the democratic, realist, and honest alternative. To demonstrate, he calls for establishing direct democracy in place of the EU.²³⁹ He justifies it by saying that in direct democracy, “the voice of the most poor and miserable citizen has the same value as a voice of the educated” ones.²⁴⁰ In addition, Okamura also supports Brexit. This is illustrated by his statement “we fully support Brexit and referendums about leaving the EU,”²⁴¹ prior to the vote and his comment about the “positive aspects of Brexit for Czexit,”²⁴² after the vote. All in all, each of the four politicians resorts to some kind of criticism of the EU: ranging from Sobotka, Babiš, and Fiala calling for a reform or transformation of the EU to Okamura’s blatant hostility towards the EU.

The same weariness towards the EU is found at the time of the US election, though only in Okamura. The rest of the politicians do not address this topic. Okamura insists that the country must terminate its membership in the Union due to the EU’s multicultural agenda and despotism. To end the membership, Okamura proposes a direct referendum,²⁴³ and articulates two rationales for leaving. Firstly, he claims that the EU “is proposing a multicultural order,”²⁴⁴ which only manifests the Union’s “dismal intellectual and political abilities,”²⁴⁵ and a “lack of common sense.”²⁴⁶ Secondly, he claims that the EU dominates the Czech government. To illustrate, he describes the activities of the EU as “not cooperating but instead crushing and dictating.”²⁴⁷ He uses the metaphor of a puppet theatre to support this. For instance, he states that the Czech government is “merely a group of puppets,”²⁴⁸ led by the EU

²³⁶ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1255745714436241/>.

²³⁷ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1254206887923457/>.

²³⁸ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1254206887923457/>.

²³⁹ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1254390141238465/>.

²⁴⁰ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1255875451089934/?type=3>.

²⁴¹ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1251421671535312/>.

²⁴² Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1252282524782560/>.

²⁴³ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1367229479954530/>.

²⁴⁴ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1369491763061635/?type=3>.

²⁴⁵ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1375976925746452/>.

²⁴⁶ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1375976925746452/>.

²⁴⁷ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1380672668610211/?type=3>.

²⁴⁸ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1366328670044611/>.

leaders. This shows that Facebook enables Okamura to oppose the EU specifically on the account of its inclusiveness and promotion of diversity – which are in fact essential for democracy. Nonetheless, in both time periods, each of the politicians engages in varying degrees with nationalist populism on social media. These articulations imply that the level of hostility towards pluralistic democracy propagated through social media can vary considerably.

Another articulation of nationalist populism is the rejection and “othering” of people from the outside, as claimed by scholars such as Wren.²⁴⁹ In the context of this research, refugees travelling to Europe from the Middle East and Africa form this group. In the first period, these people are opposed and branded as “illegal” by Babiš and Okamura. Okamura also “others” them as different and dangerous, and presents the Czechs as their victims. Babiš expresses his position in the criticism of the quota system for asylum-seekers proposed by the EU Commission.²⁵⁰ He calls it a “nonsensical solution of illegal immigration.”²⁵¹ The same is done by Okamura. To illustrate, he speaks of “illegal Islam migration,”²⁵² “illegal Arab migrants,”²⁵³ or “unadaptable Muslim migrants.”²⁵⁴ By using the term “migrants” or “immigrants,” both men imply that these people travel to Europe illegally and voluntarily, instead of being forced to leave their homelands due to wars.²⁵⁵ Next, Okamura emphasises the cultural differences and dangerousness of these people to the Czechs. To illustrate, he calls them “unadaptable (...) African and Arab migrants.”²⁵⁶ Furthermore, he always specifies that these people are “Arab,” “African,” or “Muslim.” As such, he highlights their different cultural/ethnic background to suggest the impossibility to coexist with the Czechs. This connects with the argument by Scott Poynting et al. that Arab Muslims are especially prone to criminalisation based on their cultural difference. The authors argue that Muslims are

²⁴⁹ Karen Wren, “Cultural Racism: Something Rotten in the State of Denmark?” *Social and Cultural Geography* 2, no. 2 (2001): 144; Sven Engesser et al., “Populism and Social Media: How Politicians Spread a Fragmented Ideology,” *Information, Communication, and Society*, (2016): 4.

²⁵⁰ In September 2015, the Czech Republic was outvoted in the Council of the EU concerning the Decision that increased to 160,000 the number of applicants for international protection who would be relocated from Italy and Greece across the other EU Member States. The Czech Republic became obliged under this and related decisions to relocate several thousand asylum-seekers, and this EU decision has been an object of a virulent political debate in the Czech Republic ever since (“Council Decision (EU) 2015/1601 of 22 September 2015,” *Official Journal of the European Union*, L 248/80 (24.9.2015), <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32015D1601>).

²⁵¹ Andrej Babiš’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/videos/790602281076418/>.

²⁵² Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1241477265863086/>.

²⁵³ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1246197972057682/>.

²⁵⁴ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1254206887923457/>.

²⁵⁵ Caroline Mortimer, “Refugee crisis: War and disaster internally displaces a record 40,8m people around the world, says report,” *The Independent*, May 11, 2016, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/politics/refugee-crisis-war-and-disaster-internally-displaces-a-record-408m-people-around-the-world-says-new-a7025101.html>.

²⁵⁶ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1254206887923457/>.

portrayed as criminally inclined, barbaric, or terrorist.²⁵⁷ The criminalisation of Muslims is also apparent in Okamura. For instance, he claims that the refugees bring “terrorism, homophobia, or antisemitism and criminality,” into the country.²⁵⁸ Elsewhere, he writes that the supposed “1500times increase in rapes in Sweden is the responsibility of predominantly Muslim migrants.”²⁵⁹ In contrast to this, he portrays the Czechs as the true victims. To demonstrate, he speaks of a “war with Islam,”²⁶⁰ “desperate defence,”²⁶¹ “maintaining our cultural identity, traditions, and language,”²⁶² or “survivor,” when referring to the Czech people.²⁶³ This demonstrates that Babiš and Okamura simplify the refugees as “illegal,” and as such present them as deceitful and undesirable for the nation. Moreover, Okamura also explicitly “others” them as unadaptable, criminal, and dangerous to the Czechs based on their cultural differences. This portrayal is suggestive of the ability of the politicians in this period to use Facebook as to also convey nationalist populist speech that reduces refugees to the “Other.”

The same stance towards the outsiders is conveyed in the second period, although only by Okamura. He frames refugees as culturally incompatible with the Czechs; financially benefitting on the Czechs; and as dangerous to the Czechs. Firstly, Okamura launches a “petition against accepting migrants,”²⁶⁴ and argues that other EU states are experiencing the “impossibility of integrating Muslims.”²⁶⁵ He further illustrates this with the case of Ahmednur Ayan Jamaal, a young Muslim high school student. Jamaal studied medicine at high-school in Prague and filled in a lawsuit against the school on account of not allowing her to wear hijab.²⁶⁶ Okamura calls this incident an “insolent provocation, whose aim is to establish radical Islam at Czech schools.”²⁶⁷ As such, he bolsters the notion that non-Europeans are unable to get along with the Europeans (Czechs). Secondly, he demands the

²⁵⁷ Scott Poynting et al., “Bin Laden in the Suburbs: Criminalising the Arab Other,” (Sydney: Sydney Institute for Criminology Studies, 2004), 2.

²⁵⁸ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1255745714436241/>.

²⁵⁹ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1241477265863086/>.

²⁶⁰ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1246202755390537/>.

²⁶¹ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1246202755390537/>.

²⁶² Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1246197972057682/>.

²⁶³ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1246202755390537/>.

²⁶⁴ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1369491763061635/?type=3>.

²⁶⁵ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1375976925746452/>.

²⁶⁶ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1368373549840123/?type=3>.

²⁶⁷ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1368373549840123/?type=3>.

money allocated to the refugees to be spent on the Czechs instead. This is illustrated in his exclamation “MONEY TO OUR PEOPLE, NOT TO MIGRANTS [capitalised in original].”²⁶⁸ Finally, Okamura also represents these people as criminal and dangerous on account of their Muslim background. To demonstrate, he claims that countries accepting Muslim migrants struggle with “the criminality of Muslim migrants and their offspring, with their parasite-like way of living, and with other negative effects connected to it.”²⁶⁹ Furthermore, Okamura also uses one incident and generalizes it as a norm of all refugees. The incident involves an Afghan refugee who molested a hospital nurse while he was being hospitalised in Prague in October 2016. Under the Czech law, this behaviour is recognized as a rape, and the man is being charged accordingly.²⁷⁰ Based on this, Okamura writes that “migrants are raping Czech women,”²⁷¹ and that “if the government was not accepting migrants, this poor woman [the nurse] did not have to be raped.”²⁷² In this sense Okamura criminalizes the entire Muslim refugee population. He overall portrays them as the incompatible, exploitative, and criminal “Other,” in line with nationalist populist principles. These cases imply that instead of giving voice to the refugees, social media also allows one-sided silencing and ostracism of these people, against the pluralist principles of democracy.

This exclusion as the “Other” concerns not only the outsiders but also certain groups of Czech citizens. According to Kluknavská, the inside “Other” in nationalist populist perspective consists of minorities living inside the nation.²⁷³ This articulation of nationalist populism is found in Okamura, who presents a minority in both time periods as inferior to the native Czechs and thus not deserving state support. To illustrate, he claims that the Czech people’s wages should be increased “at the expense of unadaptable citizens.”²⁷⁴ As explained by Kluknavská, the term “unadaptable citizens” commonly refers in the Czech context to the Roma minority.²⁷⁵ This shows that Okamura distinguishes Roma people as the “Other” that prey on the money that could be used to elevate the Czechs. These examples offer evidence that Facebook allows the politicians in this study to share nationalist populist rhetoric of exclusion.

²⁶⁸ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1366329903377821/>.

²⁶⁹ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1375976925746452/>.

²⁷⁰ “Prague Police is investigating a rape case of a hospital nurse at Bulovka hospital,” *Lidovky*, November 3, 2016, http://www.lidovky.cz/prazska-policie-vysetruje-pripad-znasilneni-zdravotni-sestry-pv9-/zpravy-domov.aspx?c=A161103_142913_ln_domov_ELE.

²⁷¹ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1376340792376732/>.

²⁷² Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1378535212157290/>.

²⁷³ Alena Kluknavská, “Enemies Among Us: The Anti-elitist and Xenophobic Discourses in the Czech Republic and Slovakia,” *Rexter 2* (2014): 43-4.

²⁷⁴ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1251060051571474/>.

²⁷⁵ Alena Kluknavská, “Enemies Among Us: The Anti-elitist and Xenophobic Discourses in the Czech Republic and Slovakia,” *Rexter 2* (2014): 58.

The same portrayal is apparent in the second period. Okamura portrays minorities living in the country as ineligible to be supported by the state. To illustrate, he claims that “inadaptable minorities and inadaptable individuals” should not receive “any legal support.”²⁷⁶ In contrast to the “Other” from the outside, the minorities enter the debate only marginally, however. In fact Okamura does not elaborate on who these people are and how they are different. One could argue that he keeps it sparse as not to disrupt the supposed “unity” of the Czech people, facing the bigger pressure from the outsiders. Despite this, Okamura in this study identifies and excludes certain group of people, based on their supposed difference to the majority, through Facebook. This is suggestive that social media does not necessarily encourage inclusion and equality but rather stigmatisation and exclusion.

The final articulation of nationalist populism consists of evoking the notion of a heartland, as presented by Mudde.²⁷⁷ In the first period, one way of doing this is by mentioning well-known historical and cultural personas representing the Czech heritage, as done by Fiala and Babiš. Another way of doing it is by referring to prosperous periods in national history, as done by Okamura. Firstly, Fiala praises a famous Czechoslovak political martyr Milada Horáková, a political prisoner who was executed for her opposition to the Communist regime.²⁷⁸ Fiala commemorates her execution and urges people to be reminded of “her heroism, her audacious fight against Nazism and communism.”²⁷⁹ Likewise, Babiš praises a legendary Czech ice-hockey player Jaromír Jágr. He notes that they “had a chat and have known each other for 20 years.”²⁸⁰ Similarly to Horáková, Jágr holds a somewhat heroic status in contemporary Czech “mythology.”²⁸¹ By referring to these personalities, Fiala and Babiš evoke national bravery, resistance, and in Jágr’s case success. Secondly, Okamura evokes heartland by proposing the same policies as were in place during the interwar period in the 20th century. In particular, he states that taxation of small businesses should be like the “easy and proven system that was in place (...) during the First Czechoslovak Republic.”²⁸² Like this, Okamura wants to bring back a period that is often considered a time of prosperity and liberty in the Czech history.²⁸³ All in all, the politicians in this study evoke through their use of Facebook the notion of heartland by referring to persons of great national importance and to policies from successful historical periods.

²⁷⁶ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1378422392168572/>.

²⁷⁷ Cas Mudde, “The Populist Zeitgeist,” *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (2004): 546.

²⁷⁸ Andrew Lawrence Roberts, *From the Good King Wenceslas to the Good Soldier Švejk: A Dictionary of Czech Popular Culture*, (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2005), 58.

²⁷⁹ Petr Fiala’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1058888260858723>.

²⁸⁰ Andrej Babiš’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/photos/a.324695871000397.1073741832.214827221987263/786991764770803/?type=3>.

²⁸¹ Andrew Lawrence Roberts, *From the Good King Wenceslas to the Good Soldier Švejk: A Dictionary of Czech Popular Culture*, (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2005), 65.

²⁸² Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017, <https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1255732874437525/>.

²⁸³ Otakar Odložilík et al., “Czechoslovak history,” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, March 7, 2016, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Czechoslovak-history>.

In the second period of study, the notion of heartland is also evoked through linkages to popular Czech personas. Unlike in the previous period, the politicians not only commemorate historical heroic actions but also display old Slavic traditions. In addition, they also emphasise that they “listen” to the people. Firstly, a well-known Czech persona is mentioned. Prime Minister Sobotka posts a photo of himself with Jan Tříska, a legendary acclaimed Czech actor. He writes that he would like to “cordially congratulate and thank [Tříska] for all the amazing theatre and film experiences.”²⁸⁴ This is significant because Tříska embodies certain values and rouses emotions connected with his film career and successes.²⁸⁵ Sobotka thus elicits positive sentiments through the affiliation with him. Secondly, Fiala reminds of historical heroism. To illustrate, he commemorates Czech veterans on the Armistice Day, and writes that “we should be upholding heroes, people who had courage and determination and are our role models.”²⁸⁶ Fiala thus acclaims the fallen soldiers from Czech history and encourages for the same fight for the nation. Thirdly, Babiš upholds old Slavic traditions. To demonstrate, he posts a photo of himself in an old Wallachian costume and surrounded with 52 Wallachian pensioners. Furthermore, he writes that he “invited” these people over to his farm, and in return received a Wallachian “hat, a fur, shepherd’s axe, slippers, plum brandy, and pies.”²⁸⁷ This conveys a message that Babiš upholds the cultural heritage of the nation. Lastly, the politicians also uphold the voices of the Czech people. This is done by Babiš and Okamura. The former selects some of the people who send him their questions to publically respond to them in his posts. For example, he informs that he has been “corresponding with Mr Jedlička since 2011.”²⁸⁸ On a similar note, Okamura asks for readers’ opinions and input. To demonstrate, he *always* ends his posts with “What do you think about it? Write it in the comments.”²⁸⁹ Overall, these examples evidence that the four politicians spread through Facebook messages that appeal to the people’s notion of the heartland.

All in all, Facebook posts of the four selected Czech politicians in both time periods show all six articulations of nationalist populism identified in the theoretical part of this research. The intensity of nationalist populist messages varies per politician, but each of the six articulations of nationalist populism is manifested on Facebook by at least one politician.

²⁸⁴ Bohuslav Sobotka’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/sobotka.bohuslav/photos/a.10151584489930776.1073741827.103258375775/10153880379535776/?type=3>.

²⁸⁵ One of Tříska’s most famous roles is of a strict but very human teacher who disciplines a feared class of elementary school boys and who instils patriotic sentiment in them, short after the end of WWII. Stanislav Dvořák, “Tříska to receive Kristián Award for his contributions to cinematography,” *Novinky*, February 23, 2017, <https://www.novinky.cz/kultura/430175-jan-triska-prevezme-kristiana-za-prinos-kinematografii.html>.

²⁸⁶ Petr Fiala’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/photos/a.499745696772985.1073741828.487445514669670/1166525733428308/?type=3>.

²⁸⁷ Andrej Babiš’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/photos/a.324695871000397.1073741832.214827221987263/870912583045387/?type=3>.

²⁸⁸ Andrej Babiš’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/photos/a.324695871000397.1073741832.214827221987263/870912583045387/?type=3>.

²⁸⁹ Tomio Okamura’s Facebook page, accessed June 6, 2017,

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1376592862351525/>.

The politicians distinguish between “the people” and various elite groups, while supporting the former; they express wariness of economic globalism; they criticise or oppose international superstructures, in particular the EU; they resent the outside “Other”; they resent the inside “Other”; and they evoke the notion of the Czech heartland. However, these articulations are applied in fragments. To illustrate, it is observed on the one hand that Sobotka is only mildly critical towards the EU and makes a soft reference to the Czech heartland through a photo with a popular actor. On the other hand, Okamura uses all six articulations and conveys intense nationalist populist (and often outright chauvinistic) messages in his speech. It is evident that the four politicians studied vary in their usage of nationalist populism. However, a political science analysis that would explain these differences is outside the scope of this research. What the qualitative content analysis demonstrates is that social media – and Facebook specifically – is certainly not used in the Czech Republic to exclusively facilitate respect, understanding and democratic pluralism. To the contrary, it may enable politicians to share nationalist populist messages, which is suggestive of a potential undermining of pluralist democracy.

Conclusion

This research has studied how social media can convey anti-pluralist speech, potentially undermining democratic principles. It examined the use of nationalist populist rhetoric by leaders of four popular Czech political parties on Facebook. Van Dijk argues that there has been a dual perspective regarding the democratic potentials of social media.²⁹⁰ On the one hand, according to many authors, such as Leadbeater, the rise of digital media, notably Web 2.0, supports socio-political empowerment and strengthening of democratic principles.²⁹¹ Loader and Mercea argue that social media transformed human communication by facilitating political participation,²⁹² allowing alternative opinions to be formed and shared more easily,²⁹³ and making it possible for users to share and spread information.²⁹⁴ Looking

²⁹⁰ Jan A.G.M. van Dijk, “Digital Democracy: Vision and Reality,” in *Public Administration in the Information Age: Revisited*, ed. by Ig Snellen and Wim van de Donk (Amsterdam: IOS – Press, 2013), 2-3.

²⁹¹ Charles Leadbeater, *We-Think: Mass Innovation, Not Mass Production*, (London: Profile Books, 2009), 6; Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy?” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011): 575; Larry Diamond, “Liberation Technology,” *Journal of Democracy* 21, no. 3 (2010): 70-1; José van Dijck, *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 5; José van Dijck and Thomas Poell, “Understanding Social Media Logic,” *Media and Communication* 1, no. 1 (2013): 8; Emma Price, “Social Media and Democracy,” *Australian Journal of Political Science* 48, no. 4 (2013): 519; Sarah Joseph, “Social Media, Political Change, and Human Rights” *Boston College International & Comparative Law Review* 35, (2012): 152.

²⁹² Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy?” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011): 759; William H. Dutton, “The Fifth Estate Emerging through the Network of Networks,” *Prometheus* 27, no. 1 (2009): 5; Sarah Joseph, “Social Media, Political Change, and Human Rights” *Boston College International & Comparative Law Review* 35, (2012): 149; José van Dijck, “Facebook as a Tool Producing Sociality and Connectivity,” *Television and New Media* 13, no. 2 (2012): 164.

²⁹³ Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, “Networking Democracy?” *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011): 759; William H. Dutton, “The Fifth Estate Emerging through the Network of Networks,” *Prometheus* 27, no. 1 (2009): 6; Jan A.G.M. van Dijk, “Digital Democracy: Vision and Reality,” in *Public Administration in the Information Age: Revisited*, ed. by Ig Snellen and Wim van de Donk (Amsterdam: IOS – Press, 2013), 6;

at Facebook specifically, van Dijck adds that though it strives to present itself as facilitating free sharing of information and strengthening democracy, it nonetheless has some control over the content and participation through the Terms of Service.²⁹⁵ Some scholars thus perceive social media as a nearly Utopian tool for enhancing democratic empowerment.

On the other hand, other scholars oppose this idealised perception of the capacities of social media. Engesser et al. claim that social media debilitates democratic processes because of its lack of journalistic content-oversight that is inherent to mass media. This enables users, including politicians and political institutions, to share freely messages on social media that also contain misinformation and offensive content, without the (immediate) journalistic analysis that would point it out.²⁹⁶ This type of content might challenge the principles of democracy, such as equality in representation and participation in the democratic system. Dahl dubs this aspect democratic pluralism, and claims that thanks to this principle, power in democracy is equally distributed among various groups of minorities.²⁹⁷ This principle, however, can be undermined by a spread of anti-democratic ideologies facilitated by the inherent logic of social media in lacking restrictions inherent to mass media. Engesser et al. argue that these restrictions include journalistic gate-keeping and scrutiny, and codes of ethics. This group of scholars thus finds that various users, including politicians, can use social media to share ideologically-laden messages consisting of rhetoric that can undermine democratic principles.

This tension between Utopianism and Distopianism is also addressed by social constructivists, who claim that the outcomes of the social media are a result of social and cultural choices and negotiations.²⁹⁸ These consist of design, content, and the use of

José van Dijck, "Facebook as a Tool Producing Sociality and Connectivity," *Television and New Media* 13, no. 2 (2012): 163; Emma Price, "Social Media and Democracy," *Australian Journal of Political Science* 48, no. 4 (2013): 519-520.

²⁹⁴ Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, "Networking Democracy?" *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011): 759; Sarah Joseph, "Social Media, Political Change, and Human Rights" *Boston College International & Comparative Law Review* 35, (2012): 147; José van Dijck, *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 12.

²⁹⁵ José van Dijck, *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 61-2; José van Dijck, "Facebook and the Engineering of Connectivity: A Multi-layered Approach to Social Media Platforms," *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies* 19, no. 2 (2012): 152.

²⁹⁶ Claudia Alvarez and Peter Dahlgren, "Populism, Extremism, and Media: Mapping an Uncertain Terrain," *European Journal of Communication* 31, no. 1 (2016): 53-4; Sven Engesser et al., "Populism and Social Media: How Politicians Spread a Fragmented Ideology," *Information, Communication, and Society*, (2016): 2; Brian D. Loader and Dan Mercea, "Networking Democracy?" *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011):761.

²⁹⁷ André Munro, "Robert A. Dahl," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, February 16, 2016, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Robert-A-Dahl>; Jan A.G.M. van Dijk, "Digital Democracy: Vision and Reality," in *Public Administration in the Information Age: Revisited*, ed. by Ig Snellen and Wim van de Donk (Amsterdam: IOS – Press, 2013), 4-5; Frank Bealey and Allan G. Johnson, *The Blackwell Dictionary of Political Science: A User's Guide to Its Terms*, (New Jersey: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 1999), 243.

²⁹⁸ Philip Brey, "Philosophy of Technology Meets Social Constructivism," in *Readings in the Philosophy of Technology*, ed. by David M. Kaplan (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009), 100.

technology, according to scholars like Lievrouw and Livingstone and Bijker.²⁹⁹ Moreover, van Dijck connects the two perceptions in stating that “content is generated, triggered and controlled by collaborating humans and machines, consciously and unconsciously.”³⁰⁰ As such, the author highlights the role of both – technology and people – in content creation and its spread on social media, with social media providing new automated ways of executing it.³⁰¹ In light of this theory, this research, though limited in scope and size, shows that Facebook can be used as a tool to create and share nationalist populist ideology that may undermine democratic pluralism.

Nationalist populist rhetoric can directly undermine democratic pluralism since populism can gradually lead to the tyranny of the majority. Abts and Rummens point out that both populism and the notion of the tyranny of the majority are based on advocating the sovereignty of the bulk of the people while disregarding the rights of minorities.³⁰² By having the capacity to spread freely populist messages, social media can undermine democratic pluralism and allow the tyranny of the majority, instead of exclusively facilitating democratic empowerment and emancipation.

Populism is defined by Mudde as fundamentally constructing a division between two groups of people: the elites and the people. While elites are presented by populists as “evil” and “harmful” to the people, the people are “good.”³⁰³ The elite groups consist of not only the ones in power, such as politicians, but also of big-business owners, civil servants, or intellectuals.³⁰⁴ Moreover, populism is also easily adaptable and attachable to other ideologies.³⁰⁵ Nationalism is also connected to cultural racism and the notion of the “Other.”³⁰⁶ This notion is based on the perceived cultural difference between supposedly

²⁹⁹ Philip Brey, “Philosophy of Technology Meets Social Constructivism,” in *Readings in the Philosophy of Technology*, ed. by David M. Kaplan (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009), 100; Leah Lievrouw and Sonia Livingstone, *Handbook of New Media: Social Shaping and Social Consequences*, (London: Sage, 2006), 4. Leah Lievrouw, “New Media Design and Development: Diffusion of Innovations v Social Shaping of Technology,” in *Handbook of New Media: Student Edition*, ed. by Leah Lievrouw and Sonia Livingstone, (London: SAGE, 2006), 248.

³⁰⁰ José van Dijck, “Facebook and the Engineering of Connectivity, A Multi-layered Approach to Social Media Platforms,” *Convergence* 19, no. 2 (2012): 150.

³⁰¹ José van Dijck, “Facebook and the Engineering of Connectivity, A Multi-layered Approach to Social Media Platforms,” *Convergence* 19, no. 2 (2012): 150-1.

³⁰² Koen Abts and Stefan Rummens, “Populism versus Democracy,” *Political Studies* 55, (2007): 410.

³⁰³ Cas Mudde, “The Populist Zeitgeist,” *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (2004): 544; Cas Mudde, “In the Name of the Peasantry, the Ploretariat, and the People: Populism in Eastern Europe,” *East European Politics and Societies* 14, no. 2, (2000): 37; Sven Engesser et al., “Populism and Social Media: How Politicians Spread a Fragmented Ideology,” *Information, Communication, and Society*, (2016): 5; Fareed Zakaria, “Populism on March: Why the West is in Trouble,” *Foreign Affairs*, (November/December 2016): 9; Christina Pazzanese, “In Europe, Nationalism Rising,” *Harvard Gazette*, February 27, 2017, <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2017/02/in-europe-nationalisms-rising/>.

³⁰⁴ Christina Pazzanese, “In Europe, Nationalism Rising,” *Harvard Gazette*, February 27, 2017, <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2017/02/in-europe-nationalisms-rising/>.

³⁰⁵ Cas Mudde, “The Populist Zeitgeist,” *Government and Opposition* 39, no. 4 (2004): 544; Claudia Alvarez and Peter Dahlgren, “Populism, Extremism, and Media: Mapping an Uncertain Terrain,” *European Journal of Communication* 31, no. 1 (2016): 49; Paul Taggart “The Populist Turn in the Politics of the New Europe” (paper presented at European Union Studies Association conference, Nashville, Tennessee, March 27-29, 2003): 7.

³⁰⁶ Etienne Balibar, “Is There a ‘Neo-Racism,’” in *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, ed. Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, (London: Verso, 1991), 21.

homogenous citizens of a nation and the people who do supposedly do not belong to this group. They form the “Other” and are perceived as not holding the same cultural values and beliefs; they are as such excluded and marginalised.³⁰⁷

To examine how discourse on social media can consist of nationalist populist rhetoric that can be subversive of democratic pluralism, the research focused on two politically charged time periods of 2016 in the Czech Republic, namely around the Brexit referendum and the US Presidential election, which are by many recognized as major nationalist populist breakthroughs. Since populism in general varies from one specific context to another, six articulations of nationalist populism were tailored for this study. These articulations include: constructing antagonism between the people and the elites; opposing globalism and the global market; denouncing international superstructures; “othering” the outsiders travelling to the country and presenting them as dangerous and criminal; “othering” minorities living in the country; and invoking the notion of a heartland.

This research finds all six articulations to be present in Czech politicians’ discourses on Facebook, albeit with different intensities. The “good people” are pitted against several “evil” elites including the country’s political “establishment”, EU leadership, media, big-business owners and liberal- and multiculturally-minded intellectuals. The common Czech people are portrayed as being victimised in one way or another by these elite groups. At the time of US elections, the media elite is presented by some politicians as constructing a purposefully negative image of Donald Trump. This is significant because it shows that some politicians use social media – in this case specifically Facebook – to spread nationalist populism by presenting certain groups as enemies of the “good people”, while siding with the latter.

Secondly, weariness or full-on rejection of economic globalism and global market forces is displayed by some politicians throughout the two periods. Although multinational corporations’ contributions to the Czech economy are in some cases positively acknowledged, some politicians oppose the global market and foreign investors outright, with insinuations of the diminishment of Czech national identity.

Thirdly and similarly to the rejection of the global market, some of the politicians also criticize or fully reject international superstructures – in particular the EU. In the first time period, Sobotka, Fiala, and Babiš agree that the Union is in a dire need of a dramatic change; however, they ultimately support it and condemn Brexit. Okamura, on the other hand, calls the EU “despotic” and “unrealistic,” endorses the Brexit vote and demands the Czech Republic to terminate its EU membership. In the second time period, only Okamura addresses this topic. All four politicians’ Facebook audience can get a sense of the “good people” being challenged by an intrusive EU, although the intensity of the anti-EU message varies greatly.

³⁰⁷ Verena Stolcke, “Talking Culture: New Boundaries, New Rhetorics of Exclusion in Europe,” *Current Anthropology* 36, no. 1 (1995): 1-2; Karen Wren, “Cultural Racism: Something Rotten in the State of Denmark?” *Social and Cultural Geography* 2, no. 2 (2001): 143-4.

Fourthly, people travelling to Europe and to the country are opposed and “Othered.” The topic of the refugee crisis is addressed by Babiš and Okamura in the first period. While they both deem the refugees as being merely “illegal migrants,” Okamura goes further by emphasising their cultural and ethnic differences that in his view hamper the cohesion with the Czechs. Furthermore, he explicitly portrays refugees as criminal and barbaric on account of their Muslim heritage. Okamura maintains this line also in the second period, when he represents Muslim refugees as incompatible, exploitative, and criminal towards the Czech people. Babiš and Okamura thus express a negative stance towards refugees, without any encouragement to the Czech people to support refugees or embrace diversity. “Othering” of refugees as culturally incompatible and dangerous to the Czechs falls into the pattern of exclusion of outsiders in nationalist populism, in stark contrast to the ideal of social media promoting diversity and understanding.

Fifthly and somewhat contrastingly, minorities inside the Czech Republic are mentioned in a negative context, but without much elaboration. This is done in both time periods by Okamura who implies that minorities simply profit on the Czechs. One reason for this limited scapegoating could be not to disrupt the image of supposed homogeneousness of the Czech people. By emphasising that the Czech people are divided within, populist politicians would undermine the perceived national unity in the opposition towards the outsiders, who are portrayed as a bigger threat to the country in the period studied.

Lastly, the notion of the Czech heartland is evoked. This is done by all four politicians, who appeal, again with different degrees of intensity, to Czech cultural heritage and identity in both time periods. One way of doing it is by mentioning legendary figures from the Czech history and culture. This is done by Sobotka, Fiala and Babiš. Another way of doing it is by recalling rules and policies from historical periods associated with prosperity, as done by Okamura. Appeals to the Slavic heritage are also made, particularly by Babiš. In addition, Babiš and Okamura purposefully invite the opinions and voices of “common people” by explicitly encouraging their followers to send them messages and to comment, and by reacting to these comments.

These findings demonstrate that political speech on Facebook, instead of exclusively encouraging respect and democratic empowerment, may also be used in at least six ways to undermine pluralistic democracy. Some Czech politicians use nationalist populist messages on their Facebook profiles with much lower intensity than others, but many of the Facebook posts studied clearly tend towards subverting democratic pluralism and encouraging the tyranny of the majority.

One of the limitations of this research has been that it has only analysed discourse on Facebook, the most widely used social media platform. Adding another platform to the analysis, such as Twitter or Instagram, would have enriched the findings by enabling to take into account the inherent differences between the platforms and how they might influence the discourses employed. Another limitation has been that nationalist populism has been defined for the purpose of this research in terms of six articulations found in academic literature. In

this sense, other (perhaps more subtle) manifestations of nationalist populism may have remained undetected by this study. Moreover, this research has provided only a qualitative account of the nationalist populist messages that were posted. No quantitative analysis was undertaken to specify in precise terms which politicians use nationalist populism with the greatest (or lowest) frequency and impact. Finally, no in-depth political analysis was undertaken to explain the apparent differences between the ways in which the politicians studied resort (or not) to nationalist populist messages. All these questions leave space for further research.

Possible follow-up research could also examine which nationalist populist tactics are most successful in generating positive user-responses. Moreover, a comparative analysis of the use of nationalist populism on different social media in different countries could reveal how social media is used differently (or similarly) in different contexts to spread similar ideologies. However, perhaps the most important question which the present research could inspire is: What can actually be done – by social medial platforms, traditional media, politicians and/or various other opinion-shapers – to counteract the danger that social media may facilitate a degeneration of pluralist democracy into a tyranny of the majority? Is nationalist populism an irresistible force on social media, or can it be contained? What could be the role of filter-bubbles in the possible countering the spread of undemocratic ideologies on social media? Can social media become (again, or at last) a force for understanding and democratic empowerment?

What is certain is that there is no turning back to the era before social media appeared. Things that have already been done can no longer be undone.

Secondary Sources

- Abts, Koen, and Stefan Rummens. "Populism versus Democracy." *Political Studies* 55, no. 2 (2007): 405–24. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9248.2007.00657.x.
- Akbarzadeh, Shahram, and Bianca Smith. "The Representation of Islam and Muslims in the Media: The Age and Herald Sun Newspapers." *School of Political and Social Inquiry*, (2005): 1-38.
- Alvarez, Claudia, and Peter Dahlgren. "Populism, Extremism and Media: Mapping an Uncertain Terrain Introduction: Dark Clouds over Democracy." *European Journal of Communication* 31.1 (2016): 46–57. Web.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. Verso, 1991.
- Anderson, Benedict. "The Nation and the Origin of National Consciousness." In *The Ethnicity Reader: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Migration*, edited by Montserrat Guibernau and John Rex. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010.
- Awan, Imran. "Islamophobia and Twitter: A Typology of Online Hate against Muslims on Social Media." *Policy and Internet* 6, no. 2 (2014): 133–50. doi:10.1002/1944-2866.POI364.
- Balibar, Etienne. "Is There a 'Neo-Racism.'" In *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, edited by Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein. London: Verso, 1991.
- Baranowski, Paweł. "Online Political Campaigning during the 2014 Regional Elections in Poland." *Media and Communication* 3, no. 4 (2015): 35–44. doi:10.17645/mac.v3i4.368.
- Bartlett, Jamie. "Populism, Social Media, and Democratic Strain." In *European Populism and Winning the Immigration Debate*, edited by Clara Sandelind, 100-114. Stockholm: Fores, 2014.
- Bealey, Frank and Allan G. Johnson. *The Blackwell Dictionary of Political Science: A User's Guide to Its Terms*. New Jersey: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 1999.
- Beaumont, Peter. "The truth about Twitter, Facebook and the uprisings in the Arab world." *The Guardian*. February 25, 2011.
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/feb/25/twitter-facebook-uprisings-arab-libya>.
- Bijker, Wiebe. "General Introduction." In *The Social Construction of Technological Systems: New Directions in the Sociology and History of Technology*, edited by Wiebe Bijker, Thomas Hughes, and Trevor Pinch. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1987.
- Bimber, Bruce. "Karl Marx and the Three Faces of Technological Determinism." *Social Studies of Science* 2, no. 2 (1990): 333-51.

- Bingham, Lisa Blomgren, and Rosemary O’Leary. “Federalist No. 51: Is the Past Relevant to Today’s Collaborative Public Management?” *Public Administration Review* 71, no. SUPPL. 1 (2011): 78–82. doi:10.1111/j.1540-6210.2011.02465.x.
- Bowcott, Owen. “Social Media Firms Must Face Heavy Fines over Extremist Content – MPs.” *The Guardian*. May 1, 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2017/may/01/social-media-firms-should-be-fined-for-extremist-content-say-mps-google-youtube-facebook>.
- Brey, Philip. “Philosophy of Technology Meets Social Constructivism.” In *Readings in the Philosophy of Technology*, edited by David M. Kaplan, 98-111. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2009.
- Burnap, Pete, and Matthew L. Williams. “Cyber Hate Speech on Twitter: An Application of Machine Classification and Statistical Modeling for Policy and Decision Making.” *Policy & Internet* 7, no. 2 (2015): 223–42. doi:10.1002/poi3.85.
- “Charter of Fundamental Rights – Constitutional Law of the Czech Republic No. 2/1993.” 1992. <https://www.psp.cz/docs/laws/listina.html>.
- Chaudhry, Irfan. “#Hashtagging hate: Using Twitter to track racism.” *First Monday* 20, no. 2 (2015). <http://uncommonculture.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/5450/4207>.
- “Checks and Balances.” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. July 27, 2016. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/checks-and-balances>.
- Císař, Ondřej, and Jiří Navrátil. “At the Ballot Boxes or in the Streets and Factories: Economic Contention in the Visegrad Group.” In *Austerity and Protest: Popular Contention in Times of Economic Crisis*, edited by Marco Giugni and Maria Grasso, 35-53. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2015.
- Císař, Ondřej. “Czech Republic : From Post-Communist Idealism to Economic Populism.” *Friedrich-Ebert- Stiftung*. January (2017): 1–14.
- Connolly, Kate et al. “Fake News : An Insidious Trend That’s Fast Becoming a Global Problem.” December 2, 2016. <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2016/dec/02/fake-news-facebook-us-election-around-the-world>.
- “Council Decision (EU) 2015/1601 of 22 September 2015.” *Official Journal of the European Union*, L 248/80 (24.9.2015). <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32015D1601>.
- Dahl, Robert A. “Democracy.” *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. April 12, 2017. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/democracy>.
- Dahl, Robert A. *Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy: Autonomy vs. Control*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982.

- Dekker, Rianne, Warda Belabas, and Peter Scholten. "Interethnic Contact Online: Contextualising the Implications of Social Media Use by Second-Generation Migrant Youth." *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 36, no. 4 (2015): 450–67. doi:10.1080/07256868.2015.1049981.
- Diamond, Larry. "Liberation Technology." *Journal of Democracy* 21, no. 3 (2010): 69–83. doi:10.1353/jod.0.0190.
- Djordjevic, Branislav, Spirtovic, Omer, and Danilo Acomovic. "Social Constructivism and Technology." *International Journal of Business and Social Sciences* 7, no. 11 (2016): 178-89.
- Dutton, William H. "The Fifth Estate Emerging through the Network of Networks." *Prometheus* 27, no. 1 (2009): 1–15. doi:10.1080/08109020802657453.
- Dvořák, Stanislav. "Tříška to receive Kristián Award for his contributions to cinematography." *Novinky*. February 23, 2017. <https://www.novinky.cz/kultura/430175-jan-triska-prevezme-kristiana-za-prinos-kinematografii.html>.
- El-Bermawy, Mostafa M. "Your Filter Bubble is Destroying Democracy." *The Wired*. November 18, 2016. <https://www.wired.com/2016/11/filter-bubble-destroying-democracy/>.
- Eltantawy, Nahed, and Julie B. Wiest. "Social Media in the Egyptian Revolution: Reconsidering Resource Mobilization Theory." *International Journal of Communication* 5 (2011): 1207–24. doi:1932-8036/2011FEA1207.
- Engesser, Sven et al. "Populism and Social Media: How Politicians Spread a Fragmented Ideology." *Information, Communication, and Society*, 2016: 1–18. Web. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2016.1207697> 0.0.
- Fairclough, Norman. "Critical and Descriptive Goals in Discourse Analysis." *Journal of Pragmatics* 9, no. 6 (1985): 739–63. doi:10.1016/0378-2166(85)90002-5.
- Fairclough, Norman. "Language and Power." In *Language in Social Life Series*, edited by Christopher N. Candlin, 1-258. New York: Longman, 1989.
- Fairclough, Norman. *New Language, New Labour?* London: Routledge, 2000.
- Foucault, Michel. "The Order of Discourse." In *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader*, edited by Robert Young, 51-78. London: Routledge. 1981.
- Fuchs, Christian. "Racism , Nationalism and Right-Wing Extremism Online : The Austrian Presidential Election 2016 on Facebook." *Westminster Research* 5, no. 3 (2016): 172–96.
- Gayo Avello, Daniel. "Politics and Social Media." (2016): 7-243. http://danigayo.info/publications/Gayo-Avello_Politics_and_Social_Media/.
- Gayo Avello, Daniel. "Social Media and Authoritarianism." *SSRN*, (July 22, 2015): 1-21.

- Gherghina, Sergiu, and Sorina Soare. "Introduction: Populism – A Sophisticated Concept and Diverse Political Realities. In *Contemporary Populism: A Controversial Concept and Its Diverse Forms*," edited by Sergiu Gherghina, Sergiu Micolu, and Sorina Soare. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013.
- Graham, Linda J. "Discourse Analysis and the Critical Use of Foucault." *Australia Association for Research in Education* 11, no. 4 (2005): 1–15. doi:10.1177/0959354301114006.
- Hall, Stuart. "Culture, Community, Nation." *Cultural Studies* 7, no. 3 (1993): 349–63. doi:10.1080/09502389300490251.
- Hall, Stuart. "The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power." In *Formations of Modernity*, edited by Stuart Hall and Bram Gieben, 185–227. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992.
- Hamilton, Alexander. "Federalist Paper Number 51." In *The Federalist Papers*, written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay. Auckland: The Floating Press, 2011.
- Havemann, Joel. "The Financial Crisis 2008: Year in Review 2008." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. February 2, 2009. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Financial-Crisis-of-2008-The-1484264>.
- Henry Foy, "Jaroslaw Kaczynski: Poland's Kingmaker," *Financial Times*, February 26, 2016, <https://www.ft.com/content/8238e15a-db46-11e5-a72f-1e7744c66818>.
- Van Hoboken, Joris. "New Trends in the Digital News Landscape – Alternative Media Outlets, Fake-News and the Crisis of Traditional Journalism." Presentation at the Group Conference on Democratic Discourse 2.0: Potentials and Challenges in a New Era of Communication from European Free Alliance, Brussels, Belgium, June 7, 2017.
- Hook, Derek. "Discourse, Knowledge, Materiality, History: Foucault and Discourse Analysis." *Theory & Psychology* 11, no. 4 (2001): 521–47. doi:0803973233.
- Hopkins, Nick. "Revealed: Facebook's Internal Rulebook on Sex, Terrorism, and Violence." *The Guardian*. May 21, 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2017/may/21/revealed-facebook-internal-rulebook-sex-terrorism-violence>.
- Hopkins, Nick and Julia Carrie Wong. "Has Facebook Become a Forum for Misogyny and Racism." *The Guardian*. May 21, 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2017/may/21/has-facebook-become-forum-misogyny-racism>.
- Horsti, Karina. "Asylum Seekers in the News: Frames of Illegality and Control." *Observatorio Journal*, (2007): 145-61.
- Howard, Philip et al. "Opening Closed Regimes: What Was the Role of Social Media During the Arab Spring?" *Project on Information Technology and Political Islam*, 2011, 1–30. doi:10.1007/s13398-014-0173-7.2.

- Inglehart, Ronald F., and Pippa Norris. "Trump, Brexit, and the Rise of Populism: Economic Have-Nots and Cultural Backlash." *HKS Faculty Research Working Paper Series*, August 2016, 1–52.
- Jaspal, Rusi, and Marco Cinnirella. "Media representations of British Muslims and hybridised threats to identity." *Cont Islam* 4, (2010): 289-310.
- Joseph, Sarah. "Social Media, Political Change, and Human Rights." *Boston College International and Comparative Law Review* 35, no. 145 (2014): 145–88. doi:10.1525/sp.2007.54.1.23.
- Juris, Jeffrey S. "Reflections on #Occupy Everywhere: Social Media, Public Space, and Emerging Logic of Aggregation." *American Ethnologist* 39, no. 2 (2012): 259-279.
- Kanno, Yasuko, and Bonny Norton. "Imagined Communities." *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education* 2, no. 4 (2003): 241–49. doi:10.1207/S15327701JLIE0204.
- Kluknavská, Alena. "Enemies among Us : The and Xenophobic Discourses in the Czech Republic and Slovakia 20." *Rexter* 2 (2014): 42–71.
- Komito, Lee, and Jessica Bates. "Virtually Local: Social Media and Community among Polish Nationals in Dublin." *Aslib Proceedings* 61, no. 3 (2009): 232–44. doi:10.1108/00012530910959790.
- Kranzberg, Melvin. "Technology and History: 'Kranzberg's Laws.'" *Technology and Culture* 27, no. 3 (1986): 544-60.
- Krippendorff, Klaus. *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*. London: Sage, 2004.
- Krippendorff, Klaus. "Content Analysis." In *International Encyclopedia of Communication*, edited by Wolfgang Donsbach, 403-7. 2008.
- Laclau, Ernesto. "On Populist Reason." London: Verso, 2005.
- Lášticová, Barbara. "New Media, Social Capital and Transnational Migration: Slovaks in the UK." *Human Affairs* 24, no. 4 (2014): 406–22. doi:10.2478/s13374-014-0237-6.
- Leadbeater, Charles. *We-Think: Mass Innovation, Not Mass Production*. London: Profile Books, 2009.
- Lievrouw, Leah, and Sonia Livingstone. *Handbook of New Media: Social Shaping and Social Consequences*. London: Sage, 2006.
- Lievrouw, Leah. "New Media Design and Development: Diffusion of Innovations v Social Shaping of Technology." In *Handbook of New Media: Student Edition*, edited by Leah Lievrouw and Sonia Livingstone, 246-65. London: SAGE, 2006.
- Loader, Brian D., and Dan Mercea. "Networking Democracy?" *Information, Communication & Society* 14, no. 6 (2011): 757–69. doi:10.1080/1369118X.2011.592648.

- Macková, Alena, and Václav Štětka. "Walking the Party Line? The Determinants of Facebook's Adoption and Use by Czech Parliamentarians." *Medijske Studije* 7, no. 14 (2016): 157–75. doi:10.20901/ms.7.14.11.
- Madison, James. "Federalist Paper Number 10." In *The Federalist Papers*, written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay. Auckland: The Floating Press, 2011.
- Mayring, Philipp. "Qualitative Content Analysis." *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 1, no. 2 (2000). <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1089/2385>.
- Michalski, Jerry. "How Facebook Could Actually Make The World A Better Place." *The Forbes*. May 11, 2012. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jerrymichalski/2012/05/11/what-if-zuck-meant-it/>.
- Miller, Daniel, and Don Slater. *The Internet: An Ethnographic Approach*. Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2000.
- Miller, Joe. "Zuckerberg: Facebook's mission is to 'connect the world'." *BBC*. February 24, 2014. <http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-26326844>.
- Mill, John Stuart. *On Liberty*. Ontario: Batoche Books, 2001.
- Mirani, Leo. "Sorry, Malcolm Gladwell, the revolution may well be tweeted." *The Guardian*. October 10, 2010. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/cifamerica/2010/oct/02/malcolm-gladwell-social-networking-kashmir>.
- Moreau, Elise. "The Top Social Networking Sites People Are Using." *Lifewire*. May 12, 2017. <https://www.lifewire.com/top-social-networking-sites-people-are-using-3486554>.
- Mortimer, Caroline. "Refugee crisis: War and disaster internally displaces a record 40,8m people around the world, says report." *The Independent*. May 11, 2016. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/politics/refugee-crisis-war-and-disaster-internally-displaces-a-record-408m-people-around-the-world-says-new-a7025101.html>.
- Mouffe, Chantal. *The Democratic Paradox*. New York: Verso, 2000.
- Mudde, Cas. "In the Name of the Peasantry, the Ploretariat, and the People: Populism in Eastern Europe." *East European Politics and Societies* 14, no. 2. (2000): 33-53.
- Mudde, Cas. "The Populist Zeitgeist." *Government and Opposition* 39.4 (2004): 542–563. Web.

- Munro, André. "Robert A. Dahl." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. February 16, 2016.
<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Robert-A-Dahl>.
- Napoli, Philip M., and Robyn Caplan. "Why Media Companies Insist They're Not Media Companies, Why They're Wrong, and Why It Matters." *First Monday* 22, no. 5 (2017).
<http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/7051/6124>.
- Nielsen, Rasmus Kleis. "Keynote Speech." Presentation at the Group Conference on Democratic Discourse 2.0: Potentials and Challenges in a New Era of Communication from European Free Alliance, Brussels, Belgium, June 7, 2017.
- Nikunen, Kaarina, and Karina Horsti. "The Ethics of Hospitality in Changing Journalism: A Response to the Rise of the Anti-Immigrant Movement in Finnish Media Publicity." *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 16, no. 4 (2013): 489–504.
 doi:10.1177/1367549413491718.
- Odložilik et al., Otakar. "Czechoslovak history." *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. March 7, 2016.
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Czechoslovak-history>.
- O'Hara, Kieron. "The Internet: A Tool for Democratic Pluralism?" *Science as Culture* 11, no. 2 (2002): 287–98. doi:10.1080/09505430220137298.
- O'Reilly, Tim. "What Is Web 2.0: Design Patterns and Business Models for the Next Generation of Software." *International Journal of Digital Economics*, no. 65 (2007): 17-37.
- Pariser, Eli. *The Filter Bubble: What the Internet is Hiding from You*. New York: Penguin, 2012.
- Pavlenko, Aneta, and Bonny Norton. "Imagined Communities, Identity, and English Language Learning." *International Handbook of English Language Teaching* 15, (2007): 669- 680.
- Pazzanese, Christina. "In Europe, Nationalism Rising." *Harvard Gazette*. February 27, 2017.
<http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2017/02/in-europe-nationalisms-rising/>.
- Pettersson, David, and Petter Karlström. "Reputation as a Product, Politicians in Social Media." *The Second International Conference on Reputatio, ICORE 2011*. (2011): 1-14.
- Poynting, Scott et al. "Bin Laden in the Suburbs: Criminalising the Arab Other." Sydney: Sydney Institute for Criminology Studies, 2004.
- "Pravdoláskář." *Čeština 2.0*. July 16, 2011. <https://cestina20.cz/slovník/pravdolaskar>.
- "Prague Police is investigating a rape case of a hospital nurse at Bulovka hospital." *Lidovky*. November 3, 2016. http://www.lidovky.cz/prazska-policie-vysetruje-pripad-znasilneni-zdravotni-sestry-pv9-/zpravy-domov.aspx?c=A161103_142913_In_domov_ELE.

- Price, Emma. "Social Media and Democracy." *Australian Journal of Political Science* 48, no. 4 (2013): 519–27. doi:10.1080/10361146.2013.846296.
- Reuter, Ora John, and David Szakonyi. "Online Social Media and Political Awareness in Authoritarian Regimes." *British Journal of Political Science* 45, no. 1 (2015): 29–51. doi:10.1017/S0007123413000203.
- Roberts, Andrew Lawrence. *From the Good King Wenceslas to the Good Soldier Švejk: A Dictionary of Czech Popular Culture*. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2005.
- Sakki, Inari, and Katarina Pettersson. "Discursive Constructions of Otherness in Populist Radical Right Political Blogs." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 46, no. 2 (2016): 156–70. doi:10.1002/ejsp.2142.
- Schreier, Margrit. "Qualitative Content Analysis." In *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*, edited by Uwe Flick, 170-83. London: Sage, 2014.
- Sheet, Sarah. "The Myths of Far-Right Populism: Orbán's Fence and Trump's Wall." *Berkeley Political Review*. February 28, 2017. <https://bpr.berkeley.edu/2017/02/28/the-myths-of-far-right-populism-orbans-fence-and-trumps-wall/>.
- Shirky, Clay. *Cognitive Surplus: Creativity and Generosity in a Connected Age*. New York: Penguin Books, 2011.
- Skalski, Paul D. et al. "Content Analysis in the Interactive media Age." In *The Content Analysis Guidebook*, edited by Kimberley A. Neuendorf. London: Sage, 2017.
- Smith, Merritt Roe. "Technological Determinism in American culture." in *Does Technology Drive History? The Dilemma of Technological Determinism*, edited by Merritt Roe Smith and Leo Marx. Cambridge, MIT Press, 1994.
- Stolcke, Verena. "Talking Culture: New Boundaries, New Rhetorics of Exclusion in Europe." *Current Anthropology* 36, no. 1 (1995): 1-24.
- Stanley-Becker, Isaac Stanley-Becker. "Marine Le Pen falls short in far-right bid for the presidency of France." *The Washington Post*. May 7, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/europe/marine-le-pen-congratulates-emmanuel-macron-on-his-victory-in-french-presidential-race/2017/05/07/afe9064e-3021-11e7-a335-fa0ae1940305_story.html?utm_term=.bc066ccfc0c2.
- Štětka, Václav, Macková, Alena, and Marta Fialová. "The Role of Social Media in the 2013 Czech Presidential Elections." *Social Media in Politics* 13, (2014): 225-244. doi:10.1007/978-3-319-04666-2_13
- Stieglitz, Stefan, and Linh Dang-Xuan. "Social Media and Political Communication: A Social Media Analytics Framework." *Social Network Analysis and Mining* 3, no. 4 (2013): 1277–91. doi:10.1007/s13278-012-0079-3.

- Sulovká, Lucie. “Why not to applaud president’s war with the Café.” *Forum 24*. August 18, 2016. <http://forum24.cz/proc-netleskat-prezidentove-valce-s-kavarnou/>.
- Tabery, Erik. “Winners and Losers.” *Respekt*. June 27, 2017. <https://www.respekt.cz/tydenik/2017/22/vitezove-a-porazeni>.
- Taggart, Paul. “The Populist Turn in the Politics of the New Europe.” Paper presented at European Union Studies Association conference. Nashville, Tennessee, March 27-29, 2003.
- “The Guardian view on Geert Wilders’ defeat: good news, to be treated with caution.” *The Guardian*. March 16, 2016. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/mar/16/the-guardian-view-on-geert-wilders-defeat-good-news-to-be-treated-with-caution>.
- Trotter, Daniel, and Christian Fuchs. *Social Media, Politics and the State: Protests, Revolutions, Riots, Crime and Policing in the Age of Facebook, Twitter and YouTube*. Abingdon-on-Thames: Routledge, 2014.
- “Trump, Brexit and the Future of Nationalist Populism in the US and Europe.” YouTube video, posted by “Minda de Gunzburg Center for European Studies.” September 16, 2016. <https://ces.fas.harvard.edu/recordings/trump-brexit-and-the-future-of-nationalist-populism-in-the-us-and-europe>.
- “Tyranny of the Majority.” *Encyclopaedia.com*. <http://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/applied-and-social-sciences-magazines/tyranny-majority>.
- Van Es, Karin, van Geenen, Daniela, and Thomas Boeschoten. “Mediating the Black Pete Discussion on Facebook: Slacktivism, Flaming Wars, and Deliberation.” *First Monday* 19, no. 12 (2014). <http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/5570/4180>.
- van Dijck, Jose, and Thomas Poell. “Understanding Social Media Logic.” *Media and Communication* 1, no. 1 (2013): 2–14.
- van Dijck, Jose. “Facebook and the Engineering of Connectivity: A Multi-Layered Approach to Social Media Platforms.” *Convergence* 19.2 (2012): 141–155. Web.
- van Dijck, Jose. “Facebook as a Tool for Producing Sociality and Connectivity.” *Television & New Media* 13.2 (2012): 160–176. Web.
- van Dijck, Jose. *The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media*. Oxford University Press, 2013-01-30. Oxford Scholarship Online. 2013-01-24. Date Accessed 17 Jan. 2017
<<http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199970773.001.0001/acprof-9780199970773>>.

- van Dijk Jan A.G.M. "Digital Democracy: Vision and Reality." In *Public Administration in the Information Age: Revisited*, edited by Ig Snellen and Wim van de Donk, 49-62. Amsterdam: IOS – Press, 2013.
- "Volební Preference (březen 2017)." *SANEP s.r.o.* March 8, 2017. <http://www.sanep.cz/pruzkumy/volebni-preference-brezen-2017-publikovano-8-3-2017/>.
- Zala, Eszter. "Hungary is too small for Viktor Orban." *Foreign Policy*. October 1, 2016. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/10/01/hungary-is-too-small-for-viktor-orban/>.
- Ward, Stephen, and Thierry Vedel. "Introduction: The Potential of the Internet Revisited." *Parliamentary Affairs* 59, no. 2 (2006): 210–25. doi:10.1093/pa/gsl014.
- Wolfsfeld, Gadi, Elad Segev, and Tamir Sheafer. "Social Media and the Arab Spring: Politics Comes First." *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 18, no. 2 (2013): 115-137.
- Wren, Karen. "Cultural Racism: Something Rotten in the State of Denmark?" *Social and Cultural Geography* 2, no. 2 (2001). 141-62.
- Zakaria, Fareed. "Populism on March: Why the West is in Trouble." *Foreign Affairs*, (November/December 2016): 9-15.
- Zakaria, Fareed. "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy." *Foreign Affairs* 76, no. 6 (1997): 22–43.
- Završnik, Gašper. "Brexit and Trump encouraged Eastern Europe populism: report." *Politico*. April 4, 2017. <http://www.politico.eu/article/brexit-and-trump-encouraged-eastern-europe-populism-report-hungary-poland-democracy/>.

Primary Sources

Andrej Babiš's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/posts/870259396444039>.

Andrej Babiš's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/posts/865282316941747>.

Andrej Babiš's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/posts/866960300107282>.

Andrej Babiš's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/posts/791978387605474>.

Andrej Babiš's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/posts/787898374680142>.

Andrej Babiš's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/posts/785468134923166>.

Andrej Babiš's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/photos/a.214830678653584.56598.214827221987263/789401391196507/?type=3>.

Andrej Babiš's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/posts/865281910275121>.

Andrej Babiš's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/videos/790602281076418/>.

Andrej Babiš's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/posts/789356801200966>.

Andrej Babiš's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/photos/a.324695871000397.1073741832.214827221987263/870912583045387/?type=3>.

Andrej Babiš's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/photos/a.324695871000397.1073741832.214827221987263/786991764770803/?type=3>.

Andrej Babiš's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/photos/a.324695871000397.1073741832.214827221987263/788929584577021/?type=3>.

Andrej Babiš's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/AndrejBabis/photos/a.324695871000397.1073741832.214827221987263/789891131147533/?type=3>.

Bohuslav Sobotka's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/sobotka.bohuslav/posts/10153569811180776>.

Bohuslav Sobotka's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/sobotka.bohuslav/posts/10153558577615776>.

Bohuslav Sobotka's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/sobotka.bohuslav/photos/a.10151584489930776.1073741827.103258375775/10153880379535776/?type=3>.

Petr Fiala's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1055801141167435>.

Petr Fiala's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1166601690087379>.

Petr Fiala's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1163910240356524>.

Petr Fiala's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1057128707701345>.

Petr Fiala's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1167515253329356>.

Petr Fiala's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1164622073618674>.

Petr Fiala's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/videos/1164583303622551/>.

Petr Fiala's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1058888260858723>.

Petr Fiala's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/photos/a.499745696772985.1073741828.487445514669670/1166525733428308/?type=3>.

Petr Fiala's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1056436357770580>.

Petr Fiala's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1056985204382362>.

Petr Fiala's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/petr.fiala1964/posts/1057052037709012>.

Petr Fiala's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017. <https://www.facebook.com/notes/petr-fiala/evropa-nem%C5%AF%C5%BEe-popadnout-dech-bude-sta%C4%8Dit-r%C3%A1na-do-zad/1059574357456780>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1254206887923457/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1255875451089934/?type=3>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1251063841571095/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1254206887923457/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1255745714436241/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1367229479954530/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1250033191674160/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1252282524782560/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1252818884728924/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1367229479954530/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1366328670044611/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1376322845711860/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1241482022529277/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1254206887923457/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1376340792376732/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1376592862351525/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/?fref=nf>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1255732874437525/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1368568833153928/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1380672668610211/?type=3>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1369491763061635/?type=3>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1252282524782560/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page, Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1255875451089934/?type=3>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1250834901593989/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1254390141238465/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1254390141238465/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1251421671535312/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1252282524782560/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1367229479954530/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1241477265863086/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1255745714436241/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1241477265863086/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1246197972057682/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1246202755390537/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1369491763061635/?type=3>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/photos/a.185333081477515.45875.179497582061065/1368373549840123/?type=3>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1366329903377821/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1375976925746452/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1378535212157290/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1251060051571474/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1378422392168572/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1254390141238465/>.

Tomio Okamura's Facebook page. Accessed June 6, 2017.
<https://www.facebook.com/tomio.cz/videos/1376592862351525/>.



PLAGIARISM RULES AWARENESS STATEMENT

Fraud and Plagiarism

Scientific integrity is the foundation of academic life. Utrecht University considers any form of scientific deception to be an extremely serious infraction. Utrecht University therefore expects every student to be aware of, and to abide by, the norms and values regarding scientific integrity.

The most important forms of deception that affect this integrity are fraud and plagiarism. Plagiarism is the copying of another person's work without proper acknowledgement, and it is a form of fraud. The following is a detailed explanation of what is considered to be fraud and plagiarism, with a few concrete examples. Please note that this is not a comprehensive list!

If fraud or plagiarism is detected, the study programme's Examination Committee may decide to impose sanctions. The most serious sanction that the committee can impose is to submit a request to the Executive Board of the University to expel the student from the study programme.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the copying of another person's documents, ideas or lines of thought and presenting it as one's own work. You must always accurately indicate from whom you obtained ideas and insights, and you must constantly be aware of the difference between citing, paraphrasing and plagiarising. Students and staff must be very careful in citing sources; this concerns not only printed sources, but also information obtained from the Internet.

The following issues will always be considered to be plagiarism:

- cutting and pasting text from digital sources, such as an encyclopaedia or digital periodicals, without quotation marks and footnotes;
- cutting and pasting text from the Internet without quotation marks and footnotes;
- copying printed materials, such as books, magazines or encyclopaedias, without quotation marks or footnotes;
- including a translation of one of the sources named above without quotation marks or footnotes;
- paraphrasing (parts of) the texts listed above without proper references: paraphrasing must be marked as such, by expressly mentioning the original author in the text or in a footnote, so that you do not give the impression that it is your own idea;
- copying sound, video or test materials from others without references, and presenting it as one's own work;
- submitting work done previously by the student without reference to the original paper, and presenting it as original work done in the context of the course, without the express permission of the course lecturer;
- copying the work of another student and presenting it as one's own work. If this is done with the consent of the other student, then he or she is also complicit in the plagiarism;
- when one of the authors of a group paper commits plagiarism, then the other co-authors are also complicit in plagiarism if they could or should have known that the person was committing plagiarism;
- submitting papers acquired from a commercial institution, such as an Internet site with summaries or papers, that were written by another person, whether or not that other person received payment for the work.

The rules for plagiarism also apply to rough drafts of papers or (parts of) these sent to a lecturer for feedback, to the extent that submitting rough drafts for feedback is mentioned in the course handbook or the thesis regulations.

The Education and Examination Regulations (Article 5.15) describe the formal procedure in case of suspicion of fraud and/or plagiarism, and the sanctions that can be imposed.

Ignorance of these rules is not an excuse. Each individual is responsible for their own behaviour. Utrecht University assumes that each student or staff member knows what fraud and plagiarism



Universiteit Utrecht

entail. For its part, Utrecht University works to ensure that students are informed of the principles of scientific practice, which are taught as early as possible in the curriculum, and that students are informed of the institution's criteria for fraud and plagiarism, so that every student knows which norms they must abide by.

I hereby declare that I have read and understood the above.
Name: <i>Barbora Vesela'</i>
Student number: <i>4190173</i>
Date and signature: <i>Barbora Vesela'</i> <i>August - 21 - 2017</i>

Submit this form to your supervisor when you begin writing your Bachelor's final paper or your Master's thesis.

Failure to submit or sign this form does not mean that no sanctions can be imposed if it appears that plagiarism has been committed in the paper.