Critical European Studies

THE POPULISM–EUROSCEPTICISM NEXUS

A DISCURSIVE COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF GERMANY AND SPAIN

Juan Roch

"This book breaks new ground in its exploration of the development of Euroskepticism through populist discursive and social practices. By combining the post-structuralist approaches of Foucault's *dispositifs* with the Critical Discourse Analysis of Laclau and Moufe*,* the book creates a highly innovative theoretical template through which to study populism in Europe. The result is a deeply insightful analysis of the power of populist contestation of European integration through a qualitative analysis of the cases of the AfD in Germany and Podemos in Spain."

Vivien A. Schmidt, *Jean Monnet Professor of European Integration at Boston University*

"*The Populism–Euroscepticism Nexus* offers a refreshing discursive perspective on how Alternative für Deutschland and Podemos have articulated their populism with contestation of the EU. This theoretically, methodologically and analytically sophisticated book will be of interest to anyone interested in how left and right populist discourses about the EU are embedded in historical processes of Europeanisation."

Benjamin De Cleen, *Associate Professor at the Department of Communication Studies of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel*

"Juan Roch's book offers important critical insights into the relationship between populism and EU contestation, and also demonstrates the complexity of party positions on 'Europe' more generally. While populism and Euroscepticism are often assumed to go hand-in-hand, radical populist actors often take an ambivalent stance towards the issue of European integration, and criticism of the EU is hardly the prerogative of populists alone. Based on a carefully-crafted conceptual and theoretical framework, and a systematic comparative case-study analysis, Roch's study helps us to gain a better understanding and appreciation of the multiplicity of Eurosceptic discourses, which are shown to be strongly shaped by historical and national context."

Stijn van Kessel, *Reader in European Politics, Queen Mary University of London*

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The Populism–Euroscepticism Nexus

This book explores the modes of European Union (EU) contestation which are mobilized by radical parties and seeks to unearth the relationship of such contestation with populist discourses. It looks specifically at how rightist and leftist parties articulate populist discourses with representations and problematizations of Europe and the EU by examining the left-wing Podemos in Spain and the right-wing Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) in Germany. It argues that radical parties also build their Euroscepticism on other hegemonic discourses and populism is only one possible discursive articulation to mobilize the contestation of the EU. It examines whether populism discourses may serve (or not) as a stimulus for EU contestation and as such shows the implications that this may have for the persistence of Euroscepticism in Western European democracies. This book will be of key interest to scholars and students of radical parties, democracy, democratic and political theory, populism, Euroscepticism, discourse studies and more broadly to comparative politics and European studies.

Juan Roch is a Margarita Salas postdoctoral researcher at Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (UAM).

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To my dad,

Para mi padre, Nino

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Abbreviations

AfD	Alternative für Deutschland
BNG	Bloque Nacionalista Galego
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CDS	Critical Discourse Studies
CDS	Centro Democrático y Social
CDU	Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CiU	Convergència i Unió
CL	Corpus Linguistics
CSU	Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern
EC	European Communities
ECM	European Common Market
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EDC	European Defense Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EERM	European Exchange Rate Mechanism
EES	European Employment Strategy
EFSF	European Financial Stability Facility
EMC	European Monetary System
EMU	European Monetary Union
ERC	Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya
ESM	European Stability Mechanism
EU	European Union
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
FDP	Freie Demokratische Partei
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IU	Izquierda Unida
PDA	Post-structuralist discourse theory
PDA*	Political Discourse Analysis
PDS	Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus
PEGIDA	Patriotic Europeans against the Islamization of the West

PNV	Partido Nacionalista Vasco
PP	Partido Popular
PSOE	Partido Socialista Obrero Español
RLP	Radical Left Parties
RRP	Radical Right Parties
SEA	Single European Act
SKAD	Sociology of Knowledge Approach to Discourse
TEU	Treaty of the European Union
UEF	Union Européenne des Fédéralistes
WASG	Wahlalternative Arbeit und soziale Gerechtigkeit

Introduction

Populism and EU contestation

Populism expresses, above all, a defense of the community.
(Lechner, 1991, in Taguieff, 1997: XXVII)

Since the 2008–2010 euro crisis, the dynamics of the party systems in Western Europe have been vastly altered by the emergence of new political actors. These changes in European politics have been frequently classified by pundits and scholars under the term populism. Radical or populist actors are, indeed, making inroads in most European party systems. The long-term consolidation of the Rassemblement National (before Front National) in France, the Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs in Austria, the Partij voor de Vrijheid in the Netherlands, or the Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) in Germany are only some instances of what one might call the last wave of radical right parties (RRP). On the other side of the political spectrum, there are radical left parties (RLP) which exhibit populist discourses, such as Podemos in Spain, Syriza in Greece, and La France Insoumise in France. Altogether, the rise of these parties and the increasing turbulence found in both domestic and European politics have stimulated a great amount of literature on populism and populist parties.

Several studies reveal that all of these parties, whether left-wing or right-wing, share a similar populist discourse—a general positive appeal to the people, constructed in opposition to the elites—whereas they diverge in many other respects, including: organization and party structure (Jansen, 2011; Roberts, 2015, 2021), ideology (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013; March, 2017), and forms of discursive articulation (Katsambekis, 2017, 2020; Mouffe, 2018; Roch, 2022). There is a relative consensus among scholars that the categories of left and right or inclusionary versus exclusionary are useful to discriminate among the diverse manifestations of populism, even though some parties may escape this classification axis[1] (see Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013; Mouffe, 2018; Katsambekis, 2017; Ivaldi et al., 2017; March, 2017; della Porta, 2017; Roch, 2021). There is also abundant research on the Eurosceptic profile of radical right parties (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002; Hartleb, 2012;

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Werts et al., 2013; McDonnell and Werner, 2018). Yet, the question of how RLP articulate their discourses on Europe and the European Union (EU) together with populism remains unclear, even though some scholars have addressed the relevance of the topic and the analytical problems to classify these parties as Eurosceptic (Usherwood and Startin, 2013; Stavrakakis and Katsambekis, 2014; della Porta et al., 2017). More precisely, the specific discourses mobilized by these parties about Europe and the EU have been left relatively unexplored in comparison with RRP. To address this lacuna, this work investigates and compares the articulations between populism and EU contestation mobilized by RRP and RLP. Furthermore, this monograph seeks to explore this question from an innovative perspective. It aims to analyze the interrelations between populism and EU contestation from a discourse-oriented angle, along with all the theoretical and methodological implications that this entails.

Research on populism and Euroscepticism tends to study these two phenomena as reified entities and overlooks the very discursive and social practices intertwined with the production of the populism–Euroscepticism nexus. Especially in the case of populism (but also in Euroscepticism studies), there is a dominant view in the literature addressing these phenomena as reified objects to be identified and extirpated from the social body as a social pathology of democracy (Taggart, 2004; Müller, 2015; Kriesi and Pappas, 2015; Hirvonen and Pennanen, 2019). This book, by contrast, conceives the phenomena of populism and EU contestation as the result of situated discursive and social practices. The study of these practices behind populism and EU contestation allows us to identify their contested natures, fluidity, and processes of change. Thus, from an interpretivist angle, the emphasis is placed on the contingent discursive and social practices that have historically constituted specific populist articulations revolving around Europe and the EU. The current study is a deep exploration of these articulations in Germany and Spain. It analyzes in detail two prominent populist actors, radical parties the AfD in Germany and Podemos in Spain, which are considered exponents of the two subtypes of populism mentioned above. Thus, the research design of this study privileges the qualitative and detailed analysis of the cases, as well as the historical depth, over the number of cases.[2]

This introductory chapter proceeds as follows. The next section concentrates on the research on populism and the studies related to the question of EU contestation. Secondly, the theoretical framework and research questions of this book are presented. In the third section, the chapter turns to the comparative design of this research, the case selection, and the methodological strategy. Finally, I present the structure of this book and summarize the content of each chapter.

Populism and Euroscepticism

Populism is a multidimensional phenomenon, and as such, it has been studied by attending to various dimensions (e.g., electoral behavior, attitudes, emotions,

language, social movements, parties, or party systems). This has led to the development of a multidisciplinary field of study on the subject. To discriminate among the various perspectives, it is useful to make an initial distinction between scholars who are primarily interested in the study of populism in its substance and those who are looking at the process of populism's deployment in particular contexts. The first group of scholars has especially relied on the definition of populism as a thin ideology provided by Cas Mudde and there is a strong focus on determining which actors embrace the populist ideology and how they behave. Most of this research focuses on RRP, with the main goal to identify the nature and characteristics of the populist phenomenon (see Mudde, 2004; Taggart, 2004; Rooduijn, 2014; Vasilopoulou et al., 2014).

A different approach to populism is rather concerned with the concrete *usages* of populism and the process of deployment and enactment of populist discourses. These approaches reject the categorization of populism as an ideology and tend to rely on the concept of discourse. In accordance with these scholars, it is worthwhile to look at the precise discursive articulations revolving around populism (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001; Laclau, 2005; Stavrakakis, 2017; Moffitt, 2018). Laclau and Mouffe (2001) provide the most fertile theoretical terrain for this type of approach with their theory of populism as a discursive logic. This work was then further elaborated on by members of the Essex School. As will be discussed in Chapter 1, there are discourse-oriented approaches that share this view of populism but not necessarily ascribe to the theoretical framework of Laclau an Mouffe. This is precisely the approach of this book which adopts the working definition proposed by the Essex School, but questions some premises and implications of the broader social theory proposed by Laclau and Mouffe. Populism is thus conceived as a type of discourse that articulates "the people" in an antagonistic relationship with "the elites" (Katsambekis, 2017; Stavrakakis, 2017).

There is a prominent line of research cross-cutting these two approaches (thin ideology and discursive) that turns to the contrasts between right-wing and left-wing (or inclusionary and exclusionary) populism. For example, the seminal article of Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2013) uncovers the significant divergences between Latin American and European populism, the latter dominated at the time of their writing by radical right-wing parties. Drawing on the three-dimensional approach of Filc (2010: 128–38) regarding exclusion/inclusion, Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser spell out several differences among populist parties in material, symbolic, and political terms. Furthermore, building upon the inclusionary/exclusionary distinction, more recent studies dig into the particularities of different populist projects, parties, or movements in their respective contexts. Ivaldi et al. (2017), for instance, conduct a critical analysis of the similarities and differences of populist parties across the West European left-right spectrum. They focus on Podemos in Spain, the Italian Lega and Movimento 5 Stelle, and the French Rassemblement National, revealing the divergent ways they have combined "core populist ideas," in their words, with the thicker ideologies of these parties (see also Ledezma, 2018;

Brubaker, 2017, 2019). This recent impulse in the populism literature toward the exploration of the diversity of populism has paid much less attention to the various forms of EU contestation delivered by radical and populist parties.

That said, there are a few works that deal with the relation between populism and Europe or the EU in one or another way. The most prominent strand of research here analyzes the extent to which Euroscepticism is related to populism as an ideology (see Gómez-Reino Cachafeiro and Plaza-Colodro, 2018; Ivaldi et al., 2017). This type of analysis is based on the seminal elaboration of Taggart (1997; Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002). Taggart's (1997) argument links EU opposition with notions attached to populist ideology: the defense of a heartland, anti-institutionalism, and anti-mainstream politics. Taggart and Szczerbiak (2002: 7) conclude that Euroscepticism can be subdivided into two modalities: "hard Euroscepticism," which is an opposition to the process of European integration as such and "soft Euroscepticism," which is an opposition to specific policy orientations. Euroscepticism is attached to populist ideology in one of these two modalities. More recently, Pirro and Taggart (2018) take up this approach to evaluate the crisis-related factors that increase the politicization of European integration and harden Euroscepticism across populist contenders (see also Kneuer, 2019). Even when these works offer interesting insights, the analysis of populist parties or populist organizations *in toto* vis-à-vis Euroscepticism limits the ability to identify new or unexpected interrelations among these two phenomena.

A much more nuanced picture emerges from the explorations of several scholars applying discourse-oriented perspectives. Stavrakakis and Katsambekis's (2014: 133) analysis of Syriza destabilizes the reified connection between populism and Euroscepticism; they claim that "mainstream research orientations in the study of European populism may have to be reviewed" when associating populism with a threat to the EU. In more recent investigations, the complexity of the interplay between populism and EU contestation has also been observed by various scholars. Moving away from the usual suspects, Manuela Caiani and Simona Guerra (2017) explore the different attitudes toward Europe and the EU, with a specific focus on the media. Additionally, della Porta et al. (2017) investigate the phenomenon of Podemos in Spain and conclude that its position regarding the EU can be best understood as critical Europeanism instead of soft or hard Euroscepticism. Following della Porta et al. (2017), Podemos criticizes the EU in similar ways that the global justice movement does, specifically regarding its struggles for a democratic and social Europe. In this vein, the discourses and positions of parties like Podemos or Syriza, which are considered populist in the literature, "cannot be perceived through the over-stretched term of Euroscepticism" (Ibid., 2017: 221; see also Roch, 2021). To briefly summarize, these latter contributions to the literature indicate the need for a careful and detailed investigation of populism and EU contestation, bringing together the diversity of the populist phenomenon and the complexity of EU contestation.

Building upon the approaches discussed above, this book intends to move beyond the current analyses on Euroscepticism and populism that mostly concentrate on how and to what extent (allegedly) populist parties exhibit various types of Euroscepticism (della Porta, 2020). To expand the existent research on this topic, this study focusses on the precise interplay between the populist discourse and EU contestation and the evaluation of the specific conditions in which the former may (not) serve as a stimulus for the latter. The lack of genuine research in this direction has been already noted by some scholars (see Rooduijn and Van Kessel, 2019). Therefore, the context-bound and historical exploration of the populism–Euroscepticism nexus that is presented in this book offers an innovative angle of study. The book revisits the often taken for granted mutual reinforcement between Euroscepticism and populism and argues that radical parties also build their Euroscepticism upon other hegemonic discourses and populism is only one possible discursive articulation to mobilize EU criticism. Most importantly, this book advances an explanation for the diverse ways to develop Eurosceptic discourses and shows the implications that this may have for the persistence of Euroscepticism in Western European democracies.

Theoretical framework: power, discourse, and Europeanization

Discourse research comprises various traditions and methodological approaches that share an emphasis on meaning-making activities. In discourse research, these meaning-making activities are crucial for capturing and understanding political and social processes. The central concept of discourse, however, has become difficult to grasp due to its multiple usages and definitions. In some instances, discourse is used as an abstract term referring to the whole field of semiosis. For instance, Laclau and Mouffe apply the term discourse as the structured totality of signifying practices (2001: 105). Discourse can also be used to refer to patterns of language structuration confined to specific social domains (e.g., medical discourse, political discourse, or scientific discourse). Finally, a more concrete use of the term discourse defines it as the countable semiotic formation in a given moment and by a particular actor (one discourse of one actor). This study conceives discourse as the historical, contingent, and contested social ways to semiotically construct certain objects, subjects, or social practices in a specific period (Foucault, 1972: 33; Hall, 1997: 6; Wodak, 2001: 66; Van Leeuwen, 2008: 6; Keller, 2012: 58). Therefore, discourse is not so much about language per se—even though language is involved in discourse, and discourse can be reconstructed through the analysis of language use—but about the social ways to articulate language, objects, and fields of practice in a given historical period. In the words of Michel Foucault, the study of discourse is ultimately concerned with "the interplay of the rules that make possible the appearance of objects during a given period of time" (1972: 33).

There are two traditions within discourse research that are especially relevant for the present study due to their emphasis on contingency and the interplay between power and knowledge: Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory[3] and Foucauldian-inspired approaches to discourse. Laclau and Mouffe's discourse theory dominates discourse-oriented analyses of populism (Laclau, 2005; Stavrakakis and Katsambekis, 2014; Kioupkiolis and Seona Pérez, 2019). By contrast, Foucauldian-inspired approaches to discourse are more disseminated across various fields such as education studies (Ailwood and Lingard, 2001; Baxter et al., 2002) or legal studies (Tadros, 1998). In addition, the Foucauldian approach to discourse is also actively incorporated into European studies (Diez, 1999, 2001; Schmidt, 2008, 2017; Kauppi, 2018) and international relations (Milliken, 1999; Neal, 2009; Epstein, 2010). These two traditions have provided a significant boost to discourse research, and they converge in several respects. Fundamentally, they share the idea that every political or social manifestation is meaning-mediated, which has epistemological implications for scientific practice. In social sciences, it results in a more cautious approach when predefining fixed objects or subjects within an analytical endeavor.

Following Foucault (1972: 55), "discourse is not the majestically unfolding manifestation of a thinking, knowing, speaking subject since the latter is also constituted through discourse. As a consequence, discourse analysis is also an analysis of the identity-formation of political actors. Discourse-oriented scholars account for patterns of structuration of discourses, whereby some discourses are sedimented, reproduced, or even become hegemonic and relatively stable while others are marginal and tend to disappear. In Foucault's terms, this *political economy* of discourses[4] is related to broader social, political, and economic patterns of structuration. This discursive structuration has been analyzed as different orders of discourse in the case of Fairclough (2003) and Fairclough and Fairclough (2012), hegemonic and counter-hegemonic discourses in Laclau and Mouffe (2001), and symbolic orders in Keller (2013, 2018). Therefore, we find that the meaning-making activities of social actors are also constrained by the contexts in which they take place. The famous sentence by Roland Barthes (1982) that states that people are both "masters and slaves of language" clearly illustrates the co-constitutive dynamic of the structural and agential dimensions of discourse.

Notwithstanding the commonalities within discourse research, there are some disagreements between the above two traditions, especially regarding the ontological foundations of the social world and the methodological implications derived from them. Laclau and Mouffe (2001) develop a theory of discourse in which there is no ontological distinction between discursive and non-discursive elements. In their view, discourse corresponds to "structured totalities articulating linguistic and non-linguistic elements" (Laclau, 2005: 13), and here, there is no exteriority predefining such discursive structuration of social reality. Therefore, the analytical categories designed to explain and interpret general dynamics like hegemony or sedimentation cannot refer to

external referents in history or non-semiotic ways of structuring.[5] By contrast, Foucauldian-inspired approaches to discourse generally highlight the need for transdisciplinary collaboration to benefit from the social or political theories accounting for non-discursive processes (Wodak, 2001; Fairclough, 2003; Sum and Jessop, 2013; Keller, 2013, 2018). The latter approaches refer to an ontological division, one that can clearly be found in Fairclough (2003) between discursive and non-discursive practices that allow one to analytically explore the co-constitution of discourse together with other social practices or processes. Foucault refers to that exteriority of discourse in *The Archeology of Knowledge* as a "historical a priori" (1972: 127). This study adopts a Foucauldian ontological view of discourse and social relations. At the same time, however, it is also heavily influenced by the analysis of populism developed by Laclau and Mouffe and the Essex School. In the following section, the crucial theoretical notions to articulate a framework for the analysis of populism and EU contestation in Western Europe are presented.

The Europeanization dispositif

This study conceives discourse as a bridge-concept that links the production of semiotic ensembles with social fields and social practice. Here, discourse primarily refers to the formation, reproduction, and transformation of semiotic ensembles that constitute specific objects, subjects, or topics of practice. For instance, the specific and variable ways of talking about and generate patterns of behavior in the relation between animals and human beings. Animals can be represented as *sentient beings* or as *passive recipients* of human actions. These forms of representation are recognizable and endowed with certain patterns, demarcated through regularities and discontinuities in specific contexts and historical periods. The central argument of interpretivist and post-structuralist[6] approaches to discourse is that such semiotic elaborations of actors also entail social effects, what has been called power through discourse (Carstensen and Schmidt, 2016: 323; see also Holzscheiter, 2010: 3). Therefore, there are not only constrictions in the various ways to articulate discourse but, the other way around, there are also effects of these discursive articulations on the social structure. This is why discourse is defined as a bridge-concept between the semiotic world and social fields of practice. In this vein, Hall (1997) defines discourse as "a cluster (or formation) of ideas, images and practices, which provide ways of talking about, forms of knowledge and conduct associated with, a particular topic, social activity or institutional site in society" (p. 6).

Regarding the limitations or conditions defining the discursive production, there are symbolic orders and hegemonic relations restricting the field of possibilities of discursive practices (Fairclough, 1993: 137). Therefore, there are two dimensions that should be analyzed in the study of the discursive articulations between populism and EU contestation. First, the ability of political parties to combine elements pertaining to the populist discourse with representations

of Europe and the EU. This partially explains how EU contestation and populism can be related. However, the second dimension is also crucial and refers to the context in which such articulations are made. What are the symbolic elements at disposal to be used (symbolic orders)? And what are the incentives and constraints of radical parties to mobilize such discursive articulations? To explore the context of discourse, this study analyzes the relation between the EU and the domestic level that may have produced distinct processes of Europeanization or, how this book refers to, Europeanization dispositifs. A dispositif is an arrangement that operates strategically to resolve a particular social problem, and which consistently impacts on the social and discursive practices of the actors (Raffnsøe et al., 2014: 4; Diaz-Bone and Hartz, 2017: 9). In the words of Foucault (1977), the dispositif refers to a "thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions—in short, the said as much as the unsaid" (p. 194).

Decoupling its main elements, the dispositif can be observed in its symbolic dimension by analyzing the specific symbolic orders that govern a regime of practices. Furthermore, the dispositif can also be analyzed looking into several social practices, artifacts, laws, or regulatory instruments that operate in interaction with such symbolic orders. As Foucault explains, the symbolic order or "discursive apparatus" is only one element of the dispositif which is conceived as a much broader and heterogeneous ensemble (1977: 197). In sum, the dispositif is a conceptual device used to explore how the structures of power and knowledge influence specific social actors in concrete sites. Therefore, the Europeanization dispositifs not only transfer specific policy rules or regulations to domestic actors but also shape the possibilities to construct, reproduce, or contest discourses and representations about Europe and the EU (Saurugger and Radaelli, 2008: 213). This latter form of Europeanization has been named by Radaelli (2003: 17–8) as "horizontal Europeanization," in contrast to "vertical Europeanization," which is based on mechanisms of top-down adaptational pressure. In this work, the analysis of the historical formation of dispositifs of Europeanization is the way to access the contextual dimension of the discursive practices of RRP and RLP.

Focus and research questions

Building upon this theoretical approach, the EU is analyzed as a political and economic institutional complex but also as a symbolic order. The symbolic orders of Europe and the EU in Western Europe have been systematically contested during the last few decades. The EU has been in a particularly fragile state after the UK's decision to leave (Brexit) in June 2016 and the strengthening of Eurosceptic parties across Europe. Thus, the rise and consolidation of radical parties at the national level are crucial for understanding the ongoing discursive struggles about Europe and the EU. In the words of

Campbell (1993: 7), these actors are "key story tellers" in the transnational discussion, with possibilities for reshaping the political debate around the EU.

This book delineates the discursive practices of these prominent actors about Europe and the EU, by focusing on Podemos in Spain and the AfD in Germany. The discursive practices of these parties need to be studied in their respective contexts—as historical and contingent practices related to Europeanization dispositifs in Spain (southern Europe) and Germany (northern Europe). This is potentially fertile ground for inquiry with important implications on at least three different levels. First, this study offers new insights to revise and refine the diversity and complexity of the phenomenon of populism, especially concerning populism and EU contestation. Second, this analysis entails a detailed delineation of representations and problematizations about Europe and the EU, looking into how specific discursive articulations emerge, cement, and challenge hegemonic discourses in a given context. Hence, the findings of this study also speak to the current research on Euroscepticism and Europeanization and the possible paths for development and refinement in these areas of study. Third, this research may also animate the debate within discourse research in two respects: on the one hand, this research takes up and elaborates on the ontological debates regarding the role of discourse, its boundaries, and its integration in social complexity; on the other hand, it contributes to expanding the fields for the application of Foucauldian-inspired approaches to discourse and the study of dispositifs. Taken all together, it is now possible to formulate an initial research question in a precise and theory-informed way:

How do RRP and RLP articulate populist discourses with EU contestation?

This overarching research question can then be divided into four sub-questions:

SQ1. *How are the representations of the parties [Podemos and the AfD] about Europe and the EU articulated, and how are they related to other discourses and representations?*

SQ2. *How do the Europeanization dispositifs in Germany and Spain affect the discursive articulations of these two parties?*

SQ3. *How do the discursive articulations of these parties affect the respective symbolic orders and Europeanization dispositifs?*

SQ4. *How do populist discourses in their rightist and leftist versions accommodate and are interrelated with the representations of Europe and the EU?*

Research design and analytical strategy

This study focuses on two main parties, Podemos in Spain and the AfD in Germany, as exponents of RRP and RLP, respectively. However, it is important to note that the logic of comparison within interpretivist research is different from that operating within a positivist framework of analysis. The first difference is that the comparison is not carried out between closed cases but between open processes (see Yanow, 2014; Bevir and Rhodes, 2015). The cases are not

seen as closed wholes, but rather, they are conceived as open interpretations, defined in relation to research problems that are presented for study. In this research, the parties analyzed are conceived as situated actors and interpreters of a series of "intersubjective facts" (Bevir and Rhodes, 2015: 11; Keller, 2018) and events related to the problem of study. The analytical categories used in this analysis are heuristic devices used to capture and organize the bundle of dispersed intersubjective facts, events, and discursive practices.

Within an interpretivist framework, the relevance and suitability of this comparison can be specified at three levels. First, it allows us to explore such interpretations and discursive struggles in two diverging sites within the EU: Germany as a northern European country, and Spain as a southern European member state (Hall, 2017; Iversen et al., 2016). These two sites are particularly divergent in regard to the euro crisis and the Europeanization processes. Whereas Germany is one of the EU's key creditor countries and part of those backing bailout packages and austerity measures, Spain is a debtor country whose financial system had to be rescued in 2011. The Europeanization dispositifs analyzed in this work are expected to show divergences in this respect and will also be used to illuminate the variegated processes of Europeanization and interaction with the political actors. Hence, at the contextual level, this comparison offers the added value of illuminating different Europeanization processes in northern and southern Europe.

Second, the added value of this comparison is also to connect these singular historical processes of Europeanization with the parallel emergence of populism in Spain and Germany: the rise of a populist contender in the aftermath of the euro crisis. Podemos and the AfD are relatively young political parties, respectively, founded in 2014 and 2013, as a response to the political turmoil in European politics. Both challenger parties emerged offering a populist interpretation of the euro crisis, although they diverge in many other aspects and sub-dimensions of populism. The parallel between the two parties is not made in either normative or ideological terms but only in terms of the discursive response to the political turmoil after the crisis in Europe. Third, as noted in the previous section, the comparative and contextual exploration of Podemos and the AfD is especially suited to delineate the modes of EU contestation exhibited by radical parties. This exploration allows us to compare the representations, argumentations, and problematizations mobilized in regard to Europe and the EU. Overall, the primary aim of this comparison is to capture the emergence of this parallel phenomenon from a discourse-oriented angle, connecting the similarities and differences with the processes of Europeanization in northern and southern Europe.

This research design has some limitations related to the geographical scope, the case selection, and the very nature of discourse research. First, the design is restricted to Western countries. To completely capture the current challenges and political conflicts shaking the EU, it would also be necessary to look at the tense relationships with certain Eastern member states. For instance, tensions between Poland or Hungary and the EU exemplify the importance

of EU contestation in Eastern European countries. Second, the case selection is guided by the contrasts between RRP and RLP. However, there are still parties that embrace the populist discourse but fall outside the left-right spectrum. The clearest example is the Movimento 5 Stelle, which has been proven to be difficult to classify within the left-right spectrum (Mosca, 2014). Thus, the findings of this study are assumed to be a relevant but incomplete picture of the forms to articulate populism and EU contestation by European parties. Third, this study concentrates only on two cases, the Spanish Podemos and the German AfD. The most obvious limitation has to do with the ability to generalize about all radical parties with populist discourses in Western Europe from these two cases. It is conceivable that there are radical parties in other national contexts that exhibit different discursive articulations in comparison to Podemos and the AfD.

This comparative study, indeed, privileges qualitative, detailed, and discourse-oriented research over research designs oriented toward finding general patterns of causation to produce generalizations about a population of cases. The findings of this study can be especially relevant to map patterns of reaction of RLP in southern Europe and RRP in Norther Europe. However, the contingent generalizations that can be drawn about right and left populism must always be complemented by the analysis of the contexts. Notwithstanding this contextual limitation, the transferability of the findings of this study must be also evaluated in theoretical terms: although there can be empirical divergences depending on the context, we can expect that the key mechanisms identified in relation to Europeanization and the reaction of these parties are transferable to understand and analyze similar cases in southern and northern Europe. The detailed and historical study of the contexts of "two critical cases" allows this research to identify fundamental interrelations to understand and explain the relation between populism and EU contestation. These interrelations can be useful to map and anticipate the populism–Euroscepticism nexus in other cases in Western Europe.

Methods and analytical strategy

The analysis is divided into three phases. The first phase is devoted to the reconstruction and analysis of the Europeanization dispositifs in Germany and Spain. This part of the analysis entails the study of the cases using secondary data, primary textual data, and specialized literature. The main goal here is to capture the Europeanization processes in Spain and Germany between 1992 and 2011 and to identify the main discursive practices in relation to Europe and the EU. All the ratification debate documents on the EU treaties are compiled: the Maastricht Treaty (1992), the Amsterdam Treaty (1998), the Nice Treaty (2001), the Constitutional Treaty (2005), and the Lisbon Treaty (2008). To capture the representations, problematizations, and debates during the euro crisis, two key debates in Germany and Spain are also collected and explored. In Germany, the debate over the first bailout of Greece in 2010 in

the German Bundestag and in Spain, the debate over the reform of Article 135 in 2011, which was one of the conditional measures imposed on the country to receive financial support. These textual data are combined with the "thick description" of the cases in relation to Europeanization in Spain and Germany. In the second phase, the analysis turns to the populist actors radical parties—Podemos and the AfD—and their discursive practices. To analyze the discursive practices of Podemos and the AfD, speeches and party manifestos from 2013 to 2022 are collected and analyzed. Finally, in the third phase, the interrelations and power effects operating between these populist actors parties and the Europeanization dispositifs are reconstructed.[7]

To develop the central part of the analysis—the textual-oriented exploration of discourses—this work borrows especially from the tradition of critical discourse studies (CDS). CDS is an umbrella term referred to research concerned with discourse, context, and power (see Van Dijk, 2015: 466; Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012: 78). This study adopts a pluralist position regarding the analytical framework, but it also emphasizes the importance of establishing clear ontological and epistemological principles that must be coherent with the empirical analysis. This research draws mainly on the work of Foucault (1972, 1977, 2003), Keller (2013, 2018), Van Leeuwen (2008), and Wodak (2001, 2015) to organize the sequential analysis of text around several discursive analytical categories. To summarize, the three main categories are representation, argumentative scheme—or *topoi*—and problematization. To explore the discursive articulations of Podemos and the AfD, the sequential analysis is combined with quantitative techniques inspired by corpus linguistic (CL). This approach is adopted for two closely related reasons: the requirement for fine-grained analysis—capturing the precise interrelations between populism and EU contestation—and the larger size of the corpus. There are different techniques within CL, but all are computer-mediated techniques used to characterize, classify, and analyze large quantities of textual data. This work uses the WordSmith 7.1 software (Scott, 2016) to compute the data and the analysis focuses on frequencies and collocations.

Structure of the book

This monograph is divided into three main parts. The first part establishes the approach of the study, the research design, and the theoretical framework. The second part consists of the application of the analytical framework to the study of the two cases in their respective contexts: Podemos in Spain and the AfD in Germany. The third part compares the cases and draws conclusions to answer the overriding research question, as well as the specific sub-questions, as laid out above.

More specifically, the remainder of this book is organized as follows. Chapter 1 ("The study of populism and EU contestation") is mainly devoted to discussing the different strands of research on the phenomenon of populism and EU contestation. In the second part of the chapter, the central notions of

the discursive approach to populism and its implications are presented and discussed. Finally, the chapter seeks to identify points of convergence between European studies and discourse-oriented approaches to populism and EU contestation. Hence, this chapter serves to investigate the theoretical and conceptual tools within populism and European studies, which can be useful to form a comprehensive theoretical framework for the study of populism and Euroscepticism. Chapter 2 concentrates on how the conclusions drawn from the exploration of populism and European studies can fit together to build a comprehensive theoretical framework for the study of the populism–Euroscepticism nexus.

The aim of Chapter 3 is, first, to describe the political context in which Europeanization processes took place in Spain. The central part of the textual analysis explores the hegemonic representations and problematizations that circulated in the Spanish political sphere, as well as the contesting discursive practices developed historically by the political actors. In Chapter 4, the focus turns to the discourse of the party of Podemos and the interplay between populism and Euroscepticism therein. Chapters 5 and 6 are analogous to the previous two chapters but applied to the Europeanization dispositifs in Germany and the political party AfD. The final chapter, Chapter 7, presents an aggregation of all the data used to compare the results of the two cases in relation to the Europeanization dispositifs and the different discursive practices of Podemos and the AfD. This chapter draws upon the findings of this study to answer the central questions of this book and addresses the significance of the conclusions for the field of populism, European studies, and discourse research.

Notes

1 Inclusionary versus exclusionary populism does not correspond precisely to right-wing and left-wing parties, although the former terms significantly overlap with the latter. There may be left-wing parties (in relation to socioeconomic policy) which do not incorporate marginal or excluded sectors of the population into the "legitimate people" in an active way (inclusionary parties). The Italian party Movimento 5 Stelle and sectors of the German-left Die Linke are two possible examples of this. The case of the Movimento 5 Stelle is a paradigmatic example, as the left-right spectrum is almost useless to explain the general orientation of this party (see, for instance, the analysis of Mosca, 2014). However, this is not the case for most parties identified as populist.

2 See the section below on case selection and methodology for a more detailed justification of how these two cases illuminate the distinct discursive articulations of RLP and RRP and how they can serve as a basis for ample argumentations about these parties in Western Europe.

3 This tradition is also referred to as political discourse theory or post-structuralist discourse analysis (PDA).

4 The complete sentence appears in *The History of Sexuality. Volume I*: "[…] we must define the strategies of power that are immanent in this will to knowledge. As far as

sexuality is concerned, we shall attempt to constitute the 'political economy' of a will to knowledge" (Foucault, 1978: 73).

5 Laclau and Mouffe's discourse analysis and the Essex School refer to occurrences such as crises, political events, and economic indicators, but they are included in the analysis inasmuch as they take a semiotic form.

6 This book does not conceive the interpretivist and post-structuralist traditions as antithetical, although it is assumed that there are several differences. The common base of these two traditions of thought is the post-foundational premise, by which the social world is not an aggregation of self-defined ambits of social life or foundations. On the contrary, such foundations are defined by their political character, and therefore, defined by their social contingency.

7 The entire data set is detailed in Appendix B.

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1 The study of populism and EU contestation

Introduction

Defining populism as a contested concept is commonplace in the literature. The slippery nature of the concept of populism is not only due to its contested meaning but also to its political and normative baggage. It is often used as a denigrating label in contemporary politics, and it is rare to see political actors proclaiming themselves as populists (Taguieff, 1997; Comaroff, 2011; D'Eramo, 2013; Stavrakakis, 2017a). This special condition of populism tends to situate the normative dimension of the concept at the forefront, as a way to attribute evil or good qualities—populist or anti-populist characteristics, respectively—to particular actors or events. This also permeates academic discussions and turns them into agitated political debates and one-sided allegations. While this is not necessarily negative, it presents specific challenges to differentiate the moralistic aspects of the debate from the analytical attempts to capture, describe, understand, or explain social and political phenomena associated with populism. Notwithstanding these challenges, populism studies consolidate as a growing field within political science, formed by diverse approaches and theoretical backgrounds looking at different aspects of the phenomenon. Over the last two decades, there has been an unprecedented upsurge in studies on populist discourses (Laclau, 2005; Wodak, 2015, Aslanidis, 2017; Katsambekis, 2022; Roch, 2021; 2022), populist parties (Sikk, 2009; Kriesi, 2014; Mudde, 2014; Taggart and Pirro, 2021), populist movements (Jansen, 2011; Roberts, 2015), and populist attitudes (Akkerman et al., 2014; Van Hauwaert and Van Kessel, 2017; Hawkins and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2020). In part, this expansion of populism studies is connected to the rise of new challenging actors in European party systems and, more specifically, radical right parties (RRP), exhibiting populist discourses.[1]

In several European Union (EU) countries, such as France, the Netherlands, Austria, Italy, Hungary, and Poland, RRP are the first or second political force. On the opposite side of the political spectrum, radical left parties (RLP) with populist discourses have also gained momentum in France with Le France Insoumise, in Spain with Podemos, and in Greece with Syriza, although these parties are currently in a period of decline in Greece and Spain. Therefore,

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there is a common pattern in nearly all EU member states: the emergence of at least one challenging political actor claiming to represent the people against certain elites (Mudde, 2017; Stavrakakis, 2017b). Yet, beyond the common populist discourses shown by these parties, they are widely diverse in regard to other aspects. For instance, in the articulation of the populist discourse by these parties, the EU emerges as a contested political project, but the diagnosis of its main problems and the prognosis for political action and political reform are highly diverse. Despite this diversity, all these parties question the viability or legitimacy of the EU in one or several aspects, and they focus on the tensions among some member states.

The main objective of this chapter is to identify points of convergence between EU studies and populism studies and theoretical and conceptual tools, which can be useful to form a comprehensive theoretical framework for the study of populism and EU contestation. First, the chapter addresses and discusses the main perspectives to the study of populism in political science—the policy approach, the mobilization approach, and the ideational approach. The argument presented in this chapter contends that the discursive approach is the most promising mode of analysis of populist phenomena. However, the implications of approaching populism as a type of political discourse are not minor aspects of a research agenda on populism but entail crucial ontological and epistemological questions. Second, this chapter delineates the different traditions and approaches to European integration, giving special attention to constructivist and ideational perspectives. I discuss the interrelations between the domestic level and the EU level, as well as the increasing importance of the domestic public sphere and the political sphere found in analytical approaches to the EU. The central part of the chapter is devoted to the notion of Europeanization, which is a key concept within this book's theoretical framework. This notion is introduced as the linking concept that allows one to analyze the contextual features of populism–Euroscepticism nexus.

The theoretical diversity in the field of populism studies

The Russian populists of the 1860s–1870s, the Narodniks, and the populist party in the United States (US) during the 1890s, the Populist Party (or the People's Party), inspired the first reflections on the meaning of populism and the initial discussions in the field of political science. Initially, the term populism functioned as an identity claimed by these two movements—indeed, it was written into the very name of the US party. In a second phase, the term became a descriptive and analytical category in the field of political analysis. The early works on populism focused precisely on the American and Russian experiences: on the one hand, there were scholars interested in the US' agrarian populism (Hofstadter 1955: 71; Pollack, 1962); and on the other, there were analysts concerned with the Russian Narodniks (Venturi, 1960; Walicki, 1969). It was not until 1969, with the volume edited by Ionescu and Gellner with the title *Populism: Its Meanings and National Characteristics*, that social scientists

systematized their analyses and established a research focus on populism. Even in these early explorations, it is easy to find traces of what today has become the most prevalent, solid, and fruitful tradition of research on populism: the one concerned with its ideational or discursive features. The current debates and research on populist ideas or discourse are animated by three main ways to define the concept of populism and study its manifestations: the ideological, the communicational, and the discursive. In the current scholarship, most authors refer to the ideational approach as the one ascribed to the original definition of Cas Mudde (2004) of populism as a thin ideology. Discourse-oriented scholars, and frequently scholars concerned with communication and performance, do not identify with the label "ideational" since they reject the definition of Mudde and follow more closely the approach to populism of Ernesto Laclau (2005) and Chantal Mouffe (2001). Additionally, there are other minor approaches that define populism as a form of policy orientation, mobilization, or strategy.

The policy approach focuses mainly on Latin American political systems. It analyzes macroeconomic policy trends as a result of particular types of populist political behavior. Essentially, the approach and analytical work of these scholars serve to establish connections between the characteristics of Latin American countries—the profiles of political leaders, populist politics, social conflicts—and the consistent inability to stabilize national economies. The argument asserts that social conflict and lack of responsibility lead politicians to apply so-called "populist policies." This derives from what Sachs (1989: 2) calls a "continuing inability to moderate social conflict" of such governments. In this same line, Dornbusch and Edwards (1990) evaluate the macroeconomic programs of the Allende's Unidad Popular in Chile and Alan García in Peru to demonstrate how populist features preclude an acceptable economic performance. This definition of populism as a type of macroeconomic policy can still be found in more recent contributions to the literature, as well. For example, Acemoglu et al. (2013: 772) consider populism as "the implementation of policies receiving support from a significant fraction of the population, but ultimately hurting the economic interests of this majority." Yet, how these macroeconomic policies are connected to populism remains unclear, beyond the idea of a compromise of political leaders and parties with the social majorities of the country, which, in turn, sympathize with such policies. This definition of populism offers scarce light in terms of the political characteristics of populism due to its reduction to some type of policy with popular support. It can also lead to the problematic conclusion that a country's bad economic performance is causally linked to the unwise preferences of the majority of the people.

Other scholars explore the organizational and mobilization aspects of populism, describing the latter as a specific type of political organization or mobilization (Weyland, 2001; Jansen, 2011; Roberts, 2015). This approach to populism is also mainly focused on Latin American countries. These scholars reject the identification of populism with a specific set of policies,

and instead, argue that the policy approach varies according to contextual, country-specific, and ideological determinations. They argue that the specific way in which populism is politically organized is the central feature that must be considered for providing a definition of the phenomenon. In Weyland's (2001; see also 2021) understanding, populism is "a political strategy through which a personalistic leader seeks or exercises government power based on direct, unmediated, uninstitutionalized support from large numbers of mostly unorganized followers" (p. 14). Jansen and Roberts also distinguish populism from other forms of political organization, but these two scholars focus on the forms of mobilization based on party organizations or movements. In a ground-breaking article, Jansen (2011) distinguishes between populist mobilization and populist rhetoric. He states that populist mobilization is defined as the combination of populist rhetoric with popular mobilization in specific historical moments. In the words of Jansen (2011), populist mobilization is "any sustained, large-scale political project that mobilizes ordinarily marginalized social sectors into publicly visible and contentious political action, while articulating an anti-elite, nationalist rhetoric that valorizes ordinary people" (p. 82). In the same vein, Roberts (2015: 150–6) identifies two distinct types of populist mobilization—plebiscitary and participatory—and applies this model to Latin American populist parties.

Certainly, the model of Jansen and Roberts is well suited to explain and analyze the turbulent and contentious populist episodes that occurred in Latin American during the 1990s and the first decade of the twenty-first century, all of which were preceded and fueled by strong and powerful mobilizations—the emergence of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, Evo Morales in Bolivia, and Rafael Correa in Ecuador or even Juan Perón in Argentina during the 1940–1950s. This model can also be applied to some cases in southern European countries as well, where processes of populist mobilization took place during the euro crisis and its resulting political consequences. Yet, it is not clear whether this model is suited to explain the ways in which populist discourse operates in more subtle ways, affecting the public but without manifest mobilizations. The prominence and persistence of populist discourses and actors without mobilizations cast some doubt on the exhaustiveness of this definition of populism. Nevertheless, this approach still offers some fruitful empirical avenues to be explored within populism research. To summarize, the mobilization approach, although signaling interesting empirical dimensions, fails to identify the common features of populist manifestations, preventing the concept to travel well to cases in which there is no apparent social mobilization.

As Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2017) argue, ideational or discursive approaches are better equipped to identify such common features and allow for an inductive approach to populism within a theory-informed comparative framework. In an early elaboration, Canovan (1981: 294) already observed that "all forms of populism without exception involve some kind of exaltation of and appeal to 'the people' and all are in one sense or another antielitist." In these terms, an ideational or discursive approach to populism permits us to

examine the empirical dimensions of the different types of organizations and mobilizations, as well as the special affinities between populist actors and certain policies. Finally, the ideational or discursive approach to populism does not undermine the discriminatory ability of the concept. On the contrary, several authors propose the criteria of both degree or centrality of populist appeal in order to distinguish among populist and non-populist movements or more or less populist actors, ideologies, and discourses (Aslanidis, 2017: 1–3). There seems to be general agreement about the increasing importance of the ideational and discursive approaches within populism research (Van Kessel, 2014; Katsambekis, 2017, 2022; Hawkins and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017; Mudde, 2017; Stavrakakis, 2017b; Roch, 2021, 2022). Scholars who adhere to this perspective are empirical and comparative oriented, conceiving of minimal definitions and empirical analyses as mutually reinforcing and complementary. However, there are at least three varieties of populism research on discourse and ideas with no minor differences: (1) thin ideology, (2) political style, (3) and discourse-oriented varieties.

Thin-ideology variety

The dominant definition of populism, and probably the most prolific in empirical research, was first introduced by Cas Mudde (2004) and later elaborated on in Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser (2013) and Mudde (2017). This variety conceives of populism as a thin-centered ideology "that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogenous and antagonistic groups, "the pure people" versus "the corrupt elite," and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people" (Mudde 2004: 543). Building on this definition, there are empirical analyses that focus on populism and nativism (Taggart, 2004; Mudde, 2004), comparative analyses of right-wing and left-wing populist parties (March, 2017), and studies to contrast Latin American and European political parties (Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013). The conceptualization of Mudde and his colleagues was initially inspired by the seminal article by Michael Freeden titled "Is Nationalism a Distinct Ideology" (1998). Following Freeden (1998: 750), thin ideologies "exhibit a thin-centered morphology, with a restricted core attached to a narrower range of political concepts […] it severs itself from wider ideational concepts." Hence, thin ideologies are not comprehensive and refined systems of ideas, definitions, and evaluations of the most important aspects of a polity; rather, they are vague definitions of restricted ideas that do not cover the wide range of social and politically relevant issues.

As Mudde (2004) explains, the thin ideology of populism can be combined with full or thick ideologies, like socialism or liberalism, which do offer a complete interpretation and definition of broader political concepts. Even though populism is characterized by this "restricted core," it does provide a particular worldview, in the words of Mudde, and in this sense, can be compared with its opposites—pluralism and elitism (Mudde, 2004: 543–4). In fact, this is

the most controversial aspect of this definition: the unclear extent to which this set of ideas is stabilized, sedimented, and diffused in order to promote a certain worldview; in other words, the distance and relationship between an ideology and its thinness. Some critiques have picked on this weak point of the ideological variety, arguing against the adequacy of the notion "ideology" to illuminate the dynamics and manifestations of populism (see Laclau, 2005; Aslanidis, 2016). This is resumed below when discussing discourse-oriented definitions of populism.

Political style and communication variety

There is another approach to the study of populism, which defines the latter as a political communication style (Moffitt and Tormey, 2014; Moffitt, 2016, 2017; see also Jagers and Walgrave, 2007; Aalberg et al., 2017; Kefford et al., 2021). The distinctive feature of this variety is the emphasis on the performative acts of populist actors, such as bad manners, provocative speech, and the "performance of crisis, breakdown or threat" (Moffitt, 2016: 45). The book *Populist Political Communication in Europe* (2017) brings together studies on populist discourse and populist actors in Europe that focus on communication styles and the role of the media. Notwithstanding this emphasis on performative acts, these scholars explicitly assume discourse as the crucial notion that distinguishes populism from other types of communicative styles. As Walgrave (2007) observes, "the most important element of a political style is the content of the discourse […]. Consequently, it is reference to the people that most fundamentally distinguishes populism from other types of discourse" (p. 323). Furthermore, as Moffitt discusses (2018: 4), the stylistic and discursive approaches share a common view of populism "as something that is done" in opposition to the ideological variety. This understanding of populism by Moffitt (2016, 2017) and Moffitt and Tormey (2014) also includes a constructivist epistemology since it considers subjectivities and identities not as given but at play in symbolic and social interactions. In the latter's words,

> [p]erformance within a political style is not merely a one-sided relationship in which a politician "performs" for a passive audience, but rather a feedback loop whereby the performance can actually change or create the audience's subjectivity, and this in turn can change the context and efficacy of the performance.
>
> (Moffitt and Tormey, 2014: 389)

This conception of performance resembles the approach to discourse as constitutive of social reality defended by several other scholars, as well: from Laclau (2005: 157–60), who considers the symbolic as the constitutive field of the political, to Foucauldian understandings of discourse (Foucault, 1978: 15–35) to critical discourse studies (Wodak, 2015: 216–8).

The discourse-oriented approach to populism

The discourse-oriented variety of populism studies is closely related to the work of the political theorists Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (2001) and Laclau (2005), as well as further elaborations by the Essex School.[2] This theoretical perspective considers discourse as the cornerstone with which to investigate populism. In Laclau and Mouffe (2001), and especially in Laclau (2005), the populist logic is the quintessential form to construct the political. In the terms of Laclau, the populist logic manifests itself through a discourse that activates the people, functioning as an empty signifier, against the elites (see Laclau, 2005: 69–72). In a more recent contribution, Stavrakakis (2017b) provides a working definition of populism as a "specific type of discourse which claims to express popular interests and to represent associated identities and demands (the "will of the people") against an "establishment" or elite, which is seen as undermining them and forestalling their satisfaction" (p. 5). There are several studies that explore populist manifestations following this understanding. For instance, both Groppo (2009) and Barros (2006) focus on the phenomena of *Vargism* in Brazil and *Peronism* in Argentina using the lens of the Essex School approach to discourse. The literature on Western European populism is also strongly influenced by Laclau and Mouffe's (2001) theory of discourse. For instance, in works by Katsambekis (2017) and Stavrakakis and Katsambekis (2014), the authors concentrate on the populist discourse and the emergence of Syriza in Greece. These scholars use various analytical categories of discourse like nodal points, empty signifiers, and dislocation events. More recently, Kioupkiolis and Seoane Pérez (2019) focus on the populist discourse of Podemos in Spain and this political party's evolution (see also Salgado and Stavrakakis, 2019; Roch, 2021, 2022), and De Cleen and Stavrakakis (2017) explore the articulations between nationalism and populism in several cases.

This research current has opened up the fertile methodological terrain of discourse analysis to explore populism. The minimal definition of populism (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001; Laclau, 2005) has also facilitated the further empirical exploration and comparison in populism studies. Moreover, Laclau, Mouffe, and the Essex School have been able to successfully offer analytical categories to explain the counter-hegemonic potential of some populist discourses in relation to certain crises of representation. This area of research has animated the debate on democracy and populism and its various ramifications (see Katsambekis, 2017, 2022; Stavrakakis, 2017a; De Cleen and Glynos, 2021). Besides Laclau and Mouffe's approach, there are other traditions of discourse research interested in the phenomenon of populism, but they rely on different research methodologies and their own conceptions of discourse (see Schmidt, 2022). For instance, Ruth Wodak's (2015) study on right-wing populism uses "discourse historical analysis" to explore the case of Austria. Aslanidis (2017) also takes up the notion of populism as a specific

type of political discourse and attempts to determine its impact on grassroots mobilization during the Great Recession through quantitative semantic text analysis. Additionally, slightly earlier, Aslanidis (2016) convincingly noted that to study populism and related phenomena from a discursive perspective implies the need to discuss and specify the particular conception of "discourse" that is used. As he observes,

> [s]ubscribing to a discursive populism does not entail a wholesale commitment to the Laclauian theoretical edifice or the methodology of the Essex School of discourse analysis, which is but one school of thought among numerous other perspectives on analyzing political discourse. On the contrary, for all its merits, Laclau's approach exhibits several limitations that inhibit its expansion outside post-structuralist circles.
>
> (p. 10)

This book adopts a discourse-oriented approach to populism and assumes the working definition proposed by the Essex School scholars. Populism is thus conceived as a type of discourse that articulates "the people" in an antagonistic relationship with "the elites" (Katsambekis, 2017; Stavrakakis, 2017b). The study of populism from a discursive angle first requires a discussion of what we mean by "discourse," and the implications of choosing discourse over other terms like ideology, set of ideas, or worldview. In the populism literature, the term discourse has occasionally been used as a synonym for thin ideology or worldview. For instance, Hawkins and Rovira Kaltwasser (2017) consider the distinction of discourse from other terms as something secondary:

> Among those who adhere to the ideational approach, there is some debate about what exactly populism is a type of: a discourse, a thin-centered ideology, or something else. Given that we see these differences as minor, we use the terms "discourse," "ideology," "outlook," and "worldview" somewhat interchangeably.
>
> (p. 514)

By contrast, this book contends that the diversity within approaches to populism cannot be reduced to a simple choice among equivalent possibilities—in other words, to a question of terminological and methodological eclecticism. The rich theoretical and empirical traditions linked to the main varieties of populism studies entail epistemological, methodological, and even political implications that cannot be ignored. For the sake of clarity, these underlying epistemological questions should be brought to the fore and discussed. In accordance with this, the next section elaborates on two fundamental considerations that underpin the approach used in this book: one concerning the basic ways of functioning of populism and its relations with the concept of ideology and discourse, and the second pinpointing the boundaries of this discourse and its relationship with other discourses and fields of social action.

The analysis of populism: ideology or discourse?

> We must distinguish carefully between the rhetoric used by members of a movement—which may be randomly plagiarized from anywhere according to the needs of the moment, and the ideology which expresses the deeper current of the movement.
>
> (Minogue, 1969: 198)

These words of Kenneth Minogue reflect an unresolved tension within populism studies that connects with the contemporary divergences between ideological and discursive orientations. This controversy also has to do with the variegated manifestations of populism across history. In the era of the Russian Narodniks in the 1860s and the American Populist Party in the 1890s, populism consisted of an ideological corpus that was constructed and refined by these two movements. The two had differences in their ideology and organization, and there was no official communication between them. However, they both developed an elaborate ideology and formed a self-denominated populist movement. In this sociohistorical context, populism functioned as a general political philosophy that became sedimented, discussed, refined, vindicated, and institutionalized by the actions of one or several politically organized groups. Essentially, this is what characterizes and defines an ideology, whatever its *thinness* may be (see Aslanidis, 2016). If one looks closely at the phenomenon of the Russian Narodniks, it is clear that this movement bases on an elaborated and refined ideology. The politicians' conceptions, diagnoses, and proposals linked to a specific worldview were subjected to permanent discussion and refinement. In fact, in his major works about Russian populism, Lenin defined it as a theoretical doctrine that gives a particular solution to highly important sociological and economic problems (see Lenin, 1964 [1914]: 298–301).

Accepting that populism was an ideology found in a specific sociohistorical context, we cannot ignore that the phenomenon of populism, and more importantly, the practices associated with it have been changing since the 1860s. During this time, there was a fundamental event in relation to populism that transformed the modes of its deployment: the emergence of an *anti-populist discourse* and its hegemonic nature (see Taguieff, 1997: 1; Stavrakakis, 2017a: 7–8). The demonization of the word that turned populism into a derogatory label attached to others has led to the disappearance of any movement or political organization that choose to self-define as populist or that seek to preserve, refine, and implement a more or less consistent populist program (D'Eramo, 2013: 4). As expressed by Comaroff, "populism is used largely to disparage and impute blame" (2011: 100). As a consequence, what we currently analyze as populism has little to do with an ideological and cohesive movement. The manifestations of populism are generally discursive forms enacted in the majority of the cases by actors rejecting any identification with the word. Accordingly, the study of populism does not resemble a conventional analysis of ideologies, ideologues, or ideological production, but rather

is concerned with the ways of expression and the rhetorical dimensions of certain actors. The prevalence of the rhetorical dimension of populism explains why Donald Trump, a politician alien to the "the populist agrarian ideology" of the United States, can almost by consensus be characterized as a populist leader:

> Today we are not merely transferring power from one administration to another […] but *we are transferring power from Washington, D.C. and giving it back to you, the American people* […] what truly matters is not which party controls our government, but whether *our government is controlled by the people*. January 20th, 2017, will be remembered as the day the people became the rulers of this nation again.[3]
>
> (Emphasis added)

Populist rhetoric is better understood in political science, under the light of the so-called ideational turn.[4] Instead of considering the rhetoric as a meaningless epiphenomenon without relevance for politics, some scholars choose to reflect on the implications of the rhetoric to political and social dynamics. Laclau (2005: 10–13) argues that the ontological divide between the rhetorical and the political is an obstacle to understand the nature and logics of social and political phenomena. He contends that the rhetoric is intimately related to politics and not merely an adornment of the latter. The interaction between the symbolic representation and other spheres of social action is crucial to capture the constitutive dynamics of politics. Hence, the rhetorical aspects of politics should not be ignored but, on the contrary, should be explored as a discourse in order to grasp their fluidity, vagueness, and changing character—in the words of Laclau (2005: 18)—to study its own *rationality*.

This has implications for the use of populism to classify political actors. Discourse-oriented researchers tend to be more cautious when classifying political actors as populist, and they focus more on the discursive process in a given context than on the definitive identity of the actors. The mere notion of articulation as a temporary fixation of meaning (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 113; De Cleen and Stavrakakis, 2017: 5) prevents the permanent classification of political actors. Conversely, as Moffitt (2016: 18–19) explains, ideological-oriented studies of populism tend to produce classifications or typologies of populist parties, leaders, or movements (see, for instance, Rooduijn, 2014; March, 2017). Here, it is necessary to elaborate on why these classificatory tendencies based on populism can result in misguided analyses of political actors and political processes. The case of French president Emmanuel Macron can be illustrative in this respect. The title of a 2017 article by Fabio Bordignon correctly highlights the limits of the ideology-based classification of populist parties or actors: "In and out: Emmanuel Macron's anti-populist populism."[5] In the article, Bordignon (see also Jones, 2019) argues that Macron deployed a populist discourse during his campaign to confront the generally assumed populist discourse of Marine Le Pen. However, this was not just an opinion of a political

scientist, as even Macron admitted this as an unusual attempt to give salience to his populist appeal in the media:

> If being populist is talking to the people in an understanding manner without resorting to apparatus, I am willing to be populist. From this perspective, General De Gaulle was populist. But it should not be confused with demagogy, which consists in flattering the people in its vilest instincts. So, call me populist if you want. But do not call me a demagogue because I am not flattering the people.[6]

In the case of Macron, as well as other politicians, it would be a mistake to conclude that they are suddenly transformed into *outsider populists* with a particular ideology (even the thinnest one). Instead, they are *the vehicle* whereby a hegemonic mode to articulate discourse is expressed in a given sociopolitical context. This is something that does not transform Macron's identity "from mainstream to populist," but rather, it expresses the circulation of discourse. Such changes and fluctuations are hardly captured by ideology-oriented approaches. On the contrary, the populist ideology of the "usual suspects" tends to be overestimated while the diffusion, contagion, and fluidity of populist discourses are overlooked. This is mainly due to the nature and properties of the very notion of ideology that is associated with a self-defined subject and a set of stable and graspable preferences, values, and worldviews. At this point, the first relevant methodological implication for the study of populism in this research can be drawn. If we assume the fluidity, changing, and chameleonic nature of populism, what follows is its study in a diachronic fashion at various temporal points. Even in the case of a single politician or party, in order to conclude that it can be temporarily labeled as populist, or as one who exhibits a populist discourse, the analysis should capture how the discourse varies over time. The next step, then, is to determine what exact type of discourse populism is and how it is expected to function vis-à-vis other discourses.

Analyzing form and content in populist discourse

Following Hall (1997: 6), discourse refers to particular and context-based semiotic ensembles that "provide ways of talking about, forms of knowledge and conduct associated with, a particular topic, social activity or institutional site in society." Therefore, discourses are ensembles of symbolic representations, but they are also connected with social action. Discourse, as it is understood in this research, is the "heuristic device" (Keller, 2018: 19) to grasp the interplay between semiosis and social action. In particular, populism is a representation and construction of the political, consisting of a primary antagonism between the people and the elites (Stavrakakis, 2017b; Katsambekis, 2017; Laclau, 2005). Here, "the political" is conceived of as the metadiscussion on what constitutes politics, the legitimate subjects who participate in it, and the main goals and social divisions that likely delimitate the political community

(see Lefort, 1986: 20; Borriello, 2017: 243). To explore this construction of the political using several discursive events, speeches, or texts allows us to reconstruct the phenomenon of populism and its impact in particular contexts.

Importantly, Laclau (2005: 7) notes that the phenomenon of populism is not the manifestation of specific content (e.g., a particular policy, ideology, or movement), but rather, a form to structure political discourse. In essence, then, populism is *a form to articulate discourses* about the political and not the content of such articulation. In other words, it is a "metadiscourse" on discourses about the political. The particular discourses about objects or subjects related to the political are aggregated, revolving around the two antagonistic poles constituting the populist structure: "the people" and "the elites." This is what Laclau and Mouffe (2001: 130–1) refer to as "the logic of equivalence"—a logic of simplification of the political space. However, as Laclau and Mouffe assert, the logic of equivalence and simplification "never manages to constitute a fully sutured space" (p. 129), as the proliferation of differences always springs up. Accepting that populism is primarily related to a form of articulation around two antagonistic poles, it is important to raise the question of how such populist "metadiscourse" is related to the production of specific content and more concrete positions of political actors. In other words, how is this general populist discursive articulation related to particular representations, argumentative schemes, or specific historical problematizations?

The logic of equivalence and difference

As it has been discussed in the previous section, populism consists of the creation of a chain of equivalences among different discursive points—what Laclau and Mouffe call "democratic demands" (2001: 189). This implies the substitution of one element for another in order to subsume several minor elements into the power of signification of "the people" or "the elites." As Laclau and Mouffe (Ibid.) explain, "the logic of equivalence expands the paradigmatic pole—that is, the elements that can be substituted for one another—thereby reducing the number of positions which can possibly be combined" (p. 130). Hence, a first effect of the general articulation of populism can be identified: the prevalent antagonistic poles of the people and the elites can absorb secondary discursive elements and subsume them into the antagonistic logic. Through this process, the representation of Europe or the EU may cease to have an autonomous meaning and become a discursive moment within the chain of equivalences constituted under the populist logic. In this sense, Europe or the EU could operate as an appendix of the nodal point "the people" or, conversely, Europe or the EU could be subsumed into the opposite pole, serving as an equivalent of "the elites." The crucial point here is that the meaning of these secondary moments of discourse turns to serve the more general meaning construction of populism—that is, the representation of Europe or the EU is subordinated to the pervasive symbolic practice

of populism. This is a key process that needs to be analyzed in order to grasp to what extent the populist mode of articulation may affect various discursive elements. It is likewise informative to evaluate the extent to which the power of populism to articulate EU-related discursive elements may vary over time and which practices or historical events are used to explain such variance.

As Laclau and Mouffe (2001) observe, the practice of articulation—including the populist mode of articulation—is always a *partial* fixation of meaning: "The practice of articulation, therefore, consists in the construction of nodal points which partially fix meaning; and the *partial character of this fixation* proceeds from the openness of the social" (p. 113). To summarize, the process of simplification produced by the populist mode of articulation is never fully constituted; it is always disrupted by the proliferation of autonomous meanings and alternative representations that should be empirically investigated. Accordingly, the analysis of populism entails an analytical dimension centered on the *form*—the chain of equivalences and their ability to articulate signifying elements—and another analytical dimension focused on the particular *contents* organized in such semiotic ensembles. The interplay and tension between the equivalential logic of populism and the proliferation of differences is the analytical locus used to capture the *form* of populism. Therefore, to explore the populism–Euroscepticism nexus, we must pay attention, on the one hand, to the effect of the populist *form* in shaping the representations and argumentations about the EU; on the other hand, the proliferation of differences associated with the historical meanings of Europe and the EU may also configure the forms of Euroscepticism in national contexts.

How to study the construction and contestation of the EU

The EU[7] is defined in different ways, and there is no undisputed consensus on what its fundamental features are. To understand the various theoretical approaches applied to the EU, it is necessary to look first at how EU scholars describe and explain its constitutive process: European integration. The rapid convergence of the leading countries of Western Europe after the Second World War stimulated scholars to theorize and explain European integration. Most of these works originated from international relations studies, and comparative political science scholars gradually engaged in debates about the formation of the ECSC/EC/EU. There are two prominent classical theories describing and explaining European integration: neofunctionalism and intergovernmentalism. Neofunctionalism conceives of the process of European integration as the result of an increasing interdependence among states, which generates functional needs and pressure for integration (Haas,1964, 1968; Lindberg, 1963). According to neofunctionalist scholars, European integration is a self-reinforcing process and can be explained by making use of the notion "functional spillover." Functional spillover captures the idea that the

"goals of an integrated policy issue lead to further integrative steps" (Lindberg, 1963: 10; see also Niemann, 2006; Niemann and Schmitter, 2009). Therefore, international institutions are gradually developed in order to respond to the *needs* of the advanced stages of integration.

The perspective of intergovernmentalism, by contrast, is rooted in a realist view of international politics, focusing on intergovernmental bargaining and the role of the state. This approach conceives the process of European integration as a way to strengthening the power of nation-states (Milward, 1992; Hoffmann, 1995). This state-centered explanation based on the initial negotiations among the first six countries that formed the ECSC and the directive roles that France and Germany played. This approach gained momentum after the so-called "empty chair crisis" in 1965–1966, when neofunctionalist theories alone appeared unable to explain the retrenchment and obstruction of the French government of Charles De Gaulle to intergovernmental meetings and coordination (Saurugger, 2014a: 54). Intergovernmentalism scholars typically refer to "international cooperation" and "European construction" rather than "European integration." They emphasize the primacy and singularity of each nation-state, its interests (and relative gains), national culture, and ideologies (Saurugger, 2014a: 57). It is important to note that intergovernmentalism scholars reject a simplistic neorealist conception of the structural power balance among states, instead proposing a more complex picture by including ideas, national history, and cultural traditions in their analyses of international politics (see Vollaard, 2018: 44).

These two broad theoretical perspectives on European integration have been revised, refined, developed, and sometimes fundamentally questioned by the new wave of literature on European integration since the 1980s. Indeed, these two classical theories have had long-lasting impacts on the more recent approaches to the EU and European integration. On the one hand, there has been a realist turn which analyzes states as unitary actors against the backdrop of the anarchic state of international politics (Mearsheimer, 1990). This particular view of intergovernmentalism is mainly focused on the bargaining process among member states in specific critical moments of the process of European integration (Moravcsik, 1997; Schimmelfennig, 2015). On the other hand, the *neoliberal institutionalism* of Krasner (1982) and Keohane (1984) was developed within the wave of new institutionalisms (see below) to revisit neofunctionalist approaches. It emphasizes the relevance of international cooperation, regimes, and institutions beyond the relative gains and interests of states. Under this conception—which still accepts the state as the primary actor—institutions can reduce the information and transactional costs of states to express and process their preferences. Following Krasner (1982), institutions and regimes are seen to generate a self-reinforcing tendency that prevents states from abandoning them.

Finally, postfunctionalism (Hooghe and Marks, 2009) has centered on the question of the "nature of the beast," revisiting the concept of the EU and

placing greater emphasis on domestic publics and the end of permissive consensus. Specifically, multilevel governance theories propose that the EU should be understood as a more fluid type of regulation (Hooghe and Marks, 2009; Bulmer and Joseph, 2016). This opens up the possibility to conceptualize more subtle forms of power and pressure—precisely what discourse research is capable of capturing. In the words of Saurugger (2014a: 114), the multilevel governance approach "transforms governance into a form of normative production and attribution of values which creates political authority." The emergence of the "open method of coordination" at the EU level, with its modes of "soft governance" (e.g., benchmarking, peer review), has provided fertile ground to apply this theoretical lens in empirical analyses.

Ideational approaches and the constructivist turn in EU studies

There are other approaches to European integration and the EU that have questioned the central premises of neofunctionalist and intergovernmentalist studies, rejecting the prominent and reified position of states and international institutions in EU studies. These theories are focused on identity construction and the discursive and social practices that feed into the "making" of the EU. The sociological/critical revival in the 1980s (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; March and Olsen, 1984) and the constructivist turn in the 1990s (Adler, 1997; Wendt, 1992) significantly marked European integration studies (see Bulmer and Joseph, 2016: 727; Ryner and Cafruny, 2017: 64–71). Initially, constructivist approaches attempted to integrate components of the classical theories but also paid attention to the learning processes and socialization mechanisms involved (Risse, 2000; Checkel, 2001). Following Diez (2001), they provided "an explicit theory of identity and its transformation" (p. 9), as well as give a place to the historical analysis of critical junctures as drivers of institutional change. In this vein, there is a substantial body of literature that focuses particularly on European identities (Risse, 2014; Galpin, 2017; Bergbauer, 2018).

Building on this critical and constructivist revival in EU studies, a new research agenda in EU studies has gradually gained ground. In addition to the neoliberal institutionalism discussed above, there are also two main versions of institutionalism that are distinct but also converge in several ways. The first is *historical institutionalism*, which focuses mainly on long-term changes and critical historical junctures to analyze institutions (Thelen, 1999; Hall and Taylor, 1996). Scholars within this tradition give particular importance to the time-development of institutions to explore their durability in a given society, covering periods of both relative stability and moments of disruption. The second is *sociological institutionalism*, which explores the crucial aspects of norms, identities, actors, and discourses within institutions. The work of the first scholars of sociological institutionalism explored what DiMaggio and Powell call the "mechanisms of institutional isomorphic change" (1983: 150). The authors refer to significant pressures, forces, or inertias, producing similarities

among institutions in a specific social and historical context. Close to sociological approaches, there has also been a newer version of institutionalism that has consolidated recently. Mainly based on the work of Vivien Schmidt (2008), *discursive institutionalism* focuses on discourses and ideas as the cornerstone to grasp the political dynamics of the EU. This approach outlines an integrative framework that encompasses the new sociological, historical, and discursive institutionalism, but it places the major emphasis on the discursive agency. In short, the sociological and discursive versions of institutionalism are rather concerned with the normative and ideational dimensions of decision-making that take place within institutions.

Finally, there are a group of heterogeneous critical studies that have recently contributed to reviving theoretical debates, suggesting the use of new research methodologies to study the subject of European integration. Instead of taking for granted nation-states or sets of preferences at the EU level, these critical approaches analyze the contingent formation and stabilization of identities, interests, and values revolving around Europe and the EU (Diez, 2001; Carta, 2015, Wodak, 2018). Neo-Gramscian studies describe the EU and European integration as a clash of contending hegemonic and counter-hegemonic projects (Van Apeldoorn, 2009). Thus, the main narratives about the EU and European integration are also questioned as part of this hegemonic struggle. This is consistent with the analysis of European integration proposed by critical discourse studies (CDS). In a seminal article, Thomas Diez (2001) describes Europe as a "discursive battleground" and opens the field for the detailed exploration of discursive contentions and shifts (see also Diez, 2013). For their part, Hay and Rosamond (2002) instead choose to focus on the construction of economic legitimizing narratives at the level of the EU, and Wodak (2018) and Wodak and Weiss (2005) investigate European identities and the emergence of nationalistic discourses within the EU. These recent studies bring new discourse methodologies while simultaneously questioning the very foundations of EU research and the EU. This has implications for the definition of the EU and the analytical strategies for its study, its forms of constructions, stabilization, and contestation.

This book conceives of the EU as a site of fluid and complex relations of power, instead of a sovereign and centralized power. Following Bulmer and Joseph (2016: 726), the EU can be understood as a mobile complex of institutions, formal organizations, and symbolic orders that express the temporary result of contending hegemonic and counter-hegemonic projects. The production of norms and discourses at the EU level and across its member states is crucial to guarantee consent and to ensure the viability of the hegemonic EU model. Hence, the forms of EU contestation that are under analysis in this book are seen as responses to governing practices in the context of the EU (Torfing et al., 2012; Bevir, 2013). The populist articulations of Europe and the EU at the national level respond to the historical development and evolution of hegemonic structures of knowledge and power in the EU.

Europe's crises and the emergence of "the people"

Since its inception, the EU has dealt with legitimacy problems. These problems are basically linked to its supranational authority structure and potential conflicts within the traditional forms of legitimization at the domestic level (Hobolt, 2018). Since the "constraining dissensus" period in the 1990s (Hooghe and Marks, 2009: 5), there have been variable, but significant political conflicts at the national level regarding the European integration process. In his classic work on the subject, Díez Medrano (2003) concludes that the Danish referendum rejecting the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 "represented the people's triumphant entry onto center stage of the European integration process" (p. 2). Although there were other referendums related to European integration before—the first was in 1972 in France—the Maastricht ratification referendums marked the entry into a new stage of politicization. Schünemann (2017: 10) has characterized these events as *defensive Blockadereferenden* (defensive blockade referendums). For the first time, they served to channel a consistent and organized opposition to European integration or against some aspects of the evolution of the EU (Beeson and Diez, 2018: 119; Hobolt, 2018: 243). In France, the referendum proposed by Mitterrand in 1992 on the Maastricht Treaty resulted in a thin majority of 51 percent of votes in favor. In Germany and the UK, the Maastricht Treaty and—in Germany especially—the EMU were a matter of active debate in both the public and political spheres, although there were no referendums.

By the end of the 1990s, there were attempts from within the EU to respond to the legitimacy problem. Both the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997 and the Treaty of Nice in 2001 partially included worker and citizen rights into EU law, but the most important piece, the Charter on Fundamental Rights, initially failed to become enforceable by the European Court of Justice (Staab, 2008: 26). The Lisbon Treaty in 2007 finally approved the Charter on Fundamental Rights and advanced further reforms toward the democratic functioning of EU institutions. However, the failure of the ratification of the European Constitution in 2005 in France and the Netherlands was another major setback for the process of European integration. Shortly after the Lisbon Treaty entered into force in December 2009, the last and most noticeable cycle of EU politicization started. A combination of major crises—financial, social, and migration—broke out in Europe, especially since 2010 (Hall, 2016: 55; Copelovitch et al., 2016). In recent times, these multilevel crises have turned into a critical period of turbulence for the legitimacy and the hegemonic project structuring European integration (Hall, 2017; Dinan et al., 2017; Copelovitch et al., 2016). In the European post-crisis landscape, *sui generis* European neoliberalism seems to persist as the dominant political project structuring European integration. Following Bulmer and Joseph (2016: 740), there are two emergent projects shaping European integration in addition to the social democratic pro-European project (divergent from neoliberal ideas): on the one hand, a conservative national project rests on the

so-called "losers" of cosmopolitanism (Kriesi, 2007: 85); and on the other, what Bulmer and Joseph (2016: 740) call the "social national project," which basically reclaims more flexibility in the redistributive policies at the national level. This interpretation of the contemporary ideational forces structuring the EU project seems to have some parallels with the emergence of left-wing and right-wing populism.

EU contestation at the domestic level

The analysis of the interrelations between EU governing practices and domestic actors has recently been animated by the wave of EU contestation, Euroscepticism, and anti-EU movements. At the domestic level, research has explored the critique and contestation of the EU by political parties, movements, and civil society organizations (see, for instance, the seminal article by Bulmer, 1983; see also Mair, 2007; Risse, 2014; Kriesi, 2014). In the view of Hooghe and Marks (2009: 2), "domestic and European politics have become more tightly coupled as governments have become responsive to public pressures on European integration." The increasing relevance of domestic issues in EU studies is also explained by the limitations of the public sphere at the EU level and the lack of strong intermediary organizations connecting EU institutions with a virtual European *demos* (see Mair, 2007: 7–9; Schmidt, 2006; Ahrens and Diez, 2015; Kriesi, 2014; Risse, 2014). In the words of Kriesi (2014: 32), "national politics are still the crucial arena for the politicization of European integration." Research on EU contestation at the level of party politics has mainly concentrated on measuring the type and degree of Euroscepticism across party systems (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002, 2013; Pirro and Taggart, 2018).

The politicization literature seeks to go beyond Euroscepticism studies and opens up the "black box" of Euroscepticism to engage in the diverse forms of EU critique, framing, and politicization that also imply multiple explanatory factors and conditions. Politicization is generally understood as "an expansion of the scope of conflict within the political system" (Grande and Hutter, 2016: 7), which entails bringing new matters into public discussion and public regulation (De Wilde and Zürn, 2012: 139). The study of EU politicization has dealt with a fundamental macro-structural factor—namely, authority transfer from national polities to the EU—and several mediating factors, such as crises and mobilization strategies (Grande and Hutter, 2016: 20–26). Grande and Hutter (2016), De Wilde and Zürn (2012), and Kriesi (2014) all emphasize the emergence of populist parties, and especially right-wing populist parties, as one of the principal drivers of EU politicization. Research on EU politicization is indeed a significant step ahead in the study of how EU contestation is shaped and defined at the domestic level by challenging populist or emerging parties. However, this approach does not pay sufficient attention to the contingent and agent-centered ways to articulate such EU contestation. Politicization studies give a central, although variable, weight to the authority transfer from

the nation-states to the EU as the final structural determinant of politicization (see Zürn, 2016; Hutter et al., 2016). Authority transfer to the EU can be considered as a construct that lacks flexibility in its relations and interrelations with the domestic level, the institutional level, and with the potential agency of political and social actors. As it has been argued above, the EU is not a predefined and stable entity that impacts on the domestic contexts; rather, it is an institutional ensemble *in the making*, resulting from the interaction of the governing practices and contesting practices of actors situated at multiple levels (Diez, 2001; Bevir, 2013).

Europeanization and EU contestation

In contrast to EU politicization, the concept of Europeanization invites analyses of the structural constraints and facilitators of EU politicization in a more fluid and reciprocal manner. It is, indeed, more suitable for discourse research and for an analysis of the interactions between governing practices at the EU level and contesting practices at the domestic level. There are various definitions of Europeanization, and no consensus on its meaning has been reached (see Filipec, 2017: 3). Some authors define Europeanization as a top-down transfer of policies from the EU level to the domestic level (see Radaelli, 2004). However, there has been recently an attempt to define Europeanization as a process departing from the EU but with diverse ramifications and feedback loops at the national level. This would mean that Europeanization not only refers to the process of the diffusion and implementation of policies, regulations, or discourses originating from a decision center at the EU level. It also entails the analysis of how such norms, regulations, or discourses are discussed, refined, appropriated, and, finally, used at the domestic levels. The latter has been named by Radaelli as "horizontal Europeanization," in contrast to "vertical Europeanization," which is based on mechanisms of top-down adaptational pressure (Radaelli, 2003: 17–18; see also Saurugger, 2014b).

Dyson and Goetz (2003: 20) also advance a circular definition, in which Europeanization is understood as an interactive "top-down and bottom-up process." These scholars emphasize the usages and appropriations of the EU by domestic actors and how these usages and appropriations play a relevant role in the process of EU construction and are not determined by external (EU-level) processes (for a similar approach, see Featherstone and Kazamias, 2000; Bache et al., 2011; Balkir et al., 2013). Therefore, the study of Europeanization entails the analysis of interactive processes across European and national levels of relevant political actors that construct, interpret, diffuse, implement, and institutionalize EU-related policies, regulations, and discourses. As we will see below, one of the analytical forms to explore such interrelations is discourse analysis. This book builds on the definition of Saurugger and Radaelli (2008), by which Europeanization can be defined as

> processes of (a) construction (b) diffusion and (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, "ways of doing things" and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU public policy and politics and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies.
>
> (p. 213; see also Bache et al., 2011: 124 for a similar definition)

According to this understanding of Europeanization, it is possible to distinguish between "vertical" and "horizontal" Europeanization. Vertical Europeanization refers to macro processes, whereby the EU impacts on "macrodomestic structures, public policy, and normative-cognitive domestic structures" at the domestic level (Radaelli, 2003: 10); this is the classic top-down perspective on Europeanization. Radaelli (2003: 11) refers to domestic structures as the political and legal institutions of a country, intergovernmental relations, and legal structures. For instance, Europeanization could be evaluated in terms of the extent to which EU policy or EU-produced discourses impact or influence transformations in the legal constitution of a country or its parliamentary system. Regarding public policy, Europeanization could be described as the way to shape economic, social, and cultural policy at the domestic level in accordance with EU-defined criteria. Finally, the normative and cognitive dimension of Europeanization refers to the discourses that circulate from the EU level to the domestic levels.

There are various ways to study these dimensions of vertical Europeanization. For instance, Börzel (1999) concentrates on Europeanization and its impact on the regional institutions in Spain and Germany. This approach rests on the idea of a variable misfit between EU institutions and domestic institutional configurations, as well as the adaptational pressures that it may generate. The impact of Europeanization on parliaments or judicial systems has also been explored (Ladrech, 1994). Other scholars analyze how specific policies are implemented at the domestic level (see Borrás et al., 1998). Additionally, Knill and Lehmkuhl (1999) focus on the ways of Europeanization to alter the beliefs, expectations, and discourses at the domestic level (pp. 3–5). These different domains are not independent in practice, but they can be distinguished for the sake of analysis. Bulmer and Radaelli (2004) link these processes of vertical Europeanization with various governance mechanisms: governance by negotiation (uploading policies, norms, and discourses to the EU level); governance by hierarchy (coercive mechanisms to download such elements to the domestic level); and facilitated coordination (soft downloading processes). Thus, the concept of Europeanization suggested by Saurugger and Radaelli (2008) also facilitates the mapping of the main governing practices at the EU level.

Overall, the primary relevant conclusion that the Europeanization literature offers for this work is that *Europeanization matters* when exploring the modes of EU contestation. Populist actors contesting the EU are not found in a vacuum; instead, they respond to ongoing discussions about the EU and the

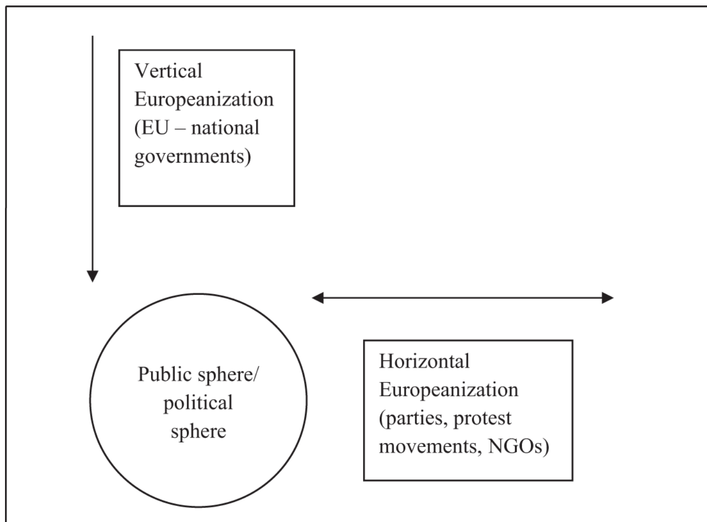

Figure 1.1 Political parties and Europeanization.

discourses that are generally accepted and that dominate the ways in which to understand the EU at the domestic level. As Hall observes (1993):

> Politicians, officials, the spokesmen for societal interests, and policy experts all operate within the terms of political discourse that are current in the nation at a given time, and the terms of political discourse generally have a specific configuration that lends representative legitimacy to some social interests more than others, delineates the accepted boundaries of state action, associates contemporary political developments with particular interpretations of national history, and defines the context in which many issues will be understood.
>
> (p. 289)

In accordance with Hall, Ladrech (2009: 8), building on Mair (2007), observes that parties respond to a certain "environment" produced by Europeanization. Connecting this idea with the above discussion on Europeanization, political parties are embedded and participate in processes of horizontal Europeanization insofar as they are consolidated and recognized actors in domestic political spheres. As explained above, the processes of horizontal Europeanization refer to "the diffusion of ideas and discourses" at the actor level across EU-domestic contexts (Radaelli, 2003: 17, 2004: 5). Generally, the few works on Europeanization and political parties has been concerned with the degree to which certain political parties or party systems are Europeanized; that is, the extent to which they assume certain policies, styles, topics, or discourses that are

defined at the EU level (Külahci, 2012; Vázquez-Garcia, 2012). This approach responds to a limited top-down approach to Europeanization, by which the actors absorb EU-produced content. This way to study Europeanization and political parties is also problematic since it is not possible to accurately capture the interrelations between parties and the EU level. This book takes the idea of horizontal Europeanization seriously and how it can be applied to the study of political parties. This allows us to conceive political parties as actors actively shaping the processes of "horizontal Europeanization" across the political and public sphere (Figure 1.1).

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to explore the points of convergence between discourse-oriented approaches to populism and (critical) European studies. First, this chapter covered the relevant and distinct approaches to populism in order to provide a comprehensive view of the field of populism studies. The central section of the literature review was devoted to research which focuses on ideas or discourse, which, in turn, entails distinct varieties. This chapter argued for the need for a precise and thorough specification of the epistemological implications of the ideological, discursive, and political style varieties. Regarding the thin-ideology variety, this chapter identified two problematic aspects that should be reconsidered: firstly, the lack of a convincing ontological account of how ideology, actors, social structures, and semiosis operate; secondly, and in relation to the first aspect, the need for a coherent research agenda that rests on the mutable and fluid character of populist phenomena in contemporary politics. These critical observations were aimed to revive a necessary debate, which rests, however, on the belief that populism studies demand a significant degree of methodological pluralism. The chapter outlines the fundamental aspects of the discourse-oriented research to populism which is adopted in this book. It contends that discourse research is better equipped to capture the changing nature of populism. In a subsequent step, I followed the theorizations of Laclau and Mouffe (2001) to formulate several expectations regarding the impact of the populist logic (metadiscourse) on other discourses and regarding the relationship between form and content.

The second part of the chapter situates the main research goals of this book against the broader literature on EU and European integration. First, the chapter explored various approaches used to investigate the EU and European integration, emphasizing that there has been a transition within EU studies from general accounts of international relations—with the states as given actors—to more complex, domestic- and actor-centered analyses. The study of the domestic political and public spheres has indeed become an increasingly important area of study within EU research. Among the approaches attentive to the domestic level within EU studies, the study of

Europeanization is identified as having great potential for the problems addressed in this work. The approach of Radaelli (2003, 2004) and others (Dyson and Goetz, 2003; Saurugger and Radaelli, 2008) to Europeanization focuses on the impact of EU governing structures at the domestic level but also identifies "horizontal processes of Europeanization." This provides a way to capture the contexts or "environments" in which populist actors radical parties contest the EU. Therefore, this book interrogates the forms by which the populist upsurge, in its full diversity, shapes and impacts the processes of horizontal Europeanization. The next chapter proposes a comprehensive theoretical framework to integrate the conceptions of populism and Europeanization within this discourse-oriented study.

Notes

1 Equally important to populism studies was the populist upsurge in Latin America in the 2000s with the so-called "pink tide" (Chávez in Venezuela, Lula in Brazil, and Morales in Bolivia), the victory of Donald Trump in the 2016 US election, and other populist manifestations across the world, for example, Duterte in the Philippines and Modi in India. According to the focus of this study, however, the strengthening and rise of populist parties in Europe since the 2008 financial crisis is especially relevant.

2 In addition to Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau, other significant scholars of the Essex School include Aletta Norval, David Howarth, Jason Glynos, and Yannis Stavrakakis.

3 Donald Trump, "Inaugural Address," January 20, 2017, Washington, DC, accessed January 1, 2018 from www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/the-inaugural-address/.

4 In this research, the ideational turn in political science is broadly understood as part of the increasing interest in the linguistic and ideational aspects of contemporary world politics. It entails the constructivist and new institutionalist turns in the field of international relations (Went, 1982; March and Olsen, 1984), broader post-structuralist approaches in the social sciences (e.g., Derrida, Foucault), post-foundational approaches in political science (e.g., Laclau, Rancière, Mouffe, Butler), and also other interpretivist perspectives in social theory, such as Bevir (2015) and Keller (2013, 2018).

5 Fabio Bordignon, "In and out: Emmanuel Macron's anti-populist populism," Blog EUROPP–European Politics and Policy of the London School of Economics, April 28, 2017, accessed December 29, 2019 from http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2017/04/28/macron-anti-populist-populism/.

6 Le Journal du di Manche, "Macron: 'Appelez-moi populiste si vous voulez,'" March 18, 2017, accessed December 29, 2019 from www.lejdd.fr/Politique/Macron-Appelez-moi-populiste-si-vous-voulez-855110. Author's translation.

7 The successive organizations and their acronyms are: European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), European Community (EC), and European Union (EU).

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2 A discursive approach to the populism–Euroscepticism nexus

Introduction: discourse research in political science

In the literature on populism and EU studies, the notion of "discourse" is a key concept upon which the research question and sub-questions of this book can be explored and interpreted. The word "discourse," however, is an elusive term, and it is often used as a synonym for "ideas" or "worldview." It can be understood as a feature of social reality, a type of methodology, or a heuristic tool embedded in broader social theorizations. In the academic literature, and more broadly, in social life, these different usages are rarely distinguished, and discourse is used in these contexts interchangeably, thus increasing confusion around this term. This is one reason that explains the slippery nature of the word. In common language, discourse, as a feature of social reality, is generally understood as the ways of talking or writing about a specific topic by an individual, institution, or organization. The incorporation of the notion of discourse into the social sciences is built on this understanding, but it also implies ontological debates about the co-constitution and interpretive nature of social and political phenomena, including social research. This discussion on the foundations of social relations and social reality relates to several critical and constructivist turns in social theory, which were based on a post-positivist impulse. In opposition to positivist approaches, the post-positivist view departs from the idea that the foundations of social reality cannot be taken for granted and must be interrogated and analyzed as contingent social formations or constructions (Springer, 2012: 133–4). This epistemological position has been termed post-foundationalism, and it has ramifications in many fields, including international relations (Wendt, 1992; Adler, 1997; Ruggie, 2017), governance (Torfing et al., 2012; Bevir, 2004, 2013), or organizational theory (Marttila, 2019).

In political science, the study of discourse is connected, on the one hand, with this interpretivist and post-foundational turn, and on the other, with the long-term development of the tradition of political discourse analysis (PDA) that some authors identify with the early elaborations of Aristotle and Cicero (see Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012: 18 ff.; Dunmire, 2012: 735). The revival of PDA was due mainly to the increasing scholarly interest in politics vis-à-vis

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sociolinguistics studies (Van Dijk, 1997; Fairclough, 2003; Chilton, 2004). PDA is a multidisciplinary research approach that concentrates on "the linguistic and discursive dimensions of political text and talk and on the political nature of discursive practice" (Dunmire, 2012: 735). In the field of political science, many scholars increasingly considered post-foundational notions linked to discourse or, at least, gave a prominent role to "ideas" or "discourse" in their analytical frameworks (for instance, see Bevir, 2004, 2013; Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998; Schmidt, 2008, 2017). At the same time, this *ideational turn* in political science absorbed some theoretical and methodological elaborations from PDA and other traditions that emerged from linguistics in the late 1980s, such as critical discourse analysis (CDA). There are at least three streams of thought and research associated with discourse or ideas that can be identified in political science.

First, heavily inspired by the work of Habermas (1991, 1996), there is a generation of scholars investigating the interactive side of discourse and discursive practices (see Müller, 2019; Risse, 2000, 2014). This approach to the study of ideas has been identified under the rubric *arguing approaches* due to the focus on the deliberative activities in search for the better argument. For instance, there are analyses of the "coordinative discourse"' of advocacy networks and policy entrepreneurs (see Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998; Schmidt, 2013). A second research strand can more directly be associated with the interpretivist turn in sociology. In the social sciences and humanities fields, a post-foundational perspective gained ground in the second half of the twentieth century in connection with the increasing interest in the ideational dimensions of social reality (see Keller and Clarke, 2018: 55). Berger and Luckman's *Social Construction of Reality* (1966), and Blumer's *Symbolic Interactionism* (1969) are major works marking this ideational turn. This perspective seeks to formulate questions within an overall interpretivist framework, in opposition to the positivist assumptions of social research (Bevir, 2013: 4; Keller and Clarke, 2018: 48 ff.). In this vein, political scientists like Michael Shapiro have urged scholars to focus on the various ways of people's meaning-making to understand political phenomena (Shapiro, 1981: 19). These contributions have stimulated a proliferation of interpretivist approaches in political science (see Torfing et al., 2012; Bevir, 2013; Keller et al., 2018).

Finally, in recent times, there has been a post-structuralist turn with the emergence of a new generation of authors building mainly on the approaches of Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Ernesto Laclau, and Chantal Mouffe.[1] Even when this post-structuralist approach to discourse shares some theoretical assumptions with the interpretivist paradigm, it emphasizes the decentering of the subject and the contingency of the very foundations of social reality. Here, there is an ongoing tension between a certain "subjectivism"—focused on the intentions of the actors and associated with interpretivist approaches—and perspectives oriented more toward social processes, social practices, and structures. The latter perspective essentially

conceives of "subjectivities" as the result of constructions within discursive practices (see Foucault 1972, 1977; Laclau and Mouffe, 2001). The post-structuralist tradition is the one providing more reflections and methodological elaborations related to discourse research and its role in the social sciences. For instance, post-structuralist discourse analysis is associated with the seminal ideas of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (Howarth, 2005; Glynos and Howarth, 2008; Zienkowsky, 2017). By contrast, CDA (Fairclough 1992: 37–62; Van Leeuwen, 2008), the sociology of knowledge approach to discourse (SKAD; Keller, 2013, 2018), and the Duisburg School (Jäger, 2001) are consistently influenced by the postulates and research orientations of Michel Foucault.

These different perspectives on discourse (arguing approaches, interpretivist approaches, and post-structuralist approaches) are not separate schools; rather, they are three distinguishable traditions of thought that have been merged in creative ways within the multiple approaches of discourse research. This book is situated within the interpretivist tradition (Bevir, 2015; Keller, 2013, 2018), but it particularly entails the assumptions of the post-structuralist turn, especially the work of Foucault. This choice is built, essentially, on the belief that political phenomena are better studied, understood, and explained as meaning-mediated processes of social reality construction. The present chapter presents two main approaches to discourse and discusses their epistemological and methodological implications. Next, based on the elaborations of Foucault, it introduces the dispositif perspective and the analysis of power relations to navigate across the various social contexts in which discourse is nested. The second part of the chapter outlines the rationale behind the selection and comparison of the two cases explored in this book and the analytical strategy of this study.

The concept of discourse: a dialogue between Laclau and Mouffe and Foucault

In the theory proposed by Laclau and Mouffe (2001), discourse is understood as the constitutive terrain of the social. To reach this conclusion, the authors depart from three theoretical starting points: first, they draw on Louis Althusser and the general development of Marxist theory; second, they rely on the work of linguistic theorists like Ferdinand de Saussure and Ludwig Wittgenstein to structure their main concepts; and third, they use psychoanalytical theories, especially those of Jacques Lacan, which are used to complement the more explanatory part of Laclau and Mouffe's elaborations. These three sources of inspiration function as the bases for Laclau and Mouffe to develop their original and suggestive theory about "the political." Among other elements, Laclau and Mouffe borrow the idea of *the autonomy of the political* from Althusser. In Althusser's conception, the political—or in Marxist terms, the superstructure—is not derived mechanically from the economic or social spheres, but instead, it has its own rules and autonomy

(Althusser, 1969: 105–17). Laclau and Mouffe analyze this argument and state that, in their view, the political is not just one particular field of the social with its autonomy (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 98). They argue that the political is the constitutive terrain *par excellence* and, in its final consequences, becomes the unique terrain to constitute the social (Ibid.: 153). In fact, Laclau and Mouffe (2001) famously proclaim the "death of society" as a valid object of study, privileging the political as the terrain for the constitution of contingent societies:

> Here we arrive at a decisive point in our argument. The incomplete character of every totality necessarily leads us to abandon, as a terrain of analysis, the premise of "society" as a sutured and self-defined totality. "Society" is not a valid object of discourse.
>
> (p. 111)

At this point, "discourse" comes into play since the political is understood discursively. Laclau and Mouffe import most of their relevant concepts from the fields of linguistics and psychoanalysis, most specifically, the terms articulation, affective investment, and nodal point. The primary logic of the political is elaborated on using the concept of "articulation." In terms of Laclau and Mouffe, articulation is the configuration of specific elements within discourse; insofar as these *elements* are discursively articulated, they become *moments* of discourse in their condition of partially fixed or articulated elements (Ibid.: 105). Discourse, then, is "the structured totality resulting from the articulatory practice" (Ibid.). It encompasses "linguistic and non-linguistic elements" whose identity is exclusively defined by their relationship with other moments of discourse (Laclau, 2005: 13). The different discursive articulations are thus defined by their internal relations among moments and not based on any external referent. This idea is derived from the analysis of the interrelations among signifiers developed by Ferdinand de Saussure (1959). The demolition of the social as an articulatory terrain led Laclau and Mouffe to conflate discourse with social practices and to dismiss any distinction between the discursive and the non-discursive (Laclau and Bhaskar, 1998: 13). Following Laclau and Mouffe (2001), the logics governing heterogeneous elements (linguistic, social, or material) are the same. Essentially, the logic of difference and equivalence transforms *elements* into *moments* (signifiers) in a chain of equivalences and vice versa, moments are turned into elements by the logic of difference. The affective impulse is the final driver of these articulations—the aspect that explains the formation and stabilization of subjectivities anchored in discourse (Laclau, 2005: 85).

The Foucauldian approach to discourse differs significantly from Laclau and Mouffe´s framework regarding the modes to analyze discourse and social relations. Foucault´s approach is characterized by a "situated notion of discourse" that concentrates on the social-semiotic practice of constructing objects and subjects in particular contexts (Foucault, 1972: 45–6). Stuart Hall

(1997) provides an initial approximation of this perspective by which discourse is conceived as

> [...] ways of referring to or constructing knowledge about a particular topic of practice; a cluster (or formation) of ideas, images and practices, which provide ways of talking about, forms of knowledge and conduct associated with, a particular topic, social activity or institutional site in society.
>
> (p. 6)

Thus, in this view, discourse is not conceived of as a meta-structure over the social, determining its constitution, but instead, as an activity embedded in a broader social complexity. The differing approaches of Foucault and Laclau and Mouffe derive in part from the fact that Foucault had little interest in—in fact, explicitly rejected on numerous occasions—the creation of a new theory of the political and the social. Instead, he was far more concerned with describing in detail, analyzing, and, ultimately, drawing interpretations about social processes and specific phenomena where power, knowledge, and discourse intermingle. Foucault seeks to capture the historical modes of formation of *things and words* under specific systems of rules and patterns of regularities. For instance, in *The Archeology of Knowledge* (1972), Foucault identifies specific rules of formation of discourses as the particular pattern of a period. Such rules of formation are not invariable but depend on (1) the enunciative modalities and genres, (2) the relation with other discursive formations (3) the field of the discourse (e.g., medicine, politics, education), and (4) the broader social relations involving a complex network of institutions and practices.

This analytical scheme provides a more multifaceted and intricate picture of how discourses relate to the social. Following Foucault, the analysis of discourse does not disregard the social field and the complexity of social relations beyond discourse. Conversely, this analysis is developed at the boundary between the social and the discursive, interrogating the co-constitutive nature of both terrains. In this same vein, SKAD (see Keller, 2013, 2018) contends that "discourses are explicitly understood as historically established, identifiable ensembles of symbolic and normative devices, all of which are context and case-specific in nature" (Hornidge et al., 2018: 3). Hence, a Foucauldian exploration of discourse paves the way for a more systematic analysis of social processes, practices, and structures that may interact with particular discourses. In fact, Foucault distinguishes different sets of relations in his work that cannot be reduced to discursive relations:

> These relations [*discursive relations*] must be distinguished first from what we might call "primary" relations, and which, independently of all discourse or all object of discourse, may be described between institutions, techniques, social forms, etc.
>
> (Foucault, 1972: 45)

Foucault then continues:

> Thus, a space unfolds articulated with possible discourses: a system of real or primary relations, a system of reflexive or secondary relations, and a system of relations that might properly be called discursive. The problem is to reveal the specificity of these discursive relations, and their interplay with the other two kinds.
>
> (Ibid.: 45–46)

In ontological terms, the conclusion that can be drawn from this discussion is that following Foucault there is an exteriority of discourse that is not reducible to other discursive articulations (Laclau and Mouffe, 2001: 146). The Foucauldian historical a priori "defines a limited space of communication" (Foucault, 1972: 126) and, therefore, operates upon discourse and is worth being analyzed. As Hamann et al. (2019) rightly note, when analyzing the impact of social relations on discourse: "social structures can have an important effect on meaning-making practices in society without being referred to explicitly, or even implicitly, in a given text or discursive practice" (p. 55). This ontological distinctiveness of the Foucauldian approach to discourse is highly relevant for the present research, as it allows us to explore not only the specific discursive articulations between populism and EU contestation but also the second subquestion posed in this work: *SQ2. How do the Europeanization dispositifs in Germany and Spain affect the discursive articulations of the [Podemos and AfD] parties?* The following section elaborates on the essential concepts regarding the social to generate a comprehensive theoretical framework on discourse and social relations.

Discourse and context

Building on Hall's (1997) definition, discourse can be decoupled into two distinct dimensions: first, the textual or manifested semiotic dimension; and second, its social potential—its links with social action in different ways (in Hall's terms, the "forms of knowledge and conduct associated with, a particular topic, social activity or institutional site in society"). In other words, discourse is not only a way of talking about, writing about, or representing a specific process or event but also a way to structure society, since it prescribes or orients social practices. This two-dimensional definition of discourse can also be found in the elaborations of many scholars within critical discourse studies (CDS),[2] especially in the tradition of CDA.[3] For instance, Van Dijk (2015: 470) refers to the two dimensions of discourse as text and context, and Epstein (2008: 2) stresses the fact that discourses have the ability to frame a certain object and, "therefore, delimit the possibilities for action in relation to it." In the same vein, Wodak distinguishes text from discourses in order to emphasize that discourses "manifest themselves within and *across the social fields of action* as thematically interrelated semiotic, oral or written tokens" (2001: 66;

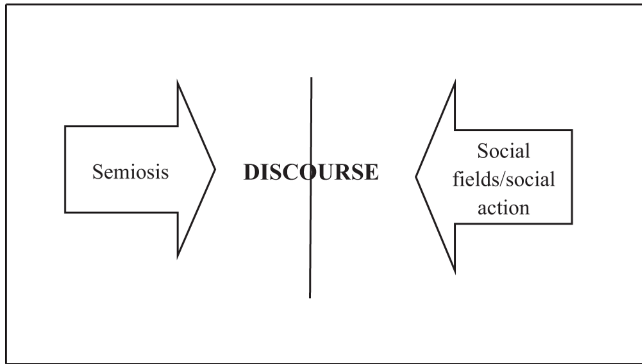

Figure 2.1 Discourse as a bridge-concept.

emphasis added). For his part, Fairclough puts it in very simple terms: "the level of discourse is an intermediate level, a mediating level between the text per se and its social context (social events, social practices, social structures)" (2003: 37; see also Foucault, 1972: 49; or Fairclough, 1992: 62).

Accordingly, discourse can be understood as a bridge-concept between text and social action (see Figure 2.1). In other words, it is the function of how semiotic elements become socially meaningful—inserted in a given social order—and, vice versa, how social action becomes semiotically expressed and organized. From this, we are led to a crucial question: How can we identify and delimit the mediating function of discourse between semiotic ensembles and social action? On one side of the bridge, texts can be conceived as "materially durable products of linguistic actions" (Wodak, 2001: 66). They can be analyzed properly in semiotic terms, focusing on their orders, sequences, and internal interrelations. If we look at the other side of the bridge—unavoidable if we want to understand "text in context," that is, discourse—the question becomes more complex, requiring a more general analysis of how human activity is socially organized and related to discourse.

Social practices and the meso level context

Following Trimithiotis (2018: 161), there are two contextual levels that can be distinguished in the study of discourse: first, the meso level of production of discourse (cognition and action); and second, the broader sociopolitical and historical context (see also Wodak, 2001: 67). These contextual levels have been explored in discourse research, granting them more or less attention depending on the interests of the researcher and the topic and field of the research. At the first contextual level, it is possible to identify discursive practices, as well as other social practices. Social practices are conceived here as the "embodied, materially mediated arrays of human activity centrally organized around shared

practical understanding" (Schatzki, 2001: 11). In similar terms, Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999: 21) conceive of social practices as "habitualised ways, tied to particular times and places, in which people apply resources (material or symbolic) to act together in the world" (for similar definitions, see Bevir, 2015; Keller et al., 2018). Discursive practices, by contrast, can be defined as communicative activities primarily concerned with the selection, retention, production, and enactment of semiotic ensembles used in certain contexts and periods and with specific patterns of formation and treatment of particular objects and subjects. However, all social practices involve processes of meaning-making or semiosis to some extent. As Fairclough et al. (2002) explain:

> The relative weight of these different elements within the overall configuration of a social action is bound to vary from case to case. In this regard it is worth noting that there is a range of "semioticity" insofar as different social actions, events, or social orders may be more or less semioticised. Indeed, one might be able to construct a continuum ranging from technological systems through to religion in terms of the relative weight of semiosis and materiality in their overall.
>
> (p. 4)

Therefore, although discourse may, in fact, penetrate all fields of social action, it does so in variable ways, and this variability and regularity is explained by a certain social structuration of the fields of action. In this vein, Wrana and Langer (2007) reject the simple choice between the discursive and non-discursive to focus instead on the analysis of the interpenetration and relational constitution of various forms of social action:

> Practices are not simply discursive or non-discursive, but rather contain [...] the discursive in different ways. This is a basic axiom of structural analysis, namely that all objects must be examined not in their identities but in their relations, as Bourdieu (1994, p. 29) argues.
>
> (p. 26; author's translation)

Macro sociopolitical context

Discourse researchers usually refer to social structures in relation to discourse (Wodak, 2001; Fairclough, 2003; Van Dijk, 2015). This captures the idea of how discourses are embedded in broader sociopolitical contexts. Such structures are the temporary outcomes of social practices, but they can also be said to develop their "own life"—*Eigenleben*, as Bührmann and Schneider (2007: 21) put it. This means that these structures have their own sphere of autonomy. That is why it is worthwhile to analyze them at a specific level (see Archer, 2000, 2010; Donati, 2016). The structures are conceived of as durable edifices that

tend to persist due to at least two elements: first, their prediscursive character (as it is the case of some biological or physical basic structures); and second, their condition as "non-sayable" or taken-for-granted entities. In their dynamic and constitutive dimensions, we can analyze their *processes of structuration* as sets of constrictors and facilitators of human action that fluctuate through moments of continuity, conjunctures, and crises.

Accordingly, it is expected that these structures consistently impact on discursive and social practices in the form of productive/constraining power effects. However, this impact is not mechanical or univocal but complex and subject to variations—derived from the contingency of such structures—and this nature can be analyzed at the level of the discursive and social practices of specific actors. This is, in fact, one of the ways used to account for the effects of social and symbolic structures over the configurations of events and practices. The practices reproducing such structures can be analyzed to infer their structural constraints and facilitators. Most studies with this approach draw on the concept of *habitus* of Bourdieu that refers to the internalization of generative schemes, structurally derived, that condition our actions (Bourdieu, 1977: 95; see also Warczok and Zarycki, 2014). Another way to capture how social structures govern action is to explore them on their own, attending to their own mechanisms, organizations, and procedures (Sum and Jessop, 2013; Donati, 2016).

It is also possible to distinguish between social structures and symbolic orders (Keller, 2012: 66) with specific patterns of structuration. As a term, "symbolic orders" is used here to refer to the configurations and stabilizations of interdiscursive relations in a given domain or field. In this same vein, Fairclough (1992) defines orders of discourse as "the totality of discursive practices within an institution or society, and the relationships between them" (p. 43), for instance, the symbolic order in the school system of a given place, or even the symbolic order of a given society regarding a particular topic. To be relatively stable (keeping in mind that they are ultimately historically contingent), a given symbolic order needs a complex network of relations, achieved not only through discursive practices but also through other social practices and institutions. Following Jäger (2001: 34), there are certain discourses and discursive practices that can be "institutionally reinforced." This brings to the fore the central question of the interrelations between heterogeneous elements (social and symbolic) at the structural level, and how this, in turn, is related to discursive and social practices. This question also concerned Foucault, who proposed to think about the matter in a more flexible and less deterministic way, arriving at the idea of the *dispositif*. This was an attempt to avoid both the absolutism of "subjectivism" (the intentions and actions of actors) and the determinism of the structure (omitting the ability to transform and contest the structural effects). In the following section, I outline the notion of the dispositif and how it is useful to explore the topic addressed in the current work.

The dispositif perspective

The dispositif perspective brings the researcher's attention to the heterogeneous sets of relations articulated at the contextual level and entailing symbolic, material, and social elements (Foucault, 1977: 194). This is not a specific method but a research perspective with which to study the contextual dimensions in discourse research (see Kratzwald, 2013: 134; Bührmann and Schneider, 2007). In the words of Hamann et al. (2019: 52), it is a "concept that tries to capture and link the heterogeneous textual and non-textual context conditions in which discourses emerge." As it has been previously discussed, the populism–Euroscepticism nexus at the discursive level is not produced in a vacuum; these discursive practices are embedded within certain contexts and responding to particular symbolic orders about Europe and the EU. The concept of the dispositif was initially used by Foucault to study disciplinary and imprisonment apparatuses; in this case, a series of discourses, practices, regulations, and laws are assembled to form specific dispositifs of imprisonment or discipline (Foucault, 1975). More recently, other authors have used the dispositif perspective to study discourses, practices, and regulations pertaining to household waste and recycling (Keller, 2012) and with the construction of the object "drugs" (Herschinger, 2015), as well as to explore the various apparatuses of governance (Brigg, 2005). In the words of Foucault (1977), the dispositif or apparatus can be defined as

> a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions—in short, the said as much as the unsaid. Such are the elements of the apparatus. The apparatus itself is the system of relations that can be established between these elements.
>
> (p. 194)

Following Foucault (1977), the dispositif emerges in response to a specific problem or urgency, and it is defined in strategic terms (see also Sum and Jessop, 2013: 113). Foucault defines two moments in the genesis and development of a dispositif: (1) a first moment in which the strategic objective clearly prevails; (2) and a second moment, which is the persistence of the dispositif on the basis of a "functional overdetermination," readjustments and reworkings, and a "perpetual process of strategic elaboration" (Foucault, 1977: 195). In the same vein, Keller (2018: 37) refers to the notion of the dispositif as the "infrastructures of intervention and implementation" that respond to a discursively posited social problem; for instance, the set of institutions, discourses, organizations, spokespersons, regulations, or laws emerging as a response to the so-called "refugee crisis" (Ibid.). Thus, the study of dispositifs seeks to identify systems of relations between discourses, regulations, laws, and actors that are *strategically established* to produce particular effects to respond to a

"social problem" (e.g., drugs, a refugee crisis, or the regional or transnational political integration of a polity). Following Keller (2018a), the dispositif is a middle-range concept that sits between structures and practices. The strategic character of the dispositif is not derived from a single decision center—a powerful actor rationally deciding the direction, strategy, and effects of the dispositif. Instead, there is a convergence, negotiation, and struggle among contradictory and confronting actors and strategies, which crystallize in the formation of the dispositif over time and correspond to specific periods (see Diaz Bone, 2017: 9; Raffnsøe et al., 2016: 279). What follows from this is that the identification of a single dispositif can only be conceived of as a contingent formation during a particular period, which then tends to be contested, rearticulated, and transformed over time.

Europeanization, dispositifs, and discursive articulations

The notion of dispositif as such appears highly abstract, and by itself, it does not offer many hints about the operationalization and the precise study of dispositifs in relation to discursive articulations on populism and Euroscepticism. Thus, it is necessary to delimitate how it can be applied to the study of discourse, and in particular, to the populism–Euroscepticism nexus. Chapter 1 argued that Europeanization matters to explore the discursive practices of radical parties on the EU. Europeanization processes serve to reorient or reshape the politics in the domestic arena in "ways that reflect policies, practices or preferences advanced through the EU system of governance" (Bache and Jordan, 2006: 30; see also Bache et al., 2011: 124; Saurugger and Radaelli, 2008). This complex process of "reshaping" domestic politics entails back and forth processes, feedback loops, and contestation.

Therefore, a macro-contextual level can be identified to explore the processes of "vertical Europeanization" that impact on the national polities (Spain and Germany). The effects of these Europeanization processes are conceived of as diffuse effects on the national "environments," without impacting directly or mechanically on actors. For instance, the degree of change induced by Europeanization and the form of governance in the relationship between a member state and the EU[4] may have different effects on the political national context (Mair, 2007; Ladrech, 2009). However, to precisely capture the contextual dimension in a discourse-oriented study, it is necessary to focus on the interpretation and representation of these effects by particular actors. (Van Dijk, 2015: 469; see also Van Leeuwen, 2008: 6). Furthermore, it is possible to identify the dispositifs of Europeanization and the various discursive and social practices of the actors at the meso level. The dispositifs of Europeanization are contingent systems of relations among discourses, actors, public policies, and strategies at the domestic level. The notion of the dispositif allows us to capture relations of knowledge and power between dominant and subaltern actors within processes of "horizontal Europeanization" (Radaelli, 2003, 2004). The dispositifs of Europeanization produce a particular symbolic order

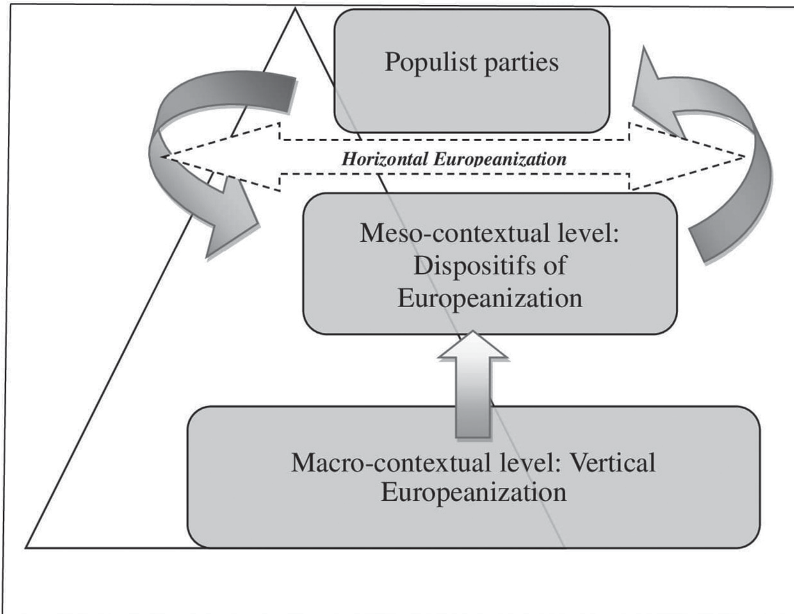

Figure 2.2 The dispositifs and the two contextual levels.

on Europe and the EU during a specific period and establish relations between discourses, public policies, actors, and general strategies. Additionally, populist actors radical parties can also contest, and they can favor counter-hegemonic alternative discourses and practices that influence the dispositif ensemble (see Diaz Bone, 2017: 9). As Radaelli (2012: 2) observes, "by resisting and opposing Europe, social and political collective actors define and constrain the role of the EU in policy and politics in their countries."

Therefore, the discursive practices analyzed in this work are contextualized in relation to the two levels outlined above—the macro- and meso-contextual levels. Figure 2.2 displays the interrelations between these contextual levels and the discursive practices of radical parties. However, what is still unclear is how to explore the interrelations across this two-layered context. To fully understand the interrelation between dispositifs and actors from a discourse-oriented angle, it is necessary to include the notion of power in relation to discourse (see Foucault, 1977, 2003; Fairclough, 2003; Schmidt, 2008, 2017; Van Dijk, 2015).

Power and discourse

The critical gaze that is usually involved in discourse-oriented approaches in political science implies scholars' significant interest in power hierarchies and

power relations. In fact, critical discourse studies (CDS) aims at linking critical social theory—the analysis of power, naturalization of social conventions, and social orders—with discourse analysis (Van Dijk, 2015: 466; Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012: 78). In political science, more generally, there is an extensive body of research focused on power as an act of dominance of one group or individuals over others. Thus, we have Mills's emblematic work, *The Power Elite* (1963), as well as Hunter's *Community Power Structure: A Study of Decision Makers* (1963), which describe the control and domination of an elite class over a population. In his book, *Power: A Radical View* (2005), Lukes establishes an interesting distinction, which, to a certain extent, modifies his previous elaborations on power. Lukes rightly and succinctly notes that "power as domination, is only one species of power" (p. 12). He argues that power is essentially a capacity, and frequently, it is not directly exerted because the interests, values, and desires of the various groups of people coincide—including the dominant and subaltern groups. This is what Gramsci (1999: 186–7) initially theorized as hegemony and consent. According to this general perspective, the power to define the valuable, achievable, and desirable in life for certain groups becomes crucial to analyze power relations. Power relations, therefore, exceed the domination of one group over another and encompass more subtle struggles about what is to be defined and how it is defined. Consequently, this activity connects power and discourse in very relevant ways.

This line of reasoning has many parallels with Foucault's approach to power. Foucault's turn from archeology to genealogy marked an increasing, or at least more explicit, interest in power relations and power strategies. Especially from the time of the publication of his book *Discipline and Punish* (1975), Foucault brought to the fore the strategies of power that are behind particular discursive formations. As it is common in Foucault's works, it is difficult to find a clear-cut, formally formulated definition of power; instead, we find a set of dispersed reflections on how the main regularities and functionalities of power enter into motion. Foucault's conception of power expands the narrow idea of a force repressing or prohibiting particular behaviors or situations to conceive of it fundamentally as a productive instance, a force to orient and guide social actions. In his words, power is better understood "as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression" (Foucault, 1977: 119; see also Foucault, 2008: 186). There are various modalities of power that can be historically situated, and they deploy specific technologies, apparatuses, and procedures in specific fields. In order to develop an operative conception of power, it is helpful to identify its various types. As a capacity, power can be estimated by evaluating specific actors—individual or collective—endowed with certain material or symbolic capacities or entitlements (see Van Dijk, 2015). This is a static analysis of power, comparing the potential of certain actors to access material or symbolic resources and, therefore, be authorized to act and talk. As Van Dijk (2015) observes,

> […] groups have (more or less) power if they are able to (more or less) control the acts and minds of (members of) other groups. This ability presupposes a power base of privileged access to scarce social resources, such as force, money, status, fame, knowledge, information, "culture," or indeed various forms of public discourse and communication (Mayr 2008).
>
> (p. 469)

When discussing the interactions between actors, or between actors and structures, we can turn to a dynamic analysis of power as a relation. Among these relations, a first relation of domination can be distinguished, in which imposition or coercion is manifest. We can refer to this relation of power as *power over* other groups, actors, or social practices (Jäger, 2001: 34; Van Dijk, 2015: 470–1; Schmidt, 2017: 252). For instance, when an individual, group, or institution exert coercion over another to behave in a particular way. However, this type of asymmetrical power relation always includes power without domination; that is, the ability to *facilitate* conduct without coercion. One way to explore this non-coercive power is by analyzing *power in discourse*—that is, the power in structures of knowledge entangled with practices, regulations, and norms that define what is sayable and doable and what is not (see Schmidt, 2017: 11; Hayward and Lukes, 2008: 15). As explained previously, the dispositifs of Europeanization are temporary arrangements that ensure the circulation of *power in discourse* through "relatively durable meanings and expectations, sustained by systems of reward and sanction, which make some forms of action, if not impossible, then highly improbable, and others, if not inevitable, then exceedingly likely" (Hayward and Lukes, 2008: 15).

Control of the power mechanisms is never total, as there is always resistance. Therefore, following Foucault (1977), relations of power and resistance are inextricably linked. The power in discourse and the hegemonic relations that discursively articulate the social can be contested with the *power through discourse* of contesting actors (Carstensen and Schmidt, 2016: 323–6). As Saurugger and Radaelli (2008) observe when discussing Europeanization,

> [d]omestic actors draw on EU resources and, by using transformative strategies (including discourse), modify power relations. Thus, instead of a causal chain going down from the EU to the domestic level, we have multiple pathways through which the EU pressure is refracted, and in some cases rhetorically amplified if not construed.
>
> (p. 215)

We can now expand in greater detail the notion of *power through discourse*, as it is especially relevant for the topic of this research. This form of power is the actor-centered power to contest and create new discursive articulations—precisely the focus of this research that is centered on the populism–Euroscepticism nexus. The concept of articulation captures the agential ability of certain actors to produce novel and sometimes challenging discourses. Following De

Cleen and Stavrakakis (2017: 5), articulation can be conceived of as "the practice of bringing together pre-existing discursive elements in a particular way in a (hegemonic) bid to construct a more or less novel arrangement of meaning" (see also Zienkowski, 2017: 45–46). The power through discourse involves excluding/including or recontextualizing particular social processes or actors (Van Leeuwen, 2008). For instance, following Herzog (2016: 83), "housework seemed largely ignored by early discourses on the national economy." However, there are currently attempts to incorporate housework into value-creation discourses and national economy discourses. In accordance with Herzog, we can further distinguish types of practices based on their relations of inclusion/exclusion to a particular discourse. There are practices produced by discourses and practices "to which discourses give a specific social sense" (Ibid.). When analyzing practices produced by discourse, we refer to how discourses provide reasons to act in certain ways and not in others. As Sum and Jessop (2013: 149) explain, "construals may help to constitute the natural and social world in so far as they guide a critical mass of self-confirming actions premised on their validity."

In party politics, it is easy to find discursive practices that provide templates for actions in specific areas. In the case of populist articulations on the EU, political actors may provide different templates of action related to the possible changes and transformations that the EU should carry out. Moreover, there are practices that are not directly produced or induced by discourse, but the discursive practices attach meaning to them, by including/excluding them in particular discourses. In this case, discourses provide general understandings and definitions of a particular activity or actor. For instance, the practice of drug consumption is related in different ways (depending on context and time) with medical discourses, discourses on criminality, and discourses on poverty and social exclusion. These relations between discourses and practices can be defined in terms of processes of inclusion/exclusion linked to the *power through discourse* of actors.

Table 2.1 summarizes the different types of power and how they can be identified in the contextual and actor-centered level proposed in this book. At the macro-contextual level, the exploration of vertical Europeanization is related to several forms of power. First, one can identify different power capacities among the relevant actors (e.g., member states). We can evaluate the power over different material and symbolic resources of these actors and connect this to the process of vertical Europeanization and the three forms of governance at the EU level: by hierarchy, by negotiation, and by facilitated coordination (Bulmer and Radaelli, 2004). At the macro-contextual level, there are also forms of Europeanization based on power in discourse that are related to the normative-cognitive structures and their diffusion. At the meso level, the crucial level of contextual analysis in this book, one can explore the relations of power between the dispositifs of Europeanization and political parties. The power in discourse of the dispositifs can be specified as processes of diffusion at the level of the political sphere using normative pressures and constraining

Table 2.1 Types of power, context, and discourse

	Macro-contextual level: *EU-national polities*	***Meso-contextual level:*** *dispositifs-political sphere-political actors*	***Actor level:*** *political parties-dispositifs*
Power over	Relations of the EU and the member states (coercion and power capacities)	N/A	Relations between political parties (power capacities)
Power in	Diffusion of hegemonic discourses, paradigms, and normative-cognitive structures (Facilitated coordination)	Diffusion of hegemonic discourses, paradigms, and normative-cognitive structures (normative pressures and constrains)	N/A
Power through	N/A		Power to contest the symbolic orders on the EU

the ability to act and speak of the actors. At the actor level, it is possible to distinguish between the power capacities and power relations among the various parties in the political sphere. The study of the power through discourse of the actors is critical in this work. As explained above, this study is primarily concerned with the ways to articulate EU contestation and populism and the capacity of particular actors to discursively contest the symbolic orders of the EU.

In summary, the three forms of power described above constitute a way to demarcate the relations between more or less powerful actors, dispositifs, and discursive and social practices. As such, this demarcation allows for the exploration of the interplay between the dispositifs of Europeanization and the discursive and social practices of radical right and radical left parties (actors).

Operationalizing power, discourse, and dispositifs of Europeanization

The context of the populism–Euroscepticism nexus

The analysis of vertical Europeanization is used in this study to evaluate, in general, the effects on the political environments in Spain and Germany. Vertical Europeanization may result in processes of transformation, absorption, or inertia depending on the degree of change of a country during a particular period and based on EU policies, regulations, or discourses (Radaelli, 2003,

2004; Balkir et al., 2013: 127; Bache 2008). The other aspect that is considered to describe the processes of vertical Europeanization in Spain and Germany is the primary form of governance between the EU and the member states during certain periods. The latter is necessary to identify whether, for instance, in the case of transformation, there has been coercion, or whether what has been produced is what Radaelli calls facilitated coordination (Bulmer and Radaelli, 2004; see also Bulmer and Padgett, 2005: 104). The same type of evaluation can be applied when identifying processes of inertia in the member states. The primary relations of power mediating the type of change at the macro level are crucial for correctly describing these processes and the effects on the political national environments. This analysis of vertical Europeanization serves to identify "an environment" in which dispositifs of Europeanization and political actors operate. This is especially relevant to determine specific strategies that are in the origin of the dispositifs and relations of power in terms of material and symbolic resources (*power over*). Following Foucault (1977: 195), it is critical to identify a certain strategic origin of the dispositifs during specific periods. In other words, the political environment at the national level produced by vertical Europeanization shapes the initial strategic orientation of the dispositifs. For instance, the strategic orientation of a dispositif in a period of coercive Europeanization to impose certain EU policies to a member state is different than a dispositif formed to upload policies, discourses, or paradigms to the EU level.

At the meso-contextual level, the primary goal is to capture the interrelations between the dispositifs and radical parties. As explained above, the dispositifs of Europeanization are conceived of as the crystallization in certain periods of ensembles of policies, discourses, strategies, and actors related to Europeanization and the EU. The dispositifs are expected to impact on the discursive practices of the radical parties, constraining or facilitating specific discursive practices regarding Europe or the EU (Raffnsøe et al., 2014: 4; see also Diaz-Bone, 2017: 9; Keller, 2012: 65). The power relations between the dispositifs and the populist actors radical parties can be defined as *power in discourse*—that is, the power in structures of knowledge that defines what is sayable and doable and what it is not (see Schimdt, 2017: 11; Hayward and Lukes, 2008: 15). These structures of meaning are consistently exerting pressures on what is expected to be said and thought, although, as we will see below, these pressures also encounter significant limitations. To operationalize the power in discourse circulating across the dispositifs of Europeanization and influencing the actors' strategies and discursive practices, I combine categories derived from both EU studies and discourse analysis. These categories are normative pressures (Saurugger, 2013: 893; see also Dimaggio and Powell, 1983; March and Olsen, 1984), invitations to emulate (mimetism), and invitations to transform (persuasion) (Radaelli, 2008: 244; Saurugger, 2013; Carpentier, 2019), each of which is described in detail below. These dispositifs' potential effects respond to a general idea borrowed from sociological institutionalism when studying organizations and norm diffusion: "isomorphic change." Sociological institutionalism argues

that "actors replicate organizational models collectively sanctioned as appropriate and legitimate" (Saurugger, 2013: 893; see Dimaggio and Powell, 1983; March and Olsen 1984). Let me turn now to the three analytical categories.

First, *normative pressures* can be discursively analyzed as forms used to delegitimize the opponent before a generally assumed or taken-for-granted representation or problematization of the EU. Against the backdrop of what is appropriate to be said and done about the EU, actors within the dispositif can strategically use normative pressures on other actors in the political sphere to discredit them or their alternative views of the EU. These pressures can be observed through the discursive processes of delegitimation, *othering*, or the stigmatization of the opponents. Second, as it pertains to *invitations to emulate*, the power in discourse invested in the dispositifs operates in a more silent manner. The representations or problematizations about the EU that have been sedimented over time generate particular invitations to be emulated. This occurs not only because of the socialization processes in the political sphere but also because powerful and legitimate representations tend to be reproduced. This, then, is a strategic response by the political actors to adapt and survive in a hostile environment. It can be observed when evaluating the inability over time to successfully propose alternative views of a populist actor, or when an actor partially replicates dominant representations without assuming the entire dominant discourse (Radaelli, 2008: 244).

Third, with the *invitations to transform*, the actors within the dispositif invite outsiders to change. Here, there is an internalization of the representations and problematizations about Europe and the EU proposed by these dominant actors. In this case, this practice is conceived of as a process of "thick learning" (Radaelli, 2008: 244) or socialization, rather than a strategic move on the part of the populist actors radical parties. In the words of Saurugger "socialization occurs when norms, worldviews, collective understandings are internalized, and subsequently are codified by a group of actors" (2013: 894). This occurs, and can be observed, in the discursive data when one "contesting actor" fully assumes the discursive articulations produced by another actor within the dispositif and fundamentally changes its position regarding a topic. Hence, the dispositifs are contingent arrangements through which power in discourse circulates with the potential to produce "isomorphic change" in the various actors of the political sphere, including populist actors radical parties. The forms of contestation and capacities of populist actors radical parties are due to be evaluated in their interactions with the above-described effects.

How to capture power through discourse

No matter how anchored the discourses about the EU and Europe are in the background stock of knowledge, they can be always questioned, challenged, or modified. This is especially likely in times of uncertainty and phenomenological disturbance—what Gramsci (1999: 450–63) called the "crisis of hegemony." As Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) observe:

> Crises create the space for competing "strategic interventions" to significantly redirect the course of events as well as for attempts to "muddle through", and which strategies prevail partly depends upon "discursive struggles" between different "narratives" of the nature, causes and significance of the crisis and how it might be resolved, including economic and political "imaginaries" for possible future states of affairs and systems.
>
> (p. 3)

This ability to change prior discourses or dispositifs is what we have called *power through discourse*. Articulations, as "the practice of bringing together pre-existing discursive elements in a particular way" (De Cleen and Stavrakakis, 2017: 5), are the basic analytical units used to capture the meaning-making activities of the actors. The populist actors radical parties may respond to the hegemonic discourses in various ways: they may oppose or reject certain discourses and representations induced by the dispositifs; they may rearticulate the dispositifs' discourses and representations in different combinations; or they may merely reproduce the discourses prevalent in the dispositifs (for a parallel analysis on policy change and resistance, see Saurugger et al., 2015: 8). The effectiveness of power through discourse can be measured by analyzing the prevalence of an actor's new articulations, together with the success of the actor.

To measure the prevalence and success of a political party, one must conduct two analytical tasks. First, it is necessary to analyze and evaluate the types of articulations developed by the populist actors radical parties and compare them with the sedimented representations of Europe and the EU in the dispositifs. In this way, one can observe the extent to which populist actors' radical parties radical parties articulations differ or are similar to the sedimented discourses and representations. The second crucial analytical task is to evaluate the extent to which these populist actors radical parties' articulations persist over time or change, as well as their degree of saliency vis-à-vis other discursive topics. To evaluate the type of articulations of the populist actors radical parties (opposition, rearticulation, or reproduction) and to compare these them with the symbolic order of the dispositifs, this book relies on discourse research methodologies. There are two main ways to evaluate and compare the discursive practices of actors in this sense: exploring the various forms to *represent* a given object, subject, or process; and analyze how this object, subject, or process is embedded into broader *problematizations* and *argumentation schemes* (Wilson, 2015; Kirvalidze and Samnidze, 2016). In this sense, Figure 2.3 displays the interrelations between the dispositifs of Europeanization and radical parties, analyzed from a discourse-oriented angle in which representation and problematization are central categories of analysis.

Representation

Representation is the primary way to capture how actors discursively construct an object, subject, or process. Following Hall (1997: 1), language

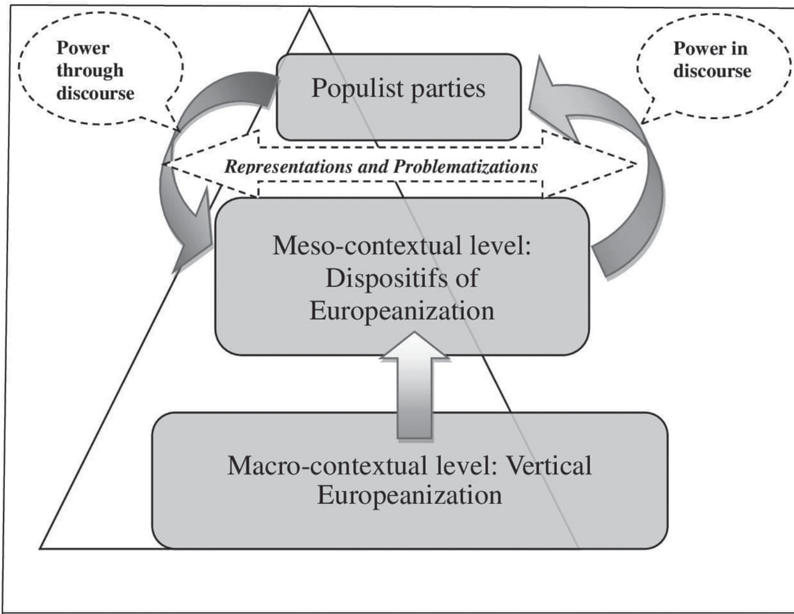

Figure 2.3 The dispositifs, power in discourse, and power through discourse.

functions "as a representational system." Linguistic representation is the link "between concepts and language which enables us to refer to either the 'real' world of objects, people or events, or indeed the imaginary worlds of fictional objects, people and events" (Ibid.: 17). Following Van Leeuwen (2008: 43), representing is to recontextualize social practices, events, or actors (see also Fairclough, 2003). Thus, the analysis of representation offers substantial evidence regarding how particular actors articulate discursive elements referring, on the one hand, to Europe and the EU, and on the other, to the popular identity.

I draw especially on Van Leeuwen (2008) to identify, order, and classify the various representations of the actors. Van Leeuwen distinguishes three main forms to construct subjects and to represent social actors: identification, functionalization, and classification (pp. 42–46). Identification occurs when social actors are defined by what they are—their styles and identities. Conversely, functionalization focuses on what types of activities the actors undertake. Finally, classification is when "social actors are referred to in terms of the major categories by means of which a given society or institution differentiates between classes of people" (Ibid.: 42). Exploring the functionalization, identification, and classification functions is critical to uncover the various forms to construct the popular identity, allowing us to compare right–and left-leaning populism. This also applies to the analysis of

the antagonists of "the people"—the so-called elites—and other out-groups excluded from "the people." In the case of Euroscepticism, the paramount analytical task is to capture and compare the forms used to represent the object "Europe" and the object "EU." This work concerns not only uncovering the positive or negative representations of these "objects" but also the relevant processes, subjects, or interrelations among objects; for instance, to identify whether Europe is constructed in connection with economic processes or with cultural, social, or political processes.

Problematizations and argumentation schemes

Foucault, especially in his late work, uses the term problematization to refer to those historically contingent forms used to order objects and subjects within rules of action and causal chains. Beyond the specific representations of objects, subjects, and processes, the analysis of problematizations allows us to investigate these elements inserted into broader causal chains or systems of relations. Keller (2013) uses the notion of phenomenal structures to refer to the forms of problematization, whereby "discourses, in the constitution of their referential relationship (or their 'theme') designate a variety of elements and combine them into a specific form of constitution of phenomena, a structure or constellation of a problem" (p. 7). This idea is paramount for the two dimensions analyzed in this book. First, populism is not only a discourse constructing "the people" and "the elites" but also a relation between them, as well as the act of situating that antagonistic relationship in the center of the political. To put it simply, it is a particular way to problematize the political. Regarding Europe and the EU, the actors can insert Europe and the EU into various problematizations and connect them with particular problems and causal argumentations. In sum, the analysis of problematizations informs us about the ways to articulate Europe and the EU, and also about the relations with the populist discourse.

To grasp the problematizations articulated by the actors, I rely on the joint analysis of representations and argumentation schemes. Argumentation schemes, or *topoi*, in terms of Wodak (2015: 52), are crucial features of the discursive practices of political parties since they are policy-oriented actors that need to justify particular measures, political processes, or actions. It is expected that the various argumentation schemes exhibited by the parties offer substantial evidence to reconstruct how populism and Europe came to be integrated into problematizations. Wodak distinguishes several topoi (Wodak, 2015: 52–53) in her study on right-wing populism that are especially relevant for the current research (see Table 2.2). The basic structure of an argumentative scheme is formed by a warrant, an argument, and a claim. The warrant is the final rule that supports a specific claim. As an example, "If authority X says that A is true, then A is true." The argument is the description of a specific situation, such as "X says that A is true," and it is connected to the consequent claim: "Thus, A is true" (Wodak, 2015: 52).

Table 2.2 List of content-related topoi

Topos	*Warrant*
People	If the people favor/refuse a specific political action, the action should be performed/not performed
Advantage or usefulness	If an action under a specific relevant point of view would be useful, then one should perform it
Threat or danger	If there are specific dangers or threats, one should do something about them
Savior	If danger is to be expected because of X, and if A has saved us in the past, then A will be able to save us again

Source: Extracted from Wodak (2015: 53).

Case selection and comparative discourse analysis

This book aims to explore the populism–Euroscepticism nexus and to capture the complexity of this topic it explores deeply one instance of a radical left-wing party (RLP) and other of a radical right-wing party (RRP) exhibiting populist discourses. This is the case of Podemos in Spain and the Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) in Germany. Following the work of several scholars, both Podemos and the AfD emerged on the political landscape by making use of a prominent populist discourse that establishes "the people" versus certain elites. In the case of Podemos, there is ample evidence on its populist discursive articulation and its left-wing orientation (see Kioupkiolis, 2016; Kioupkiolis and Seoane Pérez, 2019; Sola and Rendueles, 2017; Salgado and Stavrakakis, 2019; Roch, 2021, 2022). The relevance of this party, founded in 2014, has been demonstrated in several local, regional, and national elections. In the last 2019 general election in Spain they gained 14.3 percent of the vote (although dropping from the 21.2 percent obtained in 2016). Regarding the AfD, it is generally identified in the literature as a right-wing populist party, and this has become especially true after the leadership shift that occurred in April 2015 (Grimm, 2015: 272–3; Berbuir et al., 2015 173–4; Havertz, 2018: 5; Franzmann, 2016: 2; Lees, 2018: 11). In the 2017 federal election in Germany, the AfD consolidated its power, garnering 12.6 percent of the popular vote and most recently, it stabilized by achieving 11 percent of the vote in the 2019 European Parliamentary election and 10.3 percent in the 2021 federal election

Although this makes the parties suitable for comparison as instances of right and left populism, it is still legitimate to question, first, what makes this comparison especially fruitful, and second, why limit the comparison to these two cases. Regarding the number of cases, there are methodological and practical reasons for this choice. As it was clarified in the introductory chapter, this is a discursive-oriented study on the populist articulations on Europe and the EU. This implies that the discourse analysis of the articulations is not only limited to the texts produced by the parties but also entails the analysis of the

contexts of their production. Hence, the discursive analysis of the texts in context, including interrelations across the contextual levels (meso and macro), requires dense historical analysis. Because of this intensive work, the qualitative analysis required for this type of study prevents the inclusion of a large number of cases.

Regarding the potential of this specific comparison between Podemos and the AfD in their contexts it is precise to remark that these parties have parallels in their origins and evolution that facilitates their comparison. Both are relatively young political parties that emerged in the aftermath of the euro crisis—Podemos in 2014, and the AfD in 2013. They represented alternative responses to the crisis: the Podemos party was set against the EU's austerity measures (Sola and Rendueles, 2018; Franzé, 2018; Castells, 2018), and the AfD was against the bailouts of EU countries (Howarth and Rommerskirchen, 2013; Lees, 2018). Thus, both parties express a reaction to the insecurity, uncertainty, and precariousness associated with the euro crisis (Castells, 2018; Offe, 2018). Secondly, the two parties also have similar and comparable paths of evolution and consolidation. The first electoral success of the parties came with the May 2014 European parliamentary election, in which the AfD garnered 7.1 percent of the national vote and the Podemos achieved eight percent. After this election, both parties evolved, moving through various stages and party leadership shifts until the general election in Spain in 2016 and the federal election in Germany in 2017. In June 2016, Podemos earned 21.1 percent of the vote, and 71 deputies in the Spanish Parliament after two consecutive general elections.[5] For its part, the AfD entered into the German Bundestag in September 2017 with 12.6 percent of the vote and 94 seats. The two parties became the third political force in their respective nationwide elections, and after an unexpected rise in the 2014 European Parliamentary elections. They are currently in a period of decline /stabilization /institutionalization which is also useful for the analysis developed in this book. These parallel origins and development are relevant because this book places a strong emphasis on the analysis of the diachronic variation of populism and EU contestation. The parallel evolution and consolidation of the two parties make it possible to compare them over time and in different stages of development. This work would become more complicated if the comparison was made, for instance, between Podemos and the French Rassemblement National, as the latter became a consolidated party years before the former.

The second major justification for this specific comparison concerns the parties and their contexts. It is important to note that the method to deal with context in this comparative study differs from what might be expected in conventional political science comparative analyses. Whereas in conventional comparative analyses, the goal is to minimize the effects of the contexts to isolate certain independent variables (Lijphart, 1971; Gerring, 2007), in this discursive comparative study, the variability of the two contexts is a fundamental part of the analysis. Thus, the goal is not to minimize or control for the effects of the contexts, but rather, to systematically capture and compare

them. This is based on a different understanding and analysis of context in interpretivist comparative studies. In this type of work, contexts are conceived of as entangled with social and discursive practices, and not separate from them (see Van Dijk, 2005: 75; Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 2010: 1215; Maillat and Oswald, 2011: 66; Trimitoudus, 2018: 163). In accordance with this perspective, it is expected in this book that these two cases offer variability pertaining to the facilitating and constraining effects of the contexts. At the macro-contextual level, Europeanization is expected to affect the national polities and the domestic political spheres in Germany and Spain in different ways. First, Germany, as a founding member and the first major EU economic power, played a greater role in the design of the EU than peripheral, second–or third-generation countries (Featherstone and Kazamias, 2000: 2). Referring back to the power typology presented above, Germany's differential *power over* material and symbolic resources increases its ability to influence the dominant discourses (*power in discourse*) and public policy promoted at the EU level. By contrast, Spain, as a peripheral and second-generation state of southern Europe, is expected to have fewer resources to determine the symbolic order and political processes at the EU level. Historically, during the euro crisis, this power asymmetry intensified and had differential impacts on southern and northern political economies. This also had to do with the divergences of southern and northern political economies, as well as debtor and lender oppositions within the EU (Borrás et al., 1998; Streeck, 2015; Hall, 2017).

In sum, the comparison of the two parties offers insights on the various forms of vertical Europeanization and their impacts in northern and southern European countries. This would not be the case if one were to compare Podemos with another populist party in another southern European country, for instance, a right-wing populist party in Greece; in this case, we would expect to find similar processes of vertical Europeanization in terms of constraints from the EU to the domestic levels. This has implications at the meso-contextual level in which dispositifs and political actors operate. The different "political environments," due to the variable impact of Europeanization are related with the primary strategies, policies and discourses forming the dispositifs, which are distinct in Germany and Spain. Consequently, the interrelations between the dispositifs and the populist actors radical parties show different shapes in Spain and Germany. Hence, the current comparative design offered also the potential to evaluate the diverse dispositifs of Europeanization in a southern and a northern European country, as well as their variation over time. Based on these justifications, it is fair to conclude that the parties AfD and Podemos show sufficient common features to be compared and that they have the potential to offer relevant insights for the discussion on the populism–Euroscepticism nexus. Furthermore, exploring these cases in their German and Spanish contexts is a fruitful enterprise with advantages that are not present in other possible cases of radical right and left parties.

Analytical strategy

For the sake of clarity, this book distinguishes between discourse theory (see Chapter 4) and discourse analytical methods, following Angermuller and others (Angermuller et al., 2014: 6; see also Fairclough, 2003; or Wodak, 2001). As explained above, to analyze discourse is necessary to cover both a textual and a social dimension. Thus, the central procedures for the discourse analysis of this study were designed to explore the texts, but there were also techniques used for the context analysis.

First stage: contextual analysis

In the contextual analysis phase of this study, I combined thick description with textual analysis. To evaluate the processes of vertical Europeanization, I relied on secondary data to capture and describe the main processes of change in Spain and Germany in particular periods (between 1992 and 2011). This secondary data provides information about the main transformations—or lack thereof—in public policy, legal and political structures, and discourses. Based on the analysis of the processes of vertical Europeanization, the temporary crystallization of the dispositifs of Europeanization in Spain and Germany are reconstructed to explore, in a second step, the meso-contexts. To identify the prevalent discourses within the dispositifs, I conducted content analysis of primary textual data. These primary data serve also to reconstruct the contesting discourses within the political sphere during the period 1992–2011. The coding process of the textual units is based on specific categories related to Europe and the EU. I designed the coding scheme based on the research problems and analytical categories provided above.[6] The texts are explored to identify the recurring patterns of representations and problematizations of (1) Europe and the EU; (2) processes, events, or practices closely related to Europe or the EU; and (3) positioned subjects in relations to Europe and the EU. This content analysis is conducted using the software *ATLAS.ti 8.0*, which permits one to collect, classify, code, and comment on multiple textual units.

Second stage: political parties and textual analysis

In the second stage of the analysis, secondary sources and thick description were also used as crucial methods to inform the processes and events surrounding the emergence of Podemos and the AfD. The central part of the analysis is, however, focused on textual material using primary data. To deal with the textual material in the case of the analyses of the Podemos and AfD political parties, the coding scheme is expanded to include (4) the representation of the people; (5) the representation of the elites; (6) the relationship between the people and the elites; and (7) and the main processes, events, and

practices related to the people and popular identity.[7] This is oriented to capture the articulations between populist discourse and EU contestation as one of the main problems addressed in this study. In this second stage, content analysis is combined with quantitative techniques of analysis inspired by corpus linguistic (CL) techniques. This approach was adopted for two closely related reasons: the requirement for fine-grained analysis, and the sizeable textual corpus. CL is especially useful for dealing with large textual corpora, permitting one to efficiently compute and organize text. This research relies on the *WordSmith* 7.1 software (Scott, 2016) to compute the data. These techniques facilitate computer-assisted points of entry into the texts and allow one to identify significant patterns of relationships among the texts, parts of texts, and signifiers.

The research of this book focuses especially on frequency and collocation analysis. Frequency and repetition can indicate recurrent patterns of use of certain words linked to prominent problematizations or representations of a specific topic (e.g., Europe or the popular identity). It also provides information about the salient discourse topics that may be related to the discursive practices of the actors or to discourse events. Furthermore, frequency and repetition serve to identify nodal points that, following Torfing (1999), refer to "privileged discursive points that partially fix meaning within signifying chains" (p. 98). The identification of nodal points is crucial for identifying the interrelations between a specific node word and secondary signifiers. Regarding collocation, it is a linguistic category that refers to recurrent patterns of the co-occurrence of two or more words. Following Halliday's (1985) systemic functional linguistics, the analysis of co-selection patterns of words permits us to capture one of the main forms used to generate patterns of significations (Baker, 2006; Baker and McEnery, 2015; Fairclough, 2003: 131). In the field of linguistics, this has been called semantic prosody; it can be defined as the "constituent aura [*ora*] of meaning with which a form is imbued [*imbiud*] by its collocates" (Louw, 1993: 157; see also Baker, 2006: 101). Collocation analysis is a way to explore the various representations of particular objects, subjects, or processes. Departing from a particular node word ("the people," Europe, the EU), collocation informs us about the investment of meaning into these terms. Since language is a system of representations—selecting some elements and excluding others (Hall, 1997)—collocation reveals the particular words selected to accompany a node word. Collocation is, therefore, the linguistic base from which to explore the various representations of the actors. The systematic analysis of the relationship of particular words with "Europe" or "the popular identity" provides relevant information about semantic structures; consequently, it also offers indicators about the prominent representations, argumentations, and problematizations mobilized by the actors.

Collocation analysis also provides points of reference to manually explore the concordance lines (sequential analysis) in the WordSmith program. For the collocations, the classic span of five words to the left and right of each node word is used (e.g., "Europe" or "people") (see Gabrielatos and Baker, 2008: 11; Germond et al., 2016). To compute which collocates were relevant, their frequency is combined with two measures of significance: mutual information

(MI), and log likelihood. Following Gabrielatos and Baker (2008), this is a fruitful combination, as MI indicates the strength of the collocation and log likelihood serves to filter out the words that are randomly collocated near the node words (p. 11). The value for filtering a collocate was established as three for MI and 15.13 for log likelihood (Gabrielatos and Baker, 2008; Germond et al., 2016). Therefore, the collocates with a minimum frequency of three that appeared in at least two different texts are filtered. However, it is important to note that in this study, such statistical measures were always taken as indicators to guide the qualitative analysis, and not as absolute measures for selecting the data. Likewise, the criteria for the exploration of collocates was flexible. For instance, since there are sub-corpora in which only one text corresponded to a genre (e.g., a party manifesto), the criteria of having a minimum of two texts to select for the collocate would have disregarded all the collocates found exclusively in the genre. In this case, the collocates that appeared in only one text if there was a genre with only one text for a given sub-corpora are considered relevant. The ATLAS.ti 8.0 software is also used to code the text manually when it was not necessary to use computer-assisted techniques, especially during the first phase of the analysis.

These procedures provide a first exploration of the textual corpus to obtain the indicators to qualitatively explore concrete textual fragments. Based on the frequencies and the collocation analysis, the prominent representations and problematizations of the popular identity, the elites, Europe, and the EU are identified and explored. In order to determine the relations of these objects and the relevant processes found in relation to them, a finer qualitative content analysis is required.

Third stage: interpretative reconstruction and comparison

The last phase of the analysis consisted of the interpretation and comparison of both the discursive articulations of the actors and the power in discourse of the dispositifs. This phase of the analysis is divided into two processes: assembling and comparing. The process of assembling consisted of putting together the pieces of evidence gathered during the two stages and reconstructing their interrelations. For each case—Podemos and the AfD— (1) the forms of interaction with the dispositifs and (2) the discursive articulations of the populism–Euroscepticism nexus are summarized. The goal of this stage is to reconstruct and summarize the historical evolution of the dispositifs of Europeanization and the interrelations with the political parties. The process of comparison contrasted the similarities and differences of each case using a diachronic perspective.

Data and textual material

The first analytical phase corresponding to the contextual analysis covered a long period, from 1992 to 2011. The selection of this time span was made after considering what a sufficient period would be to analyze the sedimented

discourses about Europe and the EU and to evaluate, in a subsequent phase, the power in discourse of the dispositifs. It is generally accepted in the EU literature that from the time of the debates on the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, the EU began a period of political conflict and open public debate (Staab, 2008: 20; Bulmer and Joseph, 2016: 739; Beeson and Diez, 2018: 119; Hobolt, 2018: 243). Therefore, this is a reasonable period to explore the historical representations and problematizations deployed at the level of the party system in Spain and Germany, as well as the processes of Europeanization. Additionally, this makes also possible to analyze the discursive struggles between the contesting parties and the dominant parties and to trace the history of such contestation.

During the time span of 1992–2011, the political arenas in Spain and Germany were dominated by two primary actors: a Social Democratic party: the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) in Spain and the Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD) in Germany; and a conservative center-right party: the Partido Popular [PP] in Spain and the Christian Democratic alliance[8] (CDU/CSU) in Germany. The research concentrates on these parties to gain evidence on the main discursive articulations at the political sphere about Europe and the EU during this period. The modes of opposition to the EU in the political sphere during this same period are also analyzed. As textual data, the texts corresponding to all treaty ratification debates in both countries' Parliaments—the Congreso de los Diputados and the Bundestag—from 1992 to 2011 were systematically analyzed. Furthermore, the constitutional amendment of 2011 in the case of Spain and the "bailout program" debate in the German Parliament in 2010 were also explored. Secondary sources illustrating public opinion, relevant social events, and political processes were considered as well in order to complement the textual analytical dimension of this study (Diaz-Bone and Hartz, 2017).

To analyze the AfD and Podemos parties, I gathered a large textual corpus composed of speeches and manifestos issued by the two parties for the period 2013–2022. The speeches of party leaders were used to communicate directly to an audience—the party's potential constituency—and thus, this genre was especially suitable for analyzing the nuances of a populist discourse. For this study, it was crucial to collect textual material in which the comprehensive populist discourse was exhibited. This would not have been the case, for instance, in small press releases or with specific debates in the Parliaments, where these discourses tend to be more policy-oriented. The ideal were those cases when a party representative was appealing to "the people," which is why the critical genre here was speeches given by party leaders. Manifestos were also included because they summarized the main positions and problematizations of the parties and because they complemented the party speeches with a more formal genre. The leadership changes that occurred in both parties during their development made it advisable to divide the analysis of the parties into various periods and to identify the variations among speakers within the parties. As I explain in detail below, I identified three equivalent stages for Podemos and the AfD: (1) "Party in the making," (2) "Running for elections,"

Table 2.3 Textual material for the first stage

Events	*Spain*	*Germany*
Ratification of the Maastricht Treaty	29 October 1992	2 December 1992
Ratification of the Amsterdam Treaty	1 October 1998	5 March 1998
Ratification of the Nice Treaty	4 October 2001	18 October 2001
Ratification of the Constitutional Treaty	28 April 2005	12 May 2005
Ratification of the Lisbon Treaty	26 June 2008	24 April 2008
Approval of the Constitutional reform	2 September 2011	N/A
Approval of the “bailout package”	N/A	7 May 2010

(3) and “Party in opposition/in office.” The speeches selected were delivered by the main representatives of the party—the party leaders (see Table 2.3). The speakers varied across time since the organizational structure and leadership of the parties changed after the various party Congresses and due to the evolutionary growth of the parties. As seen in Table 2.3, the different time periods were identified based on the evolution of the parties and the critical events of each such evolution.

Initially, both parties ran candidates in the 2014 European Parliamentary elections. In the case of the AfD, the party was formed in February 2013 to compete in the September 2013 German federal election, but they did not meet the five percent electoral threshold to enter the German Bundestag. Thus, the AfD formally entered the German political landscape after the May 2014 European Parliamentary election under the leadership of the economist Bernd Lucke. In the July 2015 party Congress, there was a shift in the party leadership and the so-called liberal wing was defeated. As the main exponent of the liberal wing, Lucke left the party after the July 2015 Congress. Accordingly, the first time period (“Party in the making”) for the AfD party is from 6 February 2013 (the date of its formation) to the July 2015 party Congress. The next time period for the AfD’s new party leadership extended from July 2015 to the German federal election in September 2017 (“Running for elections”). In the case of Podemos, there is an initial period, from the time when the party first presented itself, which was in January 2014, to a critical party Congress in November 2014, when the party leadership changed and the organizational structure was consolidated. This corresponds to the initial stage named as “Party in the making.” The second and main stage in the analysis of Podemos covers the period from November 2014 to June 2016, comprising various regional elections in Spain and two general elections, in December 2015 and June 2016 (“Running for elections”). There is also a last stage for both, which I term the “Party in opposition/in office” period. This last stage consists of the speeches and manifestos of the parties after they become opposition parties (the AfD since September 2017) or government partners (Podemos since January 2020)

I selected the speeches of the main candidates in the elections and the executive leaders of each party. The number of speakers was limited to four

Table 2.4 Speeches, manifestos, and time periods of Podemos and the AfD

Podemos		*AfD*		*Periods*
Manifestos	*Speeches*	*Manifestos*	*Speeches*	
European election 2014	Pablo Iglesias (8) Teresa Rodríguez (2) Juan Carlos Monedero (2)	Federal election 2013 European election 2014	Bernd Lucke (10) Frauke Petry (1) Konrad Adam (1)	*Party in the making*
Regional elections 2015 General election 2016	Pablo Iglesias (7) Íñigo Errejón (6) Carolina Bescansa (2)	Regional elections 2015/16 Federal election 2017	Frauke Petry (6) Jörg Meuthen (7) Alexander Gauland (6) Alice Weidel (7)	*Running for elections*
European election 2019 General election 2019	Pablo Iglesias (17) Íñigo Errejón (4) Irene Montero (4) Ione Belarra (2)	European election 2019 General election 2021	Jörg Meuthen (8) Alexander Gauland (6) Alice Weidel (14) Tino Chrupalla (4)	*Party in opposition/ in office*

for each party and filtered them by their positions. This allowed me to analyze the discourse of the party overall, and not just the party leader, which is especially necessary with new parties dealing with increased plurality and leadership changes. Applying these criteria, in the first period of the AfD, as Table 2.4 shows, the selection was based on the speeches made by Bernd Lucke, but also those by Frauke Petry and Konrad Adam. Lucke, Petry, and Adam were co-chairs during this first period, but Lucke was at the forefront since the inception of the party, and he was also confirmed in January 2014 as the head candidate for the European Parliamentary election of May 2014. In July 2015 (in the second time period), Lucke left the party and Petry and Meuthen were the party co-chairs. Alexander Gauland and Alice Weidel were also included in the selection for this second period because they were the emblematic candidates for the German federal election, and they gradually acquired greater prominence during the years 2016 and 2017. After the federal election in September 2017, Petry left the party. Therefore, the speeches selected for the last period (2020–2022) correspond to Alice Weidel, Tino Chrupalla, Jörg Meuthen and Alexander Gauland as co-chairs of the party. Regarding the manifestos, I collected six manifestos from each party, corresponding to the 2013, 2017, and 2021 German federal elections (the AfD), the 2014 and 2019 European Parliamentary elections (the AfD and Podemos), regional elections in 2015 and 2016 (the AfD and Podemos), and the general elections in Spain in 2016 and 2019 (Podemos).

The case of Podemos party is different because the party leader, Pablo Iglesias, has consistently been the party chair (general secretary) since the party's formation and the only Podemos candidate in the general elections of 2015 and 2016 until March 2021, when he resigned. During the first time period of Podemos, there are speeches of Iglesias, but also those of Juan Carlos Monedero—a prominent member of the founding group and an executive of the party—and Teresa Rodríguez—the second most voted for candidate in the primaries for the 2014 European Parliamentary election after Iglesias. For the second period, the speeches analyzed were those of Iglesias, the candidate for the general election and the general secretary, and Íñigo Errejón and Carolina Bescansa, the second and third positions of the elected party executive, respectively. For the last period, I also included the speeches of Irene Montero—the second most voted for candidate in the internal primary party elections—along with those of Errejón—in second position until February 2017—and Iglesias, the general secretary of the party and Ione Belarra (general secretary since June 2021).

Conclusion

This chapter developed a theoretical framework for the research problem of this book: the populism–Euroscepticism nexus. This study relies on a situated definition of discourse that borrows heavily from the work of Michel Foucault. This approach to discourse implies a systematic exploration of the interplay

between semiotic manifestations (texts) and social relations. In order to account for the second dimension of discourse—its social dimension—one should analyze the deployment of discursive practices in their contexts.

The analysis of the two contextual levels—the meso and macro levels—allows us to navigate using the concept of "discourse" through the social fields of action. The dispositif perspective and the analysis of relations of power are presented as the critical conceptual devices to capture discourse in its context. To operationalize this theoretical framework, this chapter has first discussed the comparative logic underlying this study, arguing that there is a gap in the comparative literature when exploring the various forms of contestation to the EU by right- and left-wing radical parties. I provided my reasons for comparing the left party Podemos and the right party AfD, discussing the great potential of this paired comparison.

The last part of the chapter has specified the analytical categories to observe and analyze variation for the different dimensions of this study. On the one hand, in order to explore the macro-contextual and meso-contextual dimensions, the chapter outlines several categories borrowed from EU studies to capture the effects of the dispositifs of Europeanization; on the other hand, it presents a detailed analytical framework to explore the populist articulations on Europe and the EU. The selection of the methods was discussed in relation to the analytical categories and the main goals of this study. The next chapter of this book applies this theoretical and analytical framework to the study of the Europeanization dispositifs in Spain.

Notes

1 Post-structuralist thought is not self-evident nor unproblematic. Here, the distinction only refers to the theoretical debate between the classical structuralist view applying Marxism (e.g., Althusser and Poulantzas) and the critical account of theorists like Foucault, Derrida, Laclau, and Mouffe, among others. Post-structuralist discourse theory (PDT) is also used as a label by those scholars developing and applying the discourse theory of Laclau and Mouffe (see Glynos and Howarth, 2008).

2 Broadly conceived, CDS is an umbrella term that comprises various perspectives that aim at linking critical social theory (i.e., the analysis of power and the naturalization of social conventions and social orders) with discourse analysis (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012: 78; Van Dijk, 2015: 466).

3 As an approach to discourse analysis, CDA arose during the 1970s and 1980s. Its major figures have developed their academic activity concentrating on different aspects of linguistic and critical social theory (e.g., Ruth Wodak, Isabela Fairclough and Norman Fairclough, Paul Chilton, and Teun A. Van Dijk, among others).

4 In Chapter 2, I discussed the three forms of governance associated with Europeanization: governance by negotiation (uploading policies to the EU), by hierarchy (coercive ways to download policy and discourses from the EU to the domestic level), and by facilitated coordination (non-coercive ways to download policy and discourses from the EU to the domestic level) (see Bulmer and Radaelli, 2005).

5 In the June 2016 general election, the Podemos party presented a unitary list together with the left coalition Izquierda Unida (IU) under the name Unidos Podemos.

6 The complete coding scheme can be found in Appendix A.
7 In Appendix B, I detail the extended coding scheme for the second stage of the analysis.
8 This alliance was formed by of the Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands (CDU) and the Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern (CSU).

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3 Europeanization in Spain

Introduction: Europe and the modernization of Spain

The relationship between Spain and Europe after the Franco dictatorship (1939–1975) is crucial for understanding the transition of Spain, which moved from the isolation of the country within the European context to its modernization (Boix, 2000: 166; Farrell, 2005: 151). Europe has figured as a positive reference since the early years of the young Spanish liberal democracy (1979 onward). In terms of Moreno (2013: 219), Europe became a "master symbol" in the representations of most of the political actors during the early democratic period. This symbolic incorporation of Europe within the discursive repertoire of the Spanish political actors gradually intensified in the period between the application for accession in 1977 and its final incorporation in 1986. According to Featherstone and Kazamias (2000: 4), the association between modernization and Europe in Spain and southern European countries has a long history, dating back to the nineteenth century.

In the post-Franco dictatorship era, the new actors competing in the party system in Spain used Europe to legitimate and bolster the nation's new political system with its new institutions and policies. There was a consensus within the Spanish party system regarding the benefits of joining the European Common Market (ECM)—including the Communist Party, which was integrated in 1986 into the left coalition Izquierda Unida (IU). Following Boix (2000: 166), the position of the political parties vis-à-vis the European Communities (EC) "merely reflected the overwhelming public support for the process of European integration" (see also Magone, 2016: 89; Aviles, 2004: 410). In 1986, 62 percent of Spaniards thought that Spain's membership in the EC was a good thing, whereas only four percent considered it a poor idea (European Commission, 1986: 58). In 1989, the positive perception of Spain's EC membership had increased to over 80 percent among respondents (Ibid., 1989: 9). Indeed, there was a strong association between the EC and democratization across an ample spectrum of the political elites and civic society (Diez Nicolas, 2003: 83; Magone, 2016: 89). However, following Ruiz Jiménez and Egea de Haro (2010: 134), it is also important to recognize that this public support for

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European integration was based on a "faulty Europeanism": lack of knowledge, indifference, and apathy were persistent traits of the Spanish public opinion about the EC/EU.

At the party system level, the two government parties in Spain since 1982—the center-left Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) and the center-right Partido Popular (PP)—have exhibited a positive view toward European integration since at least Spain's accession in 1986. For the left-wing parties in Spain, they profusely linked Europe to social justice and democracy. However, after the NATO Referendum in 1986 and the plan of the social democratic government to adhere to the Maastricht Treaty, a politically organized opposition to European integration became visible in Spain. The PSOE government of Felipe González campaigned for a "yes" for Spain's incorporation into NATO, contrary to the previous position of the party. The Spaniards supported the agenda of González´s government, voting yes to become a permanent member of the Atlantic Alliance with 52.50 percent of the votes. The 39.85 percent opposition to NATO was not consistently organized at the political level. The left-wing coalition IU, the only actor openly opposing NATO adherence, received only four seats in the Spanish Parliament in the 1986 general election and just two percent of the popular vote, whereas in that same election, the PSOE once again gained an absolute majority with 48.1 percent of the vote. That same year, Spain joined the EC, finally achieving a long-term goal of the political class and a symbol of hope for a significant part of the population in Spain. Spain actively participated in the debates leading to the Maastricht Treaty, especially promoting the core concepts of a cohesive Europe, European citizenship, and the proposed Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) (Powell, 2018 96). With its incorporation into the European Monetary System (EMS) in 1989, Spain confirmed its support of European integration in its widening and deepening dimensions.

The remaining of this chapter focuses on the "environment" in which the dispositifs of Europeanization emerged in Spain, and the elements composing them. The dispositifs are analyzed over time as contingent crystallizations of the dominant discourses, policies, strategies, and actors governing the processes of horizontal Europeanization. As explained previously in this book, the analysis is limited to the period of constraining dissensus (Hooghe and Marks, 2009). That is, it covers the 1990s Europeanization processes up until the euro crisis and the emergence of new challenging actors in Spain divided into three main periods: the Europeanization/modernization stage (1986–1996), the stage of neoliberal Europeanization and the government of José María Aznar (1996–2004), and the government of Zapatero and the euro crisis (2004–2011). The goal of this chapter is to identify the power in discourse and the symbolic orders operating within the dispositifs of Europeanization in Spain.

The modernizing *ethos*: Europe 92 in Spain (1986–1996)

Under the government of González, Spain entered a period of reforms that were inspired, in part, by the European agenda and the firm willingness to meet European standards. "Europe 92" was a project designed during the 1980s that responded, at least to some extent, to the accommodation of the EC to new global challenges. The successive agreements in the run-up to the Maastricht Treaty were based on the economic liberalization of the common market (Milward, 2005: 25–26; Verdun, 2007: 202–3). The adaptational pressures derived from Spain's integration into the EC led to the adoption of several regulations and discourses, as well as the design of new policy instruments in Spain. In the academic literature, it is generally acknowledged that the EC/EU impulse played an important role in implementing significant reforms in Spain (Balmaseda and Sebastián, 2004; Borrás et al., 1998; Ruiz Jiménez and Egea de Haro, 2011). There was, in fact, a strategy to integrate Spain into the future European Monetary Union (EMU) and transform labor and market conditions in accordance with this end. This overall strategy interacted, was reinforced, and also was transformed by a consonant subjectivity in the Spanish population and a series of discursive practices, as we will see below.

The German-French axis was the strategic power center—the concentrated power over material and symbolic resources—where the President González found support to launch the initial process of Europeanization/modernization (1982–1986). During this initial stage, Spain experienced a policy-based and institutional transformation of its political landscape. The convergence criteria established for incorporation into the EMU, which Spain finally joined in 1999, shaped an era of structural reforms in Spain. The signing of the Maastricht Treaty meant a strict readjustment to the convergence criteria of the EMU. The main measures that were carried out concentrated on issues of inflation and fiscal deficit control (Balmaseda and Sebastián, 2004: 128; Blanco Sío-López, 2016: 2). In this way, Spain embraced a "policy paradigm in which competitiveness was the fundamental objective" (Boix, 2000: 170).

The vertical Europeanization in Spain during this period was not only related to economic reforms but also to regional development funds coming from European institutions that were intended to stimulate the improvement of the more deprived regions in Spain. In fact, the negotiation role of Spain during this period and after the Maastricht Treaty's ratification was focused on ensuring and expanding these development funds (Fernández-Cuesta, 2016: 3). The areas of immigration, development, cooperation, and the environment were also affected by this rapid process of Europeanization (see Borrás et al., 1998; Jiménez and Egea de Haro, 2011; Balmaseda and Sebastian, 2004). In sum, this period was characterized by an institutional change in Spain, the transformation of the nation's policy orientation, and a profound alteration in the norms and discourses at the macro level. In fact, the text of the Spanish Constitution was modified to adapt it to the Maastricht Treaty.

Symbolic order in the dispositif of Europeanization/modernization

During the ratification debates of the Maastricht Treaty in the Congress of Deputies (the Spanish Parliament) in October 1992, Foreign Minister Solana Madariaga depicted Europe as a crucial component of Spanish democratization and modernization. The minister even referred to Europe as "the collective destiny" of Spain (Congress of Deputies, 1992a: 10602). Unlike other European countries, the Maastricht Treaty was easily endorsed by the Spanish Parliament since the political opposition was confined to the narrow spectrum of the IU left coalition and a left nationalist party in Basque Country (Herri Batasuna [HB]). In the ratification vote, there were 314 affirmative votes, three against (consisting of three out of the four HB parliamentary ministers), and nine abstentions (nine out of the 17 IU members of the Spanish Parliament). Although the Maastricht Treaty led to the first modification of the Spanish constitutional text, there was almost no opposition to the Treaty (Wessels et al., 2003: 187; Powell, 2018: 98). This consensus was mainly underpinned within the party system by the PSOE and the PP, but also by the Centro Democrático y Social (CDS), a centrist party with 14 seats in Parliament, and the Catalan party Convergència i Unió (CiU) with 18 deputies. There was, therefore, a broad hegemonic bloc at the level of the Spanish party system in agreement with the dominant European project.

During the Maastricht Treaty's ratification debates, the ruling party, the social democratic PSOE, depicted the unity of Europe as a positive and necessary goal. They claimed: "without a united Europe there are very important things that will not be possible" (Congress of Deputies, 1992b: 11097). Furthermore, the position of the PSOE stated the following:

> Without the European Union we will not be able to maintain, consolidate or increase the prosperity that we have achieved in Europe—and in Spain—and which, let us not forget, is the greatest ever known in the history of the continent.
>
> (Ibid.: 11098)[1]

Analogous to representations before Maastricht, Europe was depicted as an abstract ideal of unity, destiny, prosperity, and modernization. Peace and prosperity were considered the crucial aspects of being associated with Europe (Ibid.). In opposition to these positive images of Europe, there was the isolation and underdevelopment that Spain suffered in earlier times. Therefore, the PSOE emphasized "the position that we have managed to occupy in the international context after so many decades of isolation" (Ibid.: 11098). Solidarity was other of the central values mobilized through the idea of European integration and the EU, which would have been difficult to materialize outside the EU (Ibid.). The conservative party PP provided a positive but slightly different representation of Europe. With the PP, Europe was presented as a "union of diverse peoples with their particularities and a free market" (Ibid.: 11084).

Thus, the PP combined the respect for the national particularities with the free marketization as the main principles of European integration:

> We believe that Europe must be built through the union between its peoples, we believe that this construction must be based on national identities and we believe, finally, that an integrated free market economy, with all the necessary solidarity resources, is the only viable type of society.
>
> (Ibid.: 11084)

Europe, and particularly Europeanization, was portrayed as the trigger for progress in Spain by the PP. The changes derived from Europeanization were defined as "policy changes that are not negative, that do not demand unjust sacrifices from the Spaniards but, conversely, […] are essential requirements for the progress of the citizens of this country" (Ibid.: 11085). The smaller parties supporting the Maastricht Treaty (CiU, CDS) expressed their enthusiasm for Europe in similar terms, emphasizing the new co-decisive role of Spain among the twelve member states. For instance, the CiU remarked the importance of "the defense of the values of freedom, justice and pluralism." They argued that "from these values we are going to be active and decisive protagonists of the new Europe" (Ibid.: 11087). There were also minor critiques that appeared within the pro-Maastricht bloc. In addition to the respect for national identities, asserted by the PP, other parliamentary groups like the centrist CDS party and the regionalist CiU criticized the democratic deficit within the EU.

The pro-Maastricht bloc included several subjects in its representations of Europe and the EU: the European Union, the member states, the Spaniards, and, finally, the Eurosceptics or Euro-detractors. In the words of Martinez Martinez of the PSOE: "The other thing seems to me to be *Eurodogmatism, Eurototalitarianism* and in some cases, in short, *Eurocommunism* not in the historical, positive sense, but in the literal, historically abandoned one." (Congress of Deputies, 1992b: 11098; emphasis added). The PP also used similar terminology to refer to the actors outside the consensus as Eurosceptic, or closed to the defeated "real socialism," in reference to the recent fall of the soviet bloc. In representations of Europe made by the PP, it was the "communists" or "the real socialism" that emerged as the opposite of the free market (Ibid.: 11085).

Argumentative schemes and problematizations

To defend the Maastricht Treaty and the integration of Spain into the European project, the parties mobilized various argumentation schemes, or *topoi* (Wodak, 2001, 2015). First, it is possible to identify a topos of danger; and within this topos, there is an underlying warrant (Wodak, 2015: 52): *Without Europe, Spain will not be capable to put forward progress and ensure prosperity*. In accordance with this warrant, the PSOE, especially, asserted the argument that to be with Europe requires the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty and compliance with

the rules stated in this Treaty. This last claim was in support of the signing of the Treaty and the commitment to European integration. In arguments of the time, the dangers of not following this path were multiple: chaos, poverty, war, and underdevelopment, or the rule of Eurosceptic forces. Especially in the representations of Europe mobilized by the PSOE, there was also a prominent *topos of the savior* that is related to the previous topos of danger. The general idea is that Europe has saved us in the past; therefore, it can do it again.

By contrast, the PP put forward a different argumentation scheme in favor of Europe. According with a *topos of advantage* (see also Wodak, 2015: 53), the Maastricht Treaty, and European integration in general, meant a competitive advantage for Spain. This is more an instrumental view of the advantages and benefits that could be accessed by Spain through European integration. Finally, the other topos mobilized by the PP is related to national identity, based on a definition of Europe as bringing together the divergent national identities for the sake of cooperation: if Europe was, in fact, the aggregation of different national identities, then it was important for the PP to support and defend Europe. As discussed in the next section, this topos gradually disappeared from the PP's representations of Europe.

As Figure 3.1 shows, these topoi and the representations of certain events, processes, and subjects form a heterogeneous discursive articulation revolving around Europe and the EU. The topoi that are used imply the selection of certain topics such as peace, security, free market, and national identity, all of which connect to broader discourses beyond the Spanish political sphere. These

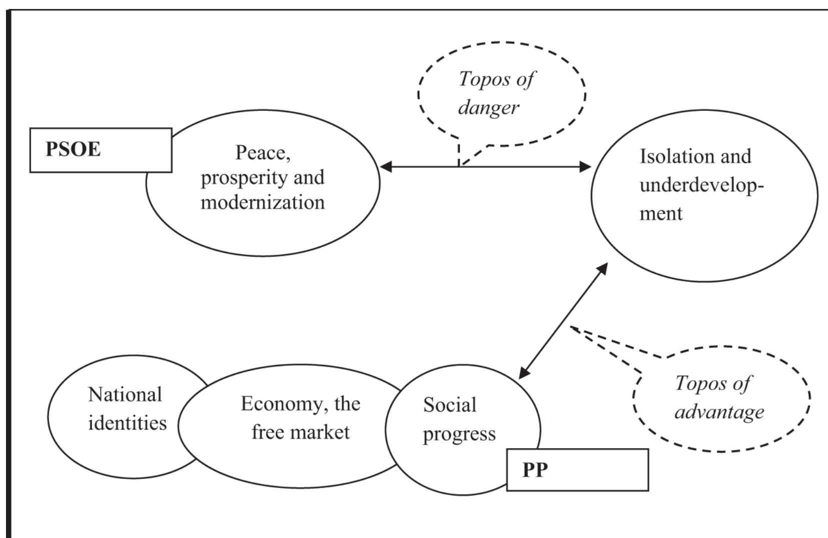

Figure 3.1 Discourse topics and *topoi* of the dominant parties.

broader discourses can be described as historically specific problematizations that incorporate Europe into a symbolic order. Europe emerges, therefore, within a broad problematization related to the isolation and underdevelopment of Spain. In the case of the PSOE, the solution to the main problems of isolation, underdevelopment, and war was Spain's solidarity with Europe. In the case of the PP, Europe was articulated with a more liberal stance on the free market and certain traits of a national-conservative view of international cooperation (Bulmer and Joseph, 2016). Hence, during this first stage, there was a temporary crystallization of a dispositif of Europeanization/modernization that was defined by several elements: a power asymmetry in the dynamic relations between Spain and the German-French axis, a set of structural domestic reforms (Spanish Constitution), a set of policy reforms (labor market, competitiveness), a set of discursive practices, and a set of dominant actors in the political sphere (the PSOE and the PP).

EU contestation in the political sphere during the modernization period

As noted by Ruiz Jiménez and Egea de Haro (2011: 123), the Maastricht Treaty was ratified during a deep economic crisis in Spain that also affected public opinion about Europe and the EU. In 1993, the unemployment rate reached a record figure of 23 percent, and the economy suffered a recession (Ibid.: 130). For some, the general feelings of goodwill toward European integration turned into skepticism and rejection. For example, the high level of support to the EC in 1989 is contrasted with a considerable decrease of more than 20 points in 1992; at this latter date, only 60 percent of Spaniards considered Spain's membership in the EC/EU as a positive thing. Much less clear is whether we can consider these data as a type of firm opposition to the EC/EU, as those Spaniards who saw EC/EU's membership as a negative thing amounted only to four percent of the total population (European Commission, 1992: 18). Here, it could be argued that this data shows a drop in the enthusiastic support of the Spaniards to Europe, rather than an informed opposition to the political project linked to the EC/EU. Therefore, the favorable opinion of both the parties and the general public during the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty began to change, showing the first signs of what several scholars have called Euro-criticism (Jiménez and Egea de Haro, 2011: 124) or "federalist maximalism" (Vázquez-García, 2012: 115). The opposition bloc to the Maastricht Treaty at the political party level was mainly formed by the left-wing IU coalition (although it was divided in this matter) and the left nationalist party HB. In the vein of the above-mentioned "federalist maximalism," IU claimed to be pro-European and represented itself as a party clearly committed to the European project:

> An active and constant commitment to European construction, responding to clear left-wing criteria and content which, without deviating, are flexed at

> all times by the imperatives of the multiple concurrence of States, political forces and situations throughout the European process.
>
> (Congress of Deputies, 1992b: 11088)

The IU presented an alternative Europe, which should be federal in its political constitution, supportive, democratic, and social (Ibid.). The left coalition emphasized the European Social Charter, in contrast to the wishes of a free market asserted by the PP or the European peace and prosperity discussed by the PSOE. They demanded the concrete and specific development of the European Social Charter (Ibid.) and highlight the democratic deficit of the EU. In the view of the IU, the unequal development under a free market without regulations led to the emergence of a division between southern and northern Europe: “The division between the countries of the North and South of Europe; that the single market, in the absence of a common fiscal policy, freed to its own dynamic, will further deepen social and territorial imbalances” (Ibid.: 11089). The left nationalist parties, of which only HB voted against the Maastricht Treaty, expressed their critique of the Maastricht Treaty insofar as it misrecognized the nations without state in the EU, like Catalonia or Basque Country (Ibid., 11094). There are two topoi operating within the opposition bloc to the Maastricht Treaty: on the one hand, in normative terms, Europe is defined as positive; on the other hand, there is a *topos of threat* regarding the European construction, with the fear that it will increase inequality. Therefore, Europe becomes an ambivalent object within the main problematization of inequality and territorial asymmetry (Figure 3.2).

After the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty, the economic crisis and the political situation were reflected in the election results of 1993, when the PSOE lost support (although still reaching a simple majority) and was forced into a

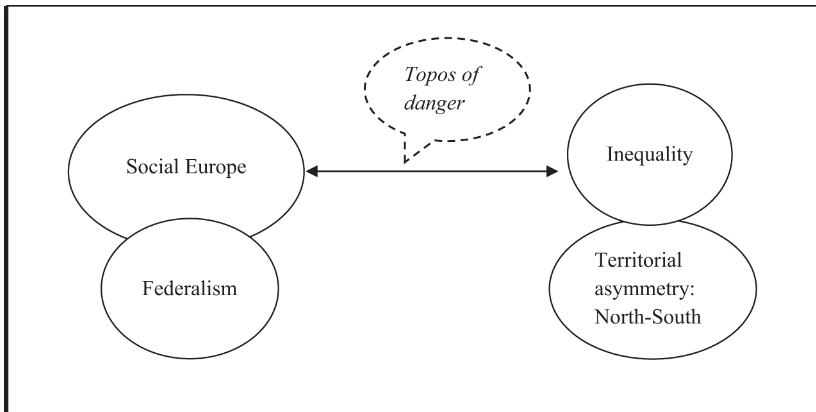

Figure 3.2 Contesting discourse topics.

pact with the Basque regionalist party, the Partido Nacionalista Vasco (PNV), as well as the CiU, to form a government. As Basabe Lloréns (2003: 201) explains, after the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty, Europeanization processes in Spain began to soften, taking the shape of processes of absorption and accommodation of EU-produced discourses and policies.

Neoliberal Europeanization (1996–2004)

The turn to the new conservative government of Aznar in Spain in 1996, implied a relative change in Spain's orientation toward European policy and Europeanization. Looking at his Tory counterparts in the United Kingdom (UK), Aznar favored a shift to Anglo-Saxon policies and openly criticized Spain's dependence on EU subsidies, as he felt it could produce counterproductive effects on the Spanish economy (Powell, 2018: 100). This change under Aznar's government affected national economic policy but it also consisted of a new perspective toward geopolitical alignments and foreign and security questions. In contrast to González's reliance on the French-German axis, Aznar aimed at resituating Spain as part of the Anglo-Saxon coordinates within the European and global power constellation. In the words of Powell (2003): "his alignment with the United States and Britain represents a departure from the behavior of PSOE governments, which almost invariably sided with the Franco-German axis in times of crisis" (p.103).

Regarding European integration, the PP government initially defended a model of intergovernmental bargaining, in which national sovereignty and identity should be respected, rather than supranational construction (Farrell, 2005: 153). This change in European politics had to do with broader paradigm shifts toward neoliberalism at the global level (Moreno, 2013: 227). To put it simply, the tendentially dominant neoliberal paradigm was based on three pillars: deregulation of labor markets, financial control over the productive economy, and freedom of movement for capital. This general paradigm permeated the policy orientation of the Aznar's government, especially since the employment reform of 2002 (Ibid.). Europeanization took the form of what Bulmer and Radaelli (2005: 345) call "facilitated coordination" through the European Employment Strategy (EES), introduced in the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997 (see also Moreno Juste and Blanco Sío-López, 2016: 8–9). The EES served as a benchmarking instrument, offering guidelines for economic and employment policy (Guillén and Álvarez, 2004).

Under this paradigm of facilitated coordination, the adjustment to the convergence criteria established in Maastricht was strict during Aznar time in power. Aznar wanted to meet the criteria for Spain to move to the single currency of the euro at any cost, and this led to successive public spending cuts, inflation controls, and reductions in the interest rates (Powell, 2018: 102). The nature of the changes produced by Europeanization processes was different during this period in comparison with the previous period of modernization

Table 3.1 Forms of vertical Europeanization

	González government	*Aznar government*
Modes of Europeanization	Facilitated coordination	Facilitated coordination
Intensity and types of change	Transformation	Absorption
Main areas of transformation	Public policy (i.e., inflation and fiscal deficit control), governance structures, normative-cognitive structures	Public policy (i.e., employment reform, inflation control, and social spending cuts), normative-cognitive structures

(1986–1996). In Spain's period of Europeanization-modernization (1986–1996), there were three significant dimensions of change: the constitutional reform of 1992, a turn in social and economic policy, and profound impacts on the normative and cognitive political structures. During the Aznar's period, there was a move instead to a process of absorption, mostly limited to public policy. The clear guidelines outlined in the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP, 1997–1998) facilitated the monitoring of the social and economic development of Spain in accordance with EU criteria (Farrell, 2005: 153). The economic recovery and growth of the Spanish economy since 1999 allowed for the accommodation of policies, normative frameworks, and instruments inspired by the general EU economic guidelines with low levels of conflict. All in all, as summarized in Table 3.1, vertical Europeanization processes responded to governing practices of facilitated coordination. The references and standards established at the EU level were accommodated within the national policies of successive Spanish governments.

The neoliberal dispositif and its symbolic order

These policies, general strategies, and dominant actors were entangled during this period (1996–2004) with various representations and problematizations that were mobilized at the political sphere. These were especially visible during the ratification of two EU treaties: the Treaty of Amsterdam, ratified by the Spanish Parliament on 1 October 1998, with 287 votes in favor and 15 against; and the Treaty of Nice, voted on by the Spanish Parliament on 4 October 2001, with 290 votes in favor and only 6 abstentions. The party in power, the PP, exhibited the idea of Europe linked to peace, prosperity, and security in the vein of the previous González government. Interestingly, the national particularities highlighted by the PP in the debates on the Maastricht Treaty were in this case explicitly rejected as part of the EU: "That is why the Europe of the States—not the Europe of the nations—and the Europe of the citizens have sense together" (Congress of Deputies, 1998a: 9215). Here, the interests

of Spain were linked to the larger project of European construction and the national and cultural particularities of Spain were not emphasized:

> It is precisely in Spain's interest to make more Europe and not less Europe, that is, to strengthen the mechanisms of solidarity and cohesion, while at the same time reconstituting European unity, broken by the now fortunately defunct Berlin Wall.
>
> (Ibid.: 9215)

The PP also referred to European citizens, Spain, and the EU as a fruitful triad that may even expand the welfare of citizens through a more democratic and transparent European construction: "Spain in the European Union and its firm commitment to lead the transformations towards a European Union more democratic, more transparent and closer to citizens" (Congress of Deputies, 2001: 5421). Highlighting the role of Spain within the EU, the PP put into motion its more intergovernmental view of the EU, asserting that the EU must provide a framework for democracy, security, and, especially, economic exchange. Aznar government claimed to have gained additional power in the EU during the process of intergovernmental bargaining, which included both veto power and more EU council members (Ibid.: 5422).

By contrast, the PSOE defended the Europe of Jean Monnet, or in their literal words, a "United States of Europe" (Congress of Deputies, 1998b: 9887). Even when this party manifested total support for the Amsterdam and Nice treaties, they considered that the "method" used to reach agreement in those cases was different from the one used during Maastricht negotiations. They demanded a deeper and different type of integration of Europe: "The dream of Churchill or Jean Monnet and of the Europeans gathered at the Hague Congress of creating a United States of Europe is emerging as an inescapable reality at the end of this century." (Congress of Deputies, 1998b: 9887) There were two main suggestions by the PSOE to improve the process of European integration. First, they considered that the EU must move toward the development of the "European social model" (Congress of Deputies, 2001: 5420), and this implied the incorporation of the "Charter of Fundamental Rights" as a norm within EU regulations. Second, the PSOE felt the EU should also face the question of the democratic deficit. As presented in the following excerpt, the PSOE summarized the policy shift that they felt should structure the future of European integration: "cohesion, territorial and social policies, citizenship policies, giving a binding character to the Charter of Fundamental Rights, and defining a EU specific policy to govern globalization" (Ibid.: 5420).

Topoi and problematizations

Two main topoi can be identified as prominent during the Aznar period. The first is a topos of advantage; that is, it was useful to stay in the EU and engage with European construction for the gains that this would produce. As in the

previous period, this topos was fundamentally mobilized by the PP. The second topos was exhibited by the PSOE and depicted a federalist and social construction of the EU that was good and desirable. These topoi were integrated into a primary problematization that continues to be the problem of poverty, isolation, and underdevelopment in Spain. Europe and European integration were again represented as one of the solutions within this problematization of Spain in relation to isolation and underdevelopment. The impact of the economic crisis of the 1990s in Spain could have possibly reinforced the imaginary of the "fear to impoverishment and underdevelopment." The construction of the "other" positioned subjects continued to be important, especially in the representations of the PP. These "others"—focused on the communists—in relation to Europe, the state, and the citizenry were portrayed as obstacles in the way to a prosperous and peaceful society, and they were associated with poverty, underdevelopment, and isolation.

Contesting the neoliberal dispositif

Although there were signs of social and economic recovery after the 1990s economic crisis, skepticism and concern about the overall situation of Spain and European integration persisted to some extent. Following Eurobarometer data, in 1998, only 45 percent of Spaniards considered that EU membership was a benefit to Spain whereas a 28 percent felt there were no benefits—figures falling just below the EU-15 average values (European Commission, 1998: 26). Within the political sphere, the opposition bloc to the Amsterdam Treaty was championed once again by the left-wing IU coalition and was supported by left nationalist parties in Galicia and Basque Country. The IU was focused on a critique of the democratic deficit, but especially of the neoliberal model of European integration (Ruiz Jiménez and Egea de Haro, 2011: 131–2). However, the opposition bloc headed by the IU only managed to gather 15 votes against the Treaty of Amsterdam. The IU criticized the type of Europe constructed since the Maastricht Treaty, lamenting that "the concern for stability and convergence, now lasting, is always above Europe's social concerns and social cohesion" (Congress of Deputies, 1998b: 9886). Thus, the IU proposed one EU turn to guarantee social cohesion through active employment policies and the democratic accountability of their institutions:

> The democratization of economic decision-making, what has come to be called an economic government that does not leave the European Central Bank (ECB) in a vacuum of political legitimacy. In this way, the ECB would become an instrument in the creation of active employment policies, what has come to be colloquially called the solution to the democratic deficit.
>
> (Congress of Deputies, 1998a: 9203)

By contrast, during the Nice Treaty negotiations of 2001–2003, the opposition was nearly nonexistent. Public sentiments about Europe and the EU also

turned more positive during this period compared to 1998. In 2001, 63 percent of Spaniards expressed their support for EU membership, and the perceived benefits of the EU increased to 64 percent of the population (European Commission, 2001a: 40). The weakening of the left-wing IU coalition, which dropped from 21 to eight seats in the Parliament after the 2000 general election, also diminished the virulence of the critique of the EU. Furthermore, the new IU leadership adopted a different view on EU issues, closer to the representations of Europe put forward by the PSOE. During the Treaty of Nice ratification debate, EU criticism by the IU was articulated in terms of the "insufficient Europeanism of Aznar, the government, and the EU" (Congress of Deputies, 2001: 4959). The party claimed that the EU needed a move toward a federalist and constitutional political union (Ibid.: 4960). Because of the softening of its opposition, the IU only abstained in the voting of the Treaty of Nice. To sum up, the alternative representations and problematizations threatening the stability of the dispositifs of Europeanization weakened, especially during the period of Aznar's second government (2000–2004). During the course of the debate of the Treaty of Nice, there were almost no diverging representations or problematizations of Europe or the EU. The IU simply exhibited a greater emphasis on the "United States of Europe," federalism, and the political union. This was a reinforcement of the topoi and problematizations used by the PSOE.

The European Constitution and the Zapatero government (2004–2008)

The PSOE won the 2004 election with a simple majority in 2004, thus they needed the support of the IU, the Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya (ERC), the Xunta Aragonesista, the Bloque Nacionalista Galego (BNG), and the Coalición Canaria during the vote of appointment in the inauguration session. The rationale behind the vote of these groups was to expel Aznar from the presidency, especially after the 2004 terrorist attack in Spain,[2] rather than supporting the overall political project of José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero (PSOE). The Spanish economy continued to grow fast during the first legislature of Zapatero (2004–2008), and the unemployment rate remained low, hovering around eight percent, in comparison with figures in the 1990s, where it was around 20 percent. Until the mid-2009, Zapatero's government was able to implement policies centered on domestic issues, such as civil rights, expansion of entitlements, and same-sex marriage. From this point onward, all analysts identified a decrease in policy autonomy, derived from the economic and financial turmoil and its specific impact on the Spanish economy (Magone, 2016; Royo, 2014). This was the starting point of what Magone calls "imposed or forced Europeanization" (see also Kreuder-Sonnen, 2018: 457): "The policies of the Troika in Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Cyprus, as well as those of the European Central Bank and the European Commission with regard to Italy and Spain, could be described as imposed or "forced" Europeanization." (Magone, 2016: 93–94)

During the first legislature, Zapatero's European and foreign policy implemented changes to distance itself from the previous Aznar government, especially concerning Spain's participation in the international coalition supporting the war in Iraq (Torreblanca, 2012: 462). This shift can be defined as an attempt to return to the "golden years" of González and a defense of a social democratic and supranational articulation of the EU. These final objectives, however, could not be actively promoted during the 2010 Spanish presidency of the EU, as the pressing issues related to the euro crisis virtually covered the entire EU agenda. In the following section, I explore the representations and problematizations of the hegemonic bloc during this first period, before the crisis broke up.

Horizontal Europeanization during the first Zapatero government

The first big challenge of the Zapatero government concerning European policy was the ratification of the European Constitutional Treaty, which was passed by the Spanish Congress of Deputies on 18 April 2005. The Spaniards also supported the Constitutional Treaty for the European Union in a referendum in February 2005, where it won 77 percent of the vote. However, there was a low voter turnout of only 42 percent, thus indicating a persistent lack of interest or low politicization regarding EU issues. The Constitutional Treaty was approved by the Congress of Deputies with a clear majority of 319 "yes" votes against 19 "no" votes. The Treaty of Lisbon, which was the last treaty of the European Union that entered into force in 2009, was also approved by the Spanish Parliament in June 2008, with 322 votes in favor, six against, and two abstentions. The Spanish government defined European integration as a process of construction that had already been highly beneficial to the country; it was seen as providing the conditions necessary for the possibility that Spain could overcome its historical problems. This representation echoed previous views of the EU:

> If we want to be fair to our recent past, we must not forget that European integration has enabled us to consolidate peace and democracy in Europe and to eradicate war and dictatorships in our countries once and for all.
>
> (Congress of Deputies, 2005: 4259)

As illustrated above, the classical elements attached by the Spanish social democracy to the EU and to Europe—prosperity, peace, and democracy—were again put at the forefront: "The idea of a united Europe has always been linked to a set of common values based on the deepening of democracy, respect for human rights, the search for prosperity and confidence in an effort of solidarity" (Ibid.) The arguments in favor of European integration, and especially defending the European Constitutional Treaty, were based on the specific recognition by the EU of the dignity and freedom of each person and the "solidarity with the most vulnerable" (Ibid.). Therefore, there was a combination

of the classical *topos of danger* ("Europe confronts war and destruction") and another, whereby the EU was capable to construct a better society based on the values of solidarity and equality.

In the Lisbon Treaty ratification discourse, the PSOE government delineated in clearer terms the conflicting opposition between one Europe reduced to a single market and one "Europe beyond the single market" (Congress of Deputies, 2008: 15). The PSOE argued that the Lisbon Treaty was moving the EU forward, beyond the single market, by incorporating the Charter of Fundamental Rights. For its part, the PP supported the ratification of the European Constitutional Treaty, but insistently picked on the weaker bargaining position of the Zapatero government within the EU, in comparison with the prior Aznar government. Again, the intergovernmental view of the EU shaped the opposition of the PP to the role of the government, although it maintained its general support to the Constitutional Treaty and the process of European integration. As a PP member stated, "I still think that this is not the best Constitution that we Spaniards could have achieved. You gave up the power we achieved in Nice in exchange for nothing" (Congress of Deputies, 2005: 4261).

The PP diagnosis of the country's "need for Europe" was similar to the PSOE´s view, but the proposed solution—the specific mode for Spain to be integrated into Europe—was different, defending the PP a more intergovernmental approach. During the ratification debate on the Treaty of Lisbon, the PP defined the union of Europe as a "dream" (Congress of Deputies, 2008: 26) and as a guarantee for peace, democracy, and prosperity (Ibid.: 27). There was no apparent critique of the government's role in this case, although the democratic deficit of the EU was mentioned. Overall, the Treaty of Lisbon and the future of the EU were described in highly enthusiastic terms:

> Integration requires a great deal of legal science, indisputably, but it also requires a spirit, it requires—as one of the persons who have studied integration the most, Professor Joseph Weiler, says—a will and a spirit that builds, that leads us to a demos, to a differentiated ethical community.
>
> (Ibid.: 28)

EU contestation from 2004 to the euro crisis

In the 2004 General Election, the left IU coalition dropped to only five seats in the Spanish Parliament—an even weaker position than they had during the ratification process of the Nice Treaty in 2001. This reduced the prominence of the main group questioning the European treaties in the Congress of Deputies. However, the ERC, an emerging left nationalist Catalan party, moved from one to eight seats in the Spanish Parliament in 2004, and they rejected the European Constitutional Treaty. The ERC argued that this treaty did not recognize the right of the nations' self-determination and did not facilitate mechanisms of co-decision within the EU for the nations "without state."

This party felt that the current Europe lacked social rights and democratic participatory mechanisms for the citizens (Congress of Deputies, 2005: 4264).

Along the same line, the left IU coalition felt the European construction was lacking in fundamental elements, for instance, fiscal unity at the European level (Ibid.: 4268). The IU referred to its own position as "critical Europeanism": "That critical European expression, of Europeanism that wants to go further, of Europeanism from the left, is taking place today in France, and is expressed mostly, in a remarkable way, among the left voters." (Ibid.) The events and processes related to Europe in the representations of the IU at this time were similar to previous periods: the democratic deficit; the federalist model; and, especially, the lack of an impulse toward a social, ecologically sustainable Europe (Ibid.: 4269). There was little opposition to the Lisbon Treaty in the Parliament. Finding themselves in an even weaker situation after the 2008 general election, the IU and ERC were forced to join together to form a parliamentary group, because the IU only gained two seats in Parliament. This party criticized the EU as a neoliberal project and lamented the abandonment of political and social perspectives for European integration. The migration and foreign policy approach of the EU was also described in negative terms, advancing the representations of a fortified military Europe (Congress of Deputies, 2008: 20). In the same vein, the BNG—a radical left party of Galicia—also depicted the European project as being off course:

> In this Parliament, the BNG and many other groups say that we are in favor of a more social Europe, of a more democratic Europe, of a Europe that is built on respect for and the articulation of all its national diversity, but the reality, ladies and gentlemen, is that this Treaty is moving in another direction.
>
> (Ibid.: 18)

Therefore, new discourse topics emerged to present the events and processes linked to Europe and formulate a critique of the direction of the European construction: the militarization of the EU, the defense of an environmental and socially sustainable world, and the self-determination and co-decision of the nations like the Basque Country or Catalonia within the EU. All of these discourse topics were combined to problematize Europe as an instance of broader, global problems connected to these topics. However, this flourishing of new discursive topics was coupled with a gradual weakening of the contesting parties and a lack of authority and power over material and symbolic resources that made the scope of these new representations quite limited.

To summarize, the analysis of the first two periods and the first legislature of Zapatero, up until the breakup of the euro crisis indicates a certain "discursive saturation"; that is, the representations of Europe, the most prominent topoi, and the fundamental problematizations tended to be reproduced, as shown in Table 3.2. Europe emerges here within broader problematizations related to the lack of progress, underdevelopment, war, and isolation and it is

Table 3.2 The symbolic order of Europe and the EU

	González: Maastricht Treaty	*Aznar: Amsterdam and Nice Treaties*	*Zapatero: Constitutional and Lisbon Treaties*
Europe as…	- A positive and collective political project (PSOE) - Naturally (by destiny) linked to Spain (PSOE) - The union of diverse peoples with their particularities and the free market (PP)	- A synonym for peace, security, and democracy (PP) - The United States of Europe (PSOE)	- The solution to the historical problems of Spain (PSOE) - A political and social union (PSOE) - A dream, a guarantee of peace, and prosperity (PP)
Social events, phenomena, and processes	- Peace, prosperity, progress, solidarity (PSOE) - Eurodogmatism, Eurototalitarism, Eurocommunism (PSOE) - National identities (PP) - Free market economy (PP) - Democratic deficit (PP) - Communism versus the free market (PP)	- Peace, prosperity, and security (PP) - Solidarity and cohesion (PP–PSOE) - Intergovernmentalism vs. supranationalism (PSOE) - The Charter of Fundamental Rights (PSOE) - The democratic deficit (PSOE). - The Berlin Wall (PP)	- Prosperity, peace, tolerance, equality, and solidarity (PSOE) - Freedom, security, and justice (PP) - The Charter of Fundamental Rights (PP) - Intergovernmental negotiations (PP)
Positioned subjects and "othering"	- The European partners, Spain, a united Europe (PSOE) - The shameful Euroskeptics (PSOE) - The Union (PP) - The anti-Europeans (PP)	- The European citizens, Spain (PP) - The communists - Candidates countries of middle and eastern Europe (PSOE)	- The citizens, Spain (PSOE) - The European Parliament (PSOE)
Topoi and Problema-tizations	- "Without a united Europe, it is not possible to do many necessary things" (PSOE) - The Maastricht Treaty and this Europe means the progress of the Spanish citizens. The problem is the lack of freedom and the lack of progress and the solution is the EU of the free market (PP)	- The interests of European construction and the development of the states are coincidental (PP) - Spain is becoming a greater country within the EU (PP) - A stronger Europe and more integration would provide increasing welfare for the citizens (PSOE)	- European integration is a trigger of the expansion of entitlements at the domestic level (PSOE) - The government should be wise to negotiate and gain power at the EU level (PP)

linked to peace and prosperity. The findings show that there is a fundamental topos of danger or threat used by the two mainstream parties; a topos of the savior, by which Europe appears as historically saving Spain from such threats; and also arguments related with the normatively desirable Europe (social and federal) mobilized mainly by the PSOE. The representations of Europe by the main parties—the PP and the PSOE—were linked to particular values and processes, including peace, prosperity, progress, solidarity, security, equality, or freedom. The PP emphasized the values of security and freedom (Congress of Deputies, 1998a: 9215; Congress of Deputies, 1992b: 11084), whereas the PSOE focused on solidarity and equality (Congress of Deputies, 1998a: 9214; Congress of Deputies, 2005: 4259).

In light of this diachronic analysis, it is possible to identify dispositifs of Europeanization as they pertain to certain public policies, actors, strategies of governance, and discourses. There is as first Europeanization/modernization dispositif during the González government and what may be called the neoliberal dispositif during the Aznar period. Spain went through periods of transformation and absorption shaped by vertical Europeanization that affected the environments in which such dispositifs emerged. In regard to horizontal Europeanization, the *power in discourse* circulated between the dispositifs of Europeanization and the main political actors in the political sphere. Over time, it was possible to identify the three effects of power in discourse related to horizontal Europeanization: normative pressures, invitations to emulate, and invitations to transform.

The normative pressures materialized with the construction of one "European other" and the labeling and discrediting of those associated with *Euroscepticism*, *Eurodogmatism*, *Eurototalitarism*, *Eurocommunism*, and the *Berlin Wall*. In the two political periods—the González and Aznar eras—the powerful actors constructed subjects as "anti-European" to generate normative pressures. Furthermore, the invitations to emulate the dominant representations of Europe have been successful since the beginning, although in variable degrees. The left IU coalition was opposed to the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, but the parliamentary group was divided, with eight out of 17 deputies voting in favor of the Treaty. The emulation effects gradually affected the initial bloc opposing the dispositifs of Europeanization, and this bloc also evolved, as we have seen. The final type of effects of the dispositifs—invitations to transform—was effective in the second period of Europeanization during the ratification debate on the Treaty of Nice. The IU assumed the representations and topic constellations promoted by the PSOE. Overall, the three types of effects were effective in diffusing the dominant views on the EU and marginalizing the alternative voices in the political sphere. In the final debate on the Lisbon Treaty, the opposition bloc was almost powerless in the Spanish Congress of Deputies. This would change with the financial and sociopolitical crisis that shook Europe, especially since 2010 and the political turmoil that had specific effects in Spain.

The euro crisis and coercive Europeanization in Spain (2008–2014)

The impact of the financial crisis in Spain and its political and social consequences have been discussed extensively in the literature in order to discriminate the domestic and transnational factors and determine how they were intertwined (Royo, 2014; Magone, 2016). Although there is no absolute consensus on this matter, the effects of the subprime real estate crisis in the United States in 2007 were intensified by the inability of the Spanish political and economic institutional infrastructure to cope (Royo, 2014). The economic infrastructure of Spain, based on an artificially created housing bubble and the growth of the construction sector, affected the real impact of the crisis in Spain (Jordana, 2014; Royo, 2014). These core sectors in the Spanish economy slowed down in the years 2008 and 2009. The inability to properly recover during the years 2010–2011 and the continuously falling housing prices ultimately resulted in the 2011–2012 banking crisis (Jordana, 2014: 227–8). Politically, the Zapatero government fell apart when, in 2010, it was forced to change its own policy approaches to implement important reforms promoted by Brussels. These austerity measures were perceived by the Spaniards as an undeserved punishment (Petkanopoulou et al., 2018; Buendía, 2018):

> While endorsed by the government, this programme, whose measures were gradually toughened, was also the result of pressures coming from the EU […]: first in the form of (stringent) recommendations and later—when the government encountered difficulties in refinancing its debt in the financial markets—as a condition for European Central Bank (ECB) intervention.
> (Buendía, 2018: 65–66)

This type of vertical "coercive Europeanization" became more visible, and its politicization increased in the public and political spheres as a political process shaping Spanish politics and policies. Among the EU requirements, Spain was asked to decrease its labor costs, reduce the size of the public sector, and replace welfare with workfare, with measures like reducing dismissal costs and unemployment benefits (Buendía, 2018: 66). This socioeconomic set of policies was aimed at improving the competitiveness of the rental housing market and the energy sector, among others (Sánchez-Cuenca, 2017: 352). It was at this point that Europeanization turned to be perceived as one of the drivers producing adverse social and economic consequences for Spaniards in terms of their living standards, employment conditions, and future expectations (Rodriguez López, 2016; Roch González, 2017; Petkanopoulou et al., 2018). In fact, public opinion about the EU dramatically worsened during these years. In 2007, 73 percent of Spaniards thought that EU membership was a good thing, but in 2011, only 32 percent viewed the EU in positive terms, below the EU average of 38 percent (European Commission, 2007: 16; European Commission, 2011: 47).

Table 3.3 Forms of vertical Europeanization in the three periods

	González governments	*Aznar governments*	*Zapatero governments and the Euro crisis*
Modes of Europeanization	Facilitated coordination	Facilitated coordination	Coercive Europeanization
Intensity and type of change	Transformation	Absorption	Transformation
Main policy areas of transformation	Public policy (inflation and fiscal deficit control), governance structures, normative-cognitive structures	Public policy (employment reform, inflation control, social spending cuts), normative-cognitive structures	Public policy (employment reforms, social spending cuts, public sector adjustments, constitutional amendment), governance structures, normative-cognitive structures

However, at first, the political conflict and contestation in the social sphere were not reflected in the party system. The left IU coalition was still isolated and weak in its critique of the adoption of the austerity measures by the socialist government. Yet, the people's outrage was finally expressed politically in the mobilizations that occurred on 15 May 2011, which spread across the country (see Castells, 2018; Rodriguez López, 2016). The contestation during the euro crisis was significantly greater on all levels than that expressed in opposition to the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. Thus, two parallel processes occurred in Spain in relation to Europeanization and the EU: on the one hand, vertical Europeanization turned from a mode of facilitating coordination into one of coercive Europeanization (the different forms of Europeanization during the three periods are shown in Table 3.3); on the other hand, protest movements, such as the 15-M movement and the emergence of the Podemos party in 2014, articulated counter-hegemonic representations that clashed with dominant discourses about the EU (Moreno and Moreno, 2013: 229).

The austerity dispositif and the symbolic order

The reform of Article 135 of the Spanish Constitution, which occurred in August 2011 under Brussels' petition, is a highly illustrative event within this new stage of coercive Europeanization in Spain (see Torreblanca, 2012). This reform consisted of a balanced budget amendment that, in practical terms, implied the priority to pay down the Spanish debt over giving money for social spending. In the Spanish Parliament, this constitutional reform was approved with 316 votes in favor and only five against. During the approval of the Article 135 amendment in the Congress of Deputies, the government exhibited a less euphoric representation of Europe. The constitutional reform was justified based on the unsustainability of the welfare state and the public budget. Without this reform, it would not be possible to sustain the financing of public expenditures in Spain. In the words of the PSOE, it was a measure of European solidarity to coordinate the budgets and expenditures of the EU member states:

> The economic and fiscal integration of the Eurozone requires partners to share structural deficit and debt criteria in order to gain European solvency as a whole. *European solidarity*, ladies and gentlemen, in order to guarantee the stability of the Eurozone as a whole and the welfare state.
>
> (Congress of Deputies, 2011: 15; emphasis added)

As can be seen, the key term "solidarity" was still used, but in this case, it was linked to the sacrifices needed to preserve European integration and the progress and prosperity in Spain. These changes to guarantee budget stability were made to maintain the level of social rights that, otherwise, would be under threat (Ibid.). The conservative PP defended the constitutional reform in the Spanish Parliament in similar terms:

> In short, ladies and gentlemen, Europe is still the greatest opportunity, but that is why Europe is also one of our main responsibilities. We are aware of this; we know that it is time to send out a message of certainty and confidence in ourselves and in Europe.
>
> (Ibid.: 13)

This constitutional reform was depicted by the PP as a requirement to clean house and reorder the public budget if Spaniards wanted to guarantee future economic growth and, subsequently, a sustainable welfare state. Therefore, the classical and hegemonic representations of Europe as a locus of solidarity, prosperity, social rights, and progress were used in this case to justify the austerity measures and the need to radically transform the institutions and policies of Spain. The topoi and problematizations that were advanced were similar to other periods, and they confronted the dramatic social realities of increasing unemployment, poverty, and uncertainty. The critiques to this constitutional reform referred to the form—only one parliamentary session was used to debate and vote on it—and the content. This "express reform," in the view of the ERC, responded to the requirements of the EU and, specifically, "to receive yesterday's enthusiastic applause of Mrs. Merkel" (Ibid.: 6). In similar terms, the IU described the reform of Article 135 as the imposition of foreign governments:

> We understand that this is a hard blow to the current Constitution, opening a period of restoration and democratic involution dictated by foreign governments and institutions not democratically endorsed by our citizens, replacing in practice the sovereignty of the people by the sovereignty of the financial markets, to which de facto constituent power is transferred.
>
> (Ibid.: 7)

As exemplified above, Europe and Europeanization processes were primarily represented in the cases of both the IU and the ERC in a populist fashion: as a struggle between the people and the elites, being the latter who controlled the institutions and were not accountable to the citizens. The approval of the constitutional amendment had immediate consequences regarding the credibility of Spain in the financial markets and the willingness of the EU to continue with its financial support. In fact, "three days after the reform of the Spanish Constitution, the European Commission approved conditioned financial aid for several Spanish banks" (Roch González, 2017: 28).

Conclusion

This chapter illuminated the macro-context of vertical Europeanization and the processes of horizontal Europeanization at the meso level in Spain. Vertical Europeanization in Spain took the form of facilitated coordination (i.e., transformation-absorption processes) with peaks of politicization until

the onset of the financial crisis. The Europeanization/modernization dispositif during the first period (1986–1996) served initially to reinforce the "reforming spirit" of Spanish politicians and to provide a symbolic way out of the isolation and underdevelopment of the Franco dictatorship. Both in the first (1986–1996) and the second period analyzed (1996–2004), the dispositifs of Europeanization exerted various effects as normative pressures, emulation, and change. From the time of the impact of the euro crisis in Spain and its political management, vertical Europeanization turned into what has been called coercive Europeanization.

Regarding the symbolic order of Europe and the EU, this chapter explored the various representations and problematizations operating within the dispositifs. The two government parties problematized Europe in a similar way: Europe was depicted as a necessary entity in order to overcome the historical problems of Spain, which included its political and cultural isolation, economic underdevelopment, and civil war. Europe was presented as a paramount element to construct a prosperous and modern Spain. The forms to Europeanize Spain, however, were shown in divergent ways in the two cases of the PSOE and the PP. Whereas the PSOE clamored for a stronger Europe and the idea of a "United States of Europe," the PP emphasized the role of Spain in intergovernmental negotiations and the resulting balance of power at the EU level. The *power over discourse* of these two parties was crucial to Spanish governance, since they had been taking turns to govern Spain since 1982. The hegemonic bloc of the PP and the PSOE was consistent during the three periods analyzed. It crystallized into a discursive constellation composed by the hegemonic representations of Europe mentioned above and various ancillary discourse topics including (1) free marketization and the state, (2) social rights and democracy expansion, (3) civil rights and citizenry, (4) and a minor discourse concerning federalism. All these topics were articulated by the hegemonic bloc with variable weight depending on the power of the actors mobilizing these discourses.

The Eurosceptic bloc mobilized alternative representations of Europe, but with little success. The IU, which initially shared a positive view toward European integration, gradually moved to criticism of the EU, arguing that its social pillar and democratic dimensions had been abandoned. Similarly, but now also including a critique of the lack of co-decision-making for Spanish regions, left-wing parties in Basque Country, Catalonia, and Galicia opposed the approval of the European treaties on several occasions. Against the backdrop of the ambivalent representation of Europe as both positive and negative, this opposition bloc articulated several discourse topics against —mainly pertaining to the social rights discourse; the territorial asymmetry discourse in the first period; the federalist discourse; the ecologist discourse; and, in the last period, the populist discourse. The *power through discourse* of these actors was limited on the one hand by the decreasing *power over* material and symbolic resources. The Eurosceptic parties lost ground to the point of gaining only two (the IU) and three (the ERC) seats in the 2008 Spanish general election.

They had, therefore, lower capacity to articulate and put forward alternative representations of EU and Europe. Additionally, *the power in discourse* within the dispositifs was clearly effective with the left-wing IU in its invitations to emulate and transform its EU criticism. The IU assumed the representations and problematizations mobilized by the PSOE, especially between 2003 (the Treaty of Nice) and 2008 (the Treaty of Lisbon).

The political and social consequences of the crisis and its discursive construction deeply transformed the Spanish social and political landscape. This also had consequences for the stability of the Europeanization dispositif, which became increasingly questioned at the political level with the arrival of a new political force—Podemos—in the May 2014 European Parliamentary election. The constitution of this political force and its political and discursive practices are extensively explored in the next chapter.

Notes

1 The translations from Spanish to English are my own throughout the book.
2 The Al-Qaeda terrorist attack on the trains in Madrid on 11 March 2004 was the deadliest terrorist attack carried out in the history of Spain.

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4 Podemos

The populist rise in Spain

Introduction

In the aftermath of the financial, political, and social crisis in Spain (2009–2013), the political party Podemos emerged as the most successful expression of anti-austerity politics. In January 2014, a group of intellectuals and left-wing activists presented Podemos as a "political platform" at the Teatro del Barrio in Madrid. The antecedent of this platform was the 15 May Movement (15-M) and subsequent protests over the high unemployment rates and austerity measures implemented in the country (Della Porta et al., 2017: 221; Castells, 2018: 335). The European Union (EU) and other international organizations actively recommended these unpopular measures and mainstream parties in Spain favored their implementation (first the center-left government of the Partido Socialista Obrero Español [PSOE], and later the conservative Partido Popular [PP] since 2011). The context of social protest and mobilization paved the way for the emergence of new political contenders and increased political conflict (Sola and Rendueles, 2018: 2; Rodriguez Teruel et al., 2017: 563). However, these conditions by themselves are not sufficient to explain the emergence and consolidation of a new political actor. In the case of Podemos, the construction of new narratives and problematizations of the social and political conflicts and the ability to communicate them through media platforms were crucial for providing initial support to the party (Castells, 2018: 348). Although the party did not define itself as a representative of the 15-M movement, it took up several demands and the overall political style advanced by the movement (see Rodriguez López, 2016: 79–81).

In the May 2014 European Parliamentary election, Podemos garnered an unexpected eight percent of votes. After two consecutive general elections, the party consolidated in June 2016 as the third force at the Spanish Parliament with 21.1 percent of the votes and 71 deputies (of which, finally, a parliamentary group of 67 was formed). From the foundation of the party in January 2014 to November of the same year, Podemos experienced a transformation from a fringe movement to a party polling in the third, second, and even the first position in several election surveys. In November 2014, Podemos formalized its structure in its first party Congress (*Vistalegre I*) with primaries

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for the party executive and the main constituent bodies. Moreover, the main documents defining the structure and functioning of the party were voted upon. After Vistalegre I, the party was prepared to compete at the national and regional level in what was called by the Podemos's leaders as "the year of change" (*el año del cambio*). This chapter concentrates on the analysis of the discursive articulations of the party since its foundation to the consolidation in the Spanish party system. The chapter is structured in three main parts in accordance with the three relevant stages identified in the development of the Podemos: *party in the making* (January–November 2014), *running for elections* (December 2014–June 2016), and *party in opposition/in office* (August 2016–December 2022); a specific corpus has been selected for each of these stages to facilitate the analysis: *Podemos1*, *Podemos2*, and *Podemos3*, respectively.[1] These corpora are explored using corpus linguistics (CL) techniques and discourse analytical techniques.

The populist upsurge and the EU (first stage)

The *Podemos1* corpus shows a primary construction of the popular identity through the signifier *gente*, a colloquial way of referring to people. *Gente* is the most frequent noun in this first sub-corpus (360, 0.46), as shown in Table 4.1, and represents one of the nodal points in the overall discursive articulations of the party. There are, however, other less prominent nouns referring to "the people," especially *personas* (person/s; 86, 0.11) and *ciudadanos* (citizen/s; 70, 0.09). The lemma[2] citizen* (*ciudadan**; 67, 0.09) is a problematic word form due to the ambiguity of its diverse usages. This word form includes citizen as an adjective ("the citizen council," or "the citizen security law" that frequently

Table 4.1 Frequency list nouns

	Word	*Freq*	*%*
1	People (ordinary–*gente-gentes*)	362	0.46
2	Country	199	0.25
3	All	152	0.19
4	"We can" (Podemos)	141	0.18
5	Democracy	118	0.15
6	Politics	113	0.14
7	Fear	96	0.12
8	Party (Political party)	93	0.12
9	We	92	0.12
10	Things	88	0.11
11	Right	86	0.11
12	Problem	86	0.11
13	Rights	74	0.09
14	Euros	74	0.09
15	Years	72	0.09

appear in the *Podemos1* corpus) and citizen/s as a noun (the citizens, or the citizenry). Only in the latter usage it is possible to examine how it constructs the popular identity in a strict sense, that is, the discursive practices of the speakers to represent "the people." Furthermore, during the second and third stages, Podemos also used "Ciudadanos" (citizens) to refer to a new liberal party that emerged in Spain.

By contrast, *gente* (the ordinary people) or *personas* (person/s) function exclusively as nouns designating "the people" and it is easier to analyze the Podemos' construction of the popular identity exploring the use of these two terms. This indicates one limitation of CL techniques and the need to combine sequential manual analysis with computer-assisted techniques, something assumed from the beginning in the present research. Hence, the analysis is primarily focused on the terms *personas* and *gente* to analyze the Podemos' construction of "the people" although the use of the term citizens as "the people" will be also considered through a sequential analysis of the concordance lines. The excerpt below exemplifies how "the people" is constructed using the signifier citizen/s. All citizens are said to have the right to participate in politics, and their interests should be defended: "Article 128 of the Constitution which is written to allow a government to intervene in companies carrying out oligopolistic practices against *the interests of citizens*" (Iglesias, 2014a; emphasis added).

If we turn to the signifier *personas*, it serves primarily to designate and classify different sub-types of persons. This can be observed in the results of its collocation analysis, as illustrated in Table 4.2.

Personas appears significantly co-selected with "disability" (*discapacidad*, 6), "dependent" (dependent people; *dependiente*, 3), and "sex" (*sexo*, 3). These collocates play the role of identifying diversity within the people and their rights: "Guarantee the right to safety and a life free of violence for women and lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual and intersex people through a legal system

Table 4.2 Collocates of "person/s" and "ordinary people" (*gente*) in the first period

Person/s		*People (Gente)*	
All	11	Many	20
Any	6	The majority	20
Disability	6	Normal	11
Access	4	Part	9
Thousands	4	Honest (*honesta*)	4
Normal	4	Decent	5
Dependent	3	Honest (*honrada*)	4
Million	3		
Sex	3		

Note: All collocates are classified by frequency and are above the values ≥3 of Mi and ≥15, 13 of log likelihood, according to the criteria established in Chapter 5.

of guarantees that intervenes in both the public and private spheres." (Podemos Manifesto, 2014: 12). The diversity of persons, as alluded to previously, is depicted exclusively in the manifesto for the European Parliamentary election. The collocates "dependent," "disability," or "sex" are not used during the campaign speeches. By contrast, in the speeches, "person/s" appears co-selected with *todas* (all persons, 11), *cualquiera* (any person, 6), *miles* (thousands of persons, 4), or *normal* (normal, 4). In this case, there is a different representation of "the people" as a political subject. The collocates "normal," "any," and "thousands" allude to a broader "people," able to absorb the differences of individuals and groups in a single locus of popular power. This usage of "persons" is equivalent, as we will see below, to the role of the signifier *gente*, the term best representing "the people": "Ensuring the right of all people (*personas*), individually or collectively, to participate in the governance of their country and to secure universal access to political representation" (Podemos, 2014: 10).

Turning to the signifier *gente* (360, 0.46), the findings show a pattern of collocation that identifies the people with "the majority": "many people" (*mucha*, 20) or the "majority of the people" (*mayoria*, 20). The "people" is classified using descriptive adjectives as seen in Table 4.2. In this sense, "the people" are "normal" (*normal*, 11) or "honest" (*honrada*, 4). This is a form representing social actors through an evaluation or appraisement (Van Leeuwen, 2008: 45). This systematic appraisement of the people in positive terms constructs it as a virtuous social subject. The two main representations of "the people" are, therefore, its identification with the majority and its appraisement as a virtuous, honest, and decent people. Such representations appear articulated to construct the popular identity:

> They know […] that there is a *social majority of people who are decent* so they take out the thing of "no, the left, the right, the parliamentary game." Don't cheat us. It's not a problem of the left and the right, no matter how much he and I are on the left. It is a problem of a caste of *brazen* people [slang*: *golfos*] and a majority of citizens.
>
> (Iglesias, 2014b; emphasis added)

The verbs collocating with *gente* or *personas* refer to relevant processes or events associated with "the people." The people in the *Podemos1* corpus primarily "is" (*está*), "have" (*tiene*) and "want" (*quiere*) specific things. Firstly, people are "tired" and "fed up to the back teeth" (slang*: *hasta las narices*): "The *people are fed up to the back teeth*, the ballot boxes are open and there is a social majority that agrees we are governed by gangsters" (Iglesias, Soria, 2014; emphasis added). "The people" are represented as outraged and fed up with politicians and the elites, and they—the majority—want "a decent education system and that the wealthy people pay taxes from time to time" (Iglesias, 2014b). Thus, "the people" is also classified through functionalization, that is, by referring to the main activities that they engage in (Van Leeuwen, 2008: 46).

These activities are basically related to the political opposition to the elites because, following Iglesias, "if we don't do politics, others do it for you and if others do it for you, then you are lost and there is no democracy and there is nothing" (Iglesias, Gijón, 2014c). Thus, the antagonism with the elites defines the main activities of the people: "The fundamental problem is that people don't do politics because if people don't do politics it's done by others and when others do it they steal your rights, they steal your democracy, they even steal your wallet." (Iglesias, 2014d)

Hence, "the people" (*gente*) is constructed using three operations: identification with the most; appraisement of the positive qualities of humbleness, honesty, or decency; and functionalization as a subject "to do" politics or letting "others" do it for them. Finally, "persons" are represented using different social classifications (e.g., people with special needs, same sex couples). This is illustrated above in Figure 4.1. There are at least two prominent argumentations that can be distinguished based on the previous analysis. First, what Wodak (2015) calls a *topos of the people* is operating across the *Podemos1* corpus with the following structure: 'If the people want this, this is right.' Another argumentation scheme brings "the elites" into a *topos of danger, or threat*: 'the main threat is the greed and undemocratic action of the elites; therefore, there is something that should be done about.' The underlying problematization of the political mobilized by the Podemos is defined by the populist discourse, as illustrated below: "With political power and political will, things can be changed. They don't want people to talk about politics they don't have a problem recognizing: yes, we are all *brazen* people [slang*: *golfos*]." (Iglesias, 2014e)

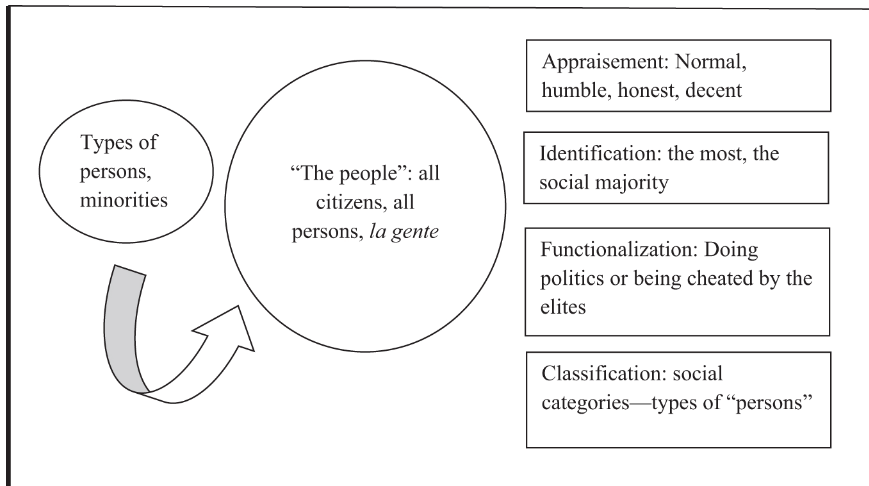

Figure 4.1 Representations of "the people".

The popular classes or "the people" are "oppressed or cheated by uncontrolled elites" and this demarcates the current political divide between the people and elites. This also legitimizes the action of gaining power in favor of the people and confronting this central political problem. We can now turn to how the particular group of 'the elites' is represented and to what extent it is paramount to construct the people. In other words, to what extent the populist antagonism is central in the *Podemos1* corpus: "It's not a left and right problem no matter how much we're left. It is a problem of a caste of *brazen* people and thieves [slang*: *mangantes*] and a majority of citizens whom they are afraid of" (Iglesias, 2014b). As exemplified above, the elites are denoted using several signifiers. Some of them are ambivalent and relate to political elites, such as the "government" (*gobierno*; 68, 0.09). This signifier refers alternatively to the PSOE and PP governments in negative terms or to a future government of Podemos as a positive change. Other terms defining the elites are univocal as "the caste" (*casta*; 46, 0.06), "the banks" (*bancos*; 48, 0.06), or "the wealthy people" (*ricos*; 37, 0.05). In the previous excerpt, Podemos is explicit about the elites—they are lazy, brazen people; have bad intentions; and steal money from "normal and decent people." They are morally defined as corrupt and privileged, and are represented in opposition to the people: "The image of the caste, the image of corruption, the image of the privileged that contrast with the image of normal people." (Iglesias, 2014f)

To estimate the centrality of the antagonistic construction of the people, an antagonism index is calculated. The degree of antagonism is measured by manually exploring the concordance lines to identify the number of concordance lines in which "the people" (*gente*) is constructed through antagonism with the elites. The antagonism index for this stage is 0.52, which means that more than half of the times that the signifier *gente* is used, it is constructed as the popular identity in antagonism with the elites. Therefore, the antagonism is central to construct the political and the popular identity during this first stage. The next section analyzes the representations and problematizations about Europe and the EU during this first stage and the interrelations with the populist discourse.

The Europe of the people or the Europe of the elites

In the *Podemos1* corpus, corresponding to the European Parliamentary election (May 2014), "Europe" as a noun ranks 48 in frequency with 55 occurrences (0.07 of relative frequency). As seen in Table 4.1, "Europe" is not among the 15 most frequent nouns. Exploring the patterns of co-selection of Europe, there are various significant collocates: "problem" (*problema*, 12), "south" (*sur*, 5), "countries" (*países*, 4), and other less significant but also relevant words for the analysis, such as "rights" (*derechos*, 4) and "social" (*social*, 3). According to the sequential analysis of the concordance lines, Europe emerges within a populist problematization of the political. The collocate "problem" designates the problem of Europe, which, in this case, is "the elites." "South" and "countries"

refer to those parts of Europe that should recover their dignity and the "social rights." Hence, there is a divide within Europe between two camps: the popular camp, and the elitist camp. There is a Europe that Podemos "loves" (6), and another that seems to be captured by the elites, Goldman Sachs, and the banks. The most relevant collocates that are mentioned are presented in the following excerpt:

> We *love* Europe if Europe means freedom, equality and fraternity, we *love* Europe if Europe means social rights, we *love* Europe if Europe means human rights. The *problem is not Europe, the problem is* that the name of the president of the European Central Bank is Mario Draghi and he was representative of Goldman Sachs in Europe […] Europe's problem is called Durão Barroso […] that's why we say along with other southern Europeans that we want to recover the dignity and the future of our peoples and our countries.
>
> (Iglesias, 2014d; emphasis added)

As this excerpt illustrates, the populist discourse and its form shape the way in which Europe is articulated. Europe appears fractured between the elites and the people—denoted primarily as the EU elites and countries of southern Europe, respectively. In fact, "south of Europe" (5) is the most cited cluster in the *Podemos1* corpus in relation to Europe. The south of Europe is an element that enters into the discursive chain of the popular identity. Conversely, the "other Europe"—linked to Goldman Sachs, Angela Merkel, and the elites—is positioned on the other side of the antagonistic frontier. Hence, the populist form is the primary way to articulate the symbolic elements corresponding to Europe in this first stage of the Podemos party. As a solution for the European problems, the party proposes the empowerment of southern European countries and the development of specific relationships between them. There is a vision for the future of Europe that is twofold: first, it consists of recovering the social rights of old Europe; and second, it implies the design of a new one with new relationships, generating some type of special area for the weakest countries in the EU. This is exemplified in the following excerpt: "The establishment of trade agreements between small producers in southern countries. Development of specific cooperation mechanisms between countries of southern Europe" (Podemos, 2014: 25).

Although Europe is primarily articulated in accordance with the populist form, if we turn to the specific contents and the discourse strand referring to the EU and its various institutions, the question becomes more complex. A distinction must be made between the representations of Europe and the more concrete dimensions related to the EU, what is called in this work "the EU discourse strand."[3] This discourse strand involves a total of 131 instances (0.17 of relative frequency in the overall *Podemos1* corpus). The terms referring to the EU discourse strand are the adjective "European" (*Europea/s,* feminine/plural; *Europeo/s*, masculine/plural; 97), "eurozone" (*Eurozona*, 1),

"European Parliament" (*Parlamento Europeo*, 8) and the "EU" (*UE*, 24). The EU, as such, is mentioned, almost exclusively, in the party manifesto for the European Parliamentary election. Only two out of 24 mentions are found in the speeches of the party. The EU is represented as a geopolitical reference in which the active subjects are the "countries" or the "citizens," rather than the EU itself. Different policies are proposed to improve the EU, including "a basic income for all EU citizens," the development of "the European Democratic Charter," "a European Fund" to help the countries most affected by the crisis, and "universal health coverage": "The elaboration of a plan to promote the implementation of universal health coverage for all EU citizens in any of the member countries, considering health coverage as one of their fundamental rights" (Podemos, 2014: 16).

The EU is portrayed in the party manifesto as a set of institutions to be reformed. It is problematized as an institutional complex with a social and democratic deficit. Podemos suggests that several reforms would turn the EU into a more positive and acceptable project. In this respect, the main argumentation scheme is different from those linked to the populist discourse: there is a *topos of reform* by which the EU can become better with policy changes. The form to articulate this discourse strand related to the EU connects with the representations and problematizations of the EU as previously articulated by the radical left coalition Izquierda Unida (IU), and even the center left PSOE in certain periods. However, these "reformist" demands are not echoed in the more general party discourse, such as in its campaign speeches. In fact, one of the two times that the EU is mentioned in party speeches is represented in a different way, once again connecting it with the populist articulation:

> The problem is not the European Union. The problem is that Europe of the merchants, that Europe of Merkel, that Europe of the financial power; and there is another Europe, that of the citizens of the south who do not want to be the place where the Germans come on vacation, who do not want to be the paradise of the lack of labor rights.
>
> (Iglesias, 2014c)

In the same vein, the EU institutions, especially the European Central Bank (ECB) and the European Commission, are described as captured and governed by the elites and without democratic legitimacy in the campaign speeches. This explains the negative situation and bad conditions for the European people. Likewise, the democratic deficit of these institutions is also criticized: "Have any of you participated in an election to vote for the members of the European Central Bank? Have any of you participated in an election to vote for the members of the "troika"?" (Iglesias, 2014f) To summarize, there is, on the one hand, a discourse strand about Europe representing a social division between southern Europeans and the elites, and on the other, a discourse strand focused on the EU, mainly in the 2014 party manifesto, that represents it as an institutional complex that can be reformed. There is a tension between

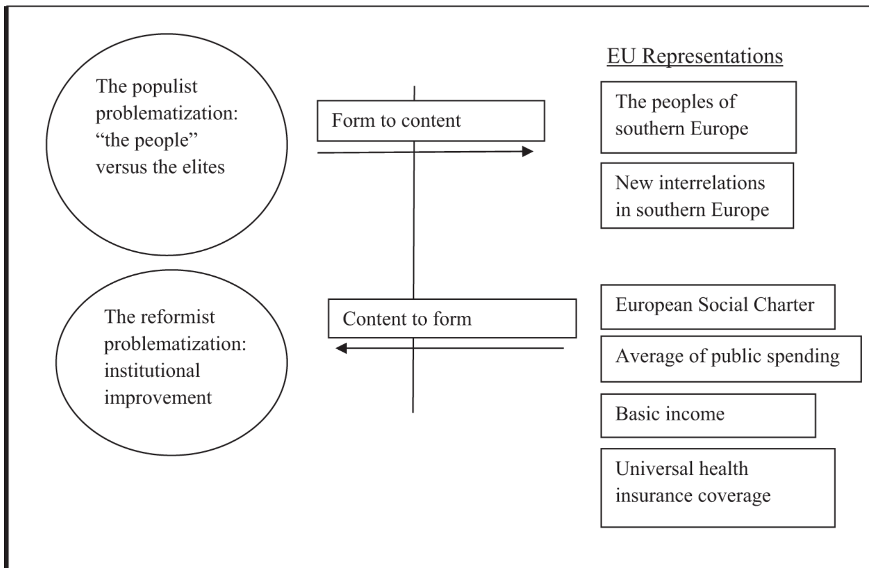

Figure 4.2 Europe, the EU, and the popular identity.

the populist form structuring the discourse about Europe and the reformist arguments, assuming a certain degree of (at least potential) legitimacy of the EU institutions. There is a difficult and tense coexistence of these two forms of legitimacy in constructing the political (based on "the people" or based on reforming the institutions through new policies). This explains their separation by genre: in the campaign speeches, the populist problematization of the political is dominant; and in the election manifesto, the reformist problematization is more prominent.

As seen in Figure 4.2, it is not only the populist form ("the people" against "the elites") that articulates various discursive elements into a chain of equivalences, including the "Europe of the people" and "the Europe of the elites." Moreover, the concrete formulation of policies and argumentations about EU-related topics can also generate a distinct form of articulation: the *reformist* problematization. This problematization does not articulate the discursive elements in two antagonistic blocs and along a chain of equivalence. By contrast, the reformist problematization articulates single and differentiated demands ("basic income," "universal health coverage") to transform politics, that is, the various forms to govern and administrate a given polity.

The *Blitzkrieg* and the "war electoral machine"

After the unexpected success of Podemos in the 2014 European Parliamentary election, the dramatic rise of the party in the polls marked the Spanish political

and media debate. The opinion polls reflected ample support for Podemos to surpass 20 percent of the vote.[4] This situation changed the expectations of Spaniards about Podemos and improved its possibility of performing well in the December 2015 general election (Rodriguez López, 2016: 86). The first party Congress of Podemos (*Vistalegre I*) took place in November 2014 to electing the party leadership, defining the internal organizational structures, and determining the political alliances. In the previous two-month "Citizen Assembly," several proposals for the organization of the party, as well as candidates for its executive posts were presented and discussed. On 15 November 2014, the new party leadership was finally elected, and Pablo Iglesias was confirmed as the head of the party executive, having a clear majority in comparison to the "alternative list" supported mainly by the political organization Anticapitalistas (at the time of the party Congress, Izquierda Anticapitalista). Iglesias and his team garnered 89 percent of the vote, and their proposals for the organization of the party also prevailed, with 81 percent of the vote. From this point onward, the party became a well-organized "war electoral machine," in the words of Errejón,[5] who was responsible for the election campaign and a member of the party executive (see Sola and Rendueles, 2018: 8). The organizational changes were oriented to improve the performance of Podemos in upcoming electoral events: the May 2015 regional and local elections and especially the December 2015 general election.

The results of the regional and local elections were ambivalent. The percentage of votes for Podemos in these simultaneous regional elections was 14.19 percent, similar to the previous election held one month prior in Andalusia (14.84 percent).[6] For the local elections, Podemos did not stand itself for election but was integrated into various "popular candidacies" comprising several parties and movements. This strategy for the local elections was successful, and these "popular candidacies" supported by Podemos gained the major councils of Spain (Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, and Zaragoza). In accordance with several authors the party entered into a phase of normalization in this period by adapting to the media dynamics and the fluctuations of public opinion about the party and the political situation (Franze, 2018; Rodriguez López, 2016). Kioupkiolis and Seoane Pérez (2018: 8) argue that Podemos experienced, in a parallel way to its process of institutionalization, a retreat from populism (see also Franze, 2018).

The popular identity and the antagonistic divide

In the *Podemos2* corpus, the word *gente* (538, 0.42 percent) continues to be the most frequent signifier when alluding to "the people," although its salience decreased slightly from 0.46 to 0.42 percent. The word form *citizen** gains prominence in the *Podemos2* corpus (167, 0.13 percent). As noted above, the multiple meanings and usages of this term make it problematic to evaluate its relevance as a signifier of "the people." Finally, *personals* is the third most relevant signifier to refer to "the people" (143, 0.11 percent). Looking at the

Table 4.3 Collocates of persons and "ordinary people" (*gente*) in the second period

Person/s		*Gente*	
All	13	Many (*Mucha*)	66
Situation	8	Decent	34
Vote	7	Humble	15
Migrant	6	So much	16
Attention	6	Simple	13
Rescue	5	Service	13
Natural	5	Working	14
Thousand	5	All	17
Dependency	5	Normal (*normal*)	8
Legal	4	Normal (*corriente*)	7
Dependents	4		

collocate profile of "persons" summarized in Table 4.3, and exploring the concordance lines, the findings show at least three prominent representations of "the people," similar to the *Podemos1* corpus. On the one hand, the signifier "person/s" classifies different types of people in a similar fashion to the first period. People in a "situation of dependency" (dependent persons) and "migrant persons" are positioned subjects that need a "shock plan for their dignity" (Podemos, 2016: 48).

There are several measures proposed by Podemos to improve the precarious situations of these persons and "rescue the people in the worst conditions" (Ibid.: 9). In the case of migrants, it is unacceptable that thousands of people drown in the Mediterranean Sea. The proposal of Podemos is to incorporate migrants into the political community: "Articulation of legal and safe means of entry into our country for both applicants for international protection and for migrants, as a guarantee that there will be no more deaths at the borders" (Podemos, 2016: 51). These people and their incorporation into the political community are mainly represented in the election manifestos, similar to the first period. Migrants and dependent people are inscribed inside the popular identity. Podemos actively include these subjects into the legitimate definition of "the people." Secondly, there is another representation that refers in a more generic form to "the people" and this group's entitlements as a universal subject: "all persons" should be able to access to the same "rights, development and equal opportunities" (Podemos, 2015: 19). Thirdly, the "person/s" are depicted as a multitude—as the majority of the people—involved in politics when used together with the collocates "thousands" or "hundreds of thousands": "Hundreds of thousands of people went out into the streets and squares, and we sat in the streets and squares to say 'you have to go [to the political class]'" (Bescansa, 2015).

Turning to the signifier *gente*, there are similar patterns of co-selection as in the previous stage, and this term continues to be the nodal point for

constructing "the people." When examining the collocation patterns, the findings show a set of adjectives alluding to quantity: "many" (*mucha*, 66), "so much" (*tanta*, 16) or "all" (*toda*, 17); and other evaluative adjectives: "decent" (*decente*, 34), "humble" (*humilde*, 15), "simple" (*simple*, 13), "hardworking" (*trabajadora*, 14), or "normal" (*normal*, 8). In this way, as seen in Table 4.3, "the people" are portrayed as the majority and as decent and normal, in contrast to the privileged minority. This representation is clearly articulated again within the populist discourse:

> We do dare *with the rich*. We know that governing means choosing between two options: either to *govern for those above or for normal people*. Do not believe those who tell you that you can govern for everyone, that you can govern for *the billionaires and for the normal people*.
>
> (Iglesias, 2015a; emphasis added)

Similar to the previous stage, "the people" (*gente*) are represented as tired of the economic and political elites and of the economic and social situation. The colloquial expression *hasta las narices* (fed up to the back teeth) is used again to depict the mood of the people. Finally, the signifier *citizen** collocates primarily with "right/s" (13) and "country" (7). "Country" serves to identify "the citizens of our country" (Iglesias, 2015a). Moreover, the rights of the citizens are enumerated in the two Podemos manifestos: "the right of the citizens to culture," and the "direct role of citizens in their right to participate in public affairs as opposed to economic power" (Podemos, 2016: 58). This relates to the representation of "the people" as a group entitled to rights. The antagonism index is only 0.28, in contrast to the 0.52 of the previous stage. This indicates that "the people" (*gente*) is constructed as a central nodal point of the discourse of Podemos but not necessarily as antagonistic with the elites, at least not to the same extent as during the first stage. This suggests a greater "demoticism," in the terms of March (2017: 284), that is, closeness to the ordinary people, and a lesser relevance of the pure antagonistic logic articulating the popular identity. The moralistic classifications of "the elites" as "brazen," bad people, or thieves is also absent during this stage. Rather, "the elites" are defined exclusively in socio-economic and political terms, as those at the top of the social structure. Therefore, the populist discourse is still the main way to construct the popular identity but the antagonism is less salient than in the previous stage.

Europe in times of normalization

The salience of the noun "Europe" diminishes in the *Podemos2* corpus, from 0.07 to 0.04 of relative frequency, and down to 46 occurrences. The discourse strand on the EU is also less prominent during this period, amounting to 132 instances and 0.10 percent, while in the *Podemos1* corpus it has 0.17 of relative frequency. During this second period, the party is focused on the regional, local, and national elections, and consequently, this can partially explain the

drop in salience of "Europe" in the *Podemos2* corpus. When analyzing the concordance lines and the collocates, the findings show a singular discursive constellation. Europe appears co-selected in significant ways with the terms "idea" (*idea*, 3) and "Spain" (*España*, 5), although there are other less significant collocates, such as "social" (*social/sociales*, 6) and "democratic" (*democrática*, 3). The discourse strand revolving around "Europe" represents the latter in a positive way by associating it with "the idea of prosperity." This representation connects with the *topos of the savior* by which Europe may help Spain overcome its state of underdevelopment through a process of modernization. As it is shown in Chapter 3, this argumentation scheme is firmly anchored in the symbolic order of the dispositifs of Europeanization in Spain. In the following excerpts, Podemos self-defines as pro-European and in defense of one Europe prioritizing prosperity, as well as social and human rights:

> To defend social rights, public services, sovereignty and an idea of *Europe associated with prosperity*. I say this very clearly: either they take the hand of the pro-Europeans who understand that Europe without prosperity, without human rights, without civil rights, without social rights is not sustainable, or they will have to negotiate with Marine Le Pen.
>
> (Iglesias, 2015b; emphasis added)

> To say "Europe" was to build that Spain that we all wanted to have; and the Spanish political system was built on that idea of Europe.
>
> (Bescansa, 2015)

The collocates "democratic" and "social" serve to portray Europe as a positive reference to Spain although it also introduces some critiques of the current state of the EU. The positive representation of Europe is connected with a reformist problematization already incipient in the *Podemos1* corpus. It is necessary to implement significant changes to consolidate a democratic and social Europe. Europe is also contrasted with the history of Spain in recent decades:

> Of course, given the trajectory of our country in recent decades, Europe is perhaps the first reality that must be taken as a starting point in order to tackle the great challenges that lie ahead, while also being aware that *it needs significant changes* in order to become a *democratic, social Europe at the service of the social majorities* of the different Member States.
>
> (Podemos, 2016: 75; emphasis added)

The main verbs co-selected with Europe are "was built" (*se construyó*, 4) and "meant" (*significaba*, 2). They indicate the same idea of prosperity connected to Europe. Following Iglesias, "Europe was built on a project of prosperity based on social rights and it is others who are destroying Europe" (Iglesias,

2015a). This representation of Europe connects with a problematization of the history of Spain and the depiction of Europe as a solution to these historical problems. If we turn to the EU discourse strand, the EU is also constructed as a positive reference, a mirror reflecting the deficits of Spain and the possible developments and improvements for the country. The "European average," as one of the most significant co-selections within the EU discourse strand, signals the positive reference provided by Europe to improve the labor, wages, and public spending conditions in Spain: "Convergence with 60 percent of the average salary as established by the European Social Charter." (Podemos, 2016: 38) There are still critiques of the EU institutions, although with less salience than in the previous period. The ECB, the European Commission, and the "troika" are portrayed in this minor representation as governed by elites whose power should be undermined:

> Democracy is a movement that distributes power, a movement that tells whoever is in power, either the European Central Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Private Investment Fund, or multimillionaires that in a democracy, the power has to be in the hands of the people.
>
> (Iglesias, 2015b)

The problematization of the elites as those destroying the EU is still operative in the *Podemos2* corpus, based on the populist discourse and the antagonism

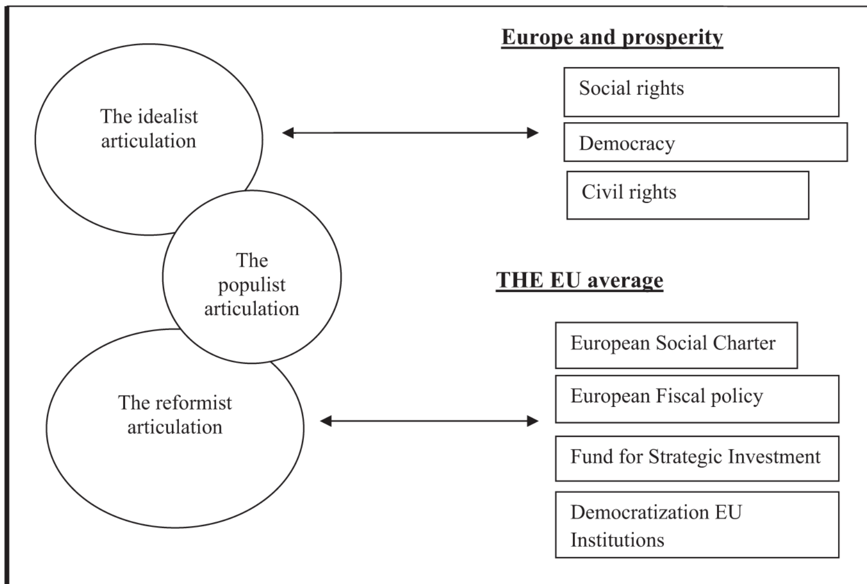

Figure 4.3 Representations of Europe and the EU in the second stage.

between the people and the elites. However, in contrast to the previous period, this populist form is operative in the EU discourse strand rather than in the Europe discourse strand. Even in the case of the EU, this is a minor form of articulation, as illustrated in Figure 4.3. The EU appears primarily represented as a positive reference that may help Spain to escape its isolation and economic underdevelopment and as a set of institutions that can be reformed. The first representation of the EU can be defined as an idealist discursive articulation since it draws on traditional ideas and problematizations of Europe linked to the modernization of Spain. The second representation of the EU is based on a reformist type of articulation, whereby several measures may improve and correct the current course of the EU. The latter was already prominent during the first stage of the party, especially in the party manifesto for the European Parliamentary election.

Regarding the Europe discourse strand, there is an absence of the populist form of articulation. By contrast, Europe is depicted in association with the idea of prosperity, democracy, and social rights—a hegemonic construction also found in the early years of Europeanization in Spain.

Party in opposition/in office

The consolidation of Podemos was confirmed in the Spanish general election held in December 2015. The party gained 20.7 percent of the popular vote, just 1.3 points below the PSOE, which had 22.0 percent. This impactful result marked the beginning of a new political cycle in which mainstream parties in Spain were unable to govern by themselves or with the support of fringe regionalist parties. After what Castells (2018: 351) calls the "Podemos's conundrum"— the inability to find a plausible alliance with the PSOE—the negotiations to form a government after the 20-D election failed. In the run-up to the new general election called for in June 2016, Podemos formed an alliance with the radical left coalition IU in May 2016.The final goal was to surpass the PSOE in the upcoming election and, with greater bargaining power, forming a left-wing government in Spain (Franze, 2018: 64). The convergence with IU did not produce the expected effects and Unidos Podemos, the new brand of the alliance between the two parties, received barely five million votes. Although it was not a bad result by itself, disappointment came from the fact that it was almost the same result that Podemos obtained running alone in the 20-D 2015 election. Following Castells (2018: 354), the approximately one million missing votes went to the abstention; they included half of the communist vote (IU) and the other half of the "Podemos voters who were lost in the tactical maneuvers of Podemos during the weeks of byzantine negotiations between the parties." After the 26-J 2016 election, the conservative PP was finally able to form a government with the support of another emerging contender, Ciudadanos, a liberal center-right party. It was at this point that a new phase of internal reorganization, conflict, and parliamentary opposition started for Podemos (Franze, 2018: 65).

Populism and institutionalization in Podemos

Franze (2018) argues that the discourse of Podemos evolved from antagonism to agonism during this phase of institutionalization, borrowing this expression from Chantal Mouffe (2005; see also Kioupkiolis and Seoane Pérez, 2019: 8–9). Indeed, looking at the *Podemos3* corpus, the emblematic signifier *gente* to construct "the people" loses salience during this third stage, being the second most frequent word form (406, 0.27). However, the signifier "person/s" slightly increases its salience with 0.15 of relative frequency. Exploring the 41 instances of the signifier "persons" in the *Podemos3* corpus, the findings again show two main discursive constructions. This word form is used to refer to "all persons," "millions of persons," or specific types of persons (e.g., deaf persons, evicted persons). There is also a civic representation of the people using the signifiers citizens (*ciudadano/a/s*) to emphasize the rights of the citizens and the desired constitution of the polity and its institutions: "There is a need for institutions that protect all citizens without asking them who they voted for" (Iglesias, 2017a). Looking at the concordance lines of the nodal point *gente*, the findings show similar patterns of collocation: the adjectives "many," "hardworking," "humble," "simple," or "decent" are again at the top of the collocate list, as seen in Table 4.4.

The antagonistic construction of "the people," however, is less central in the *Podemos3* corpus, with an antagonism index of 0.25—three points lower than during the previous stage. The term "the people" is represented through an appraisal or positive evaluation but it is not necessarily connected to the antagonism against the elites:

> Decent people, humble people, working people left us another legacy, left us a legacy made up of rights, left us a legacy made up of a social agreement, made up of guarantees, made up of the right to have the chance to try and that if you fell they wouldn't turn their backs on you.
>
> (Errejón, 2016)

Therefore, both the salience of "the people" and especially the degree of antagonism decreases during this stage. The main representations of the people still

Table 4.4 Collocates of persons and "ordinary people" (*gente*) in the third period

Person/s		*Gente*	
All	28	Many (*Mucha*)	47
Rights	19	Hardworking	24
Millions	13	Humble	22
Thousands	8	Simple	19
		Decent	14
		Tired	11
		Normal	11

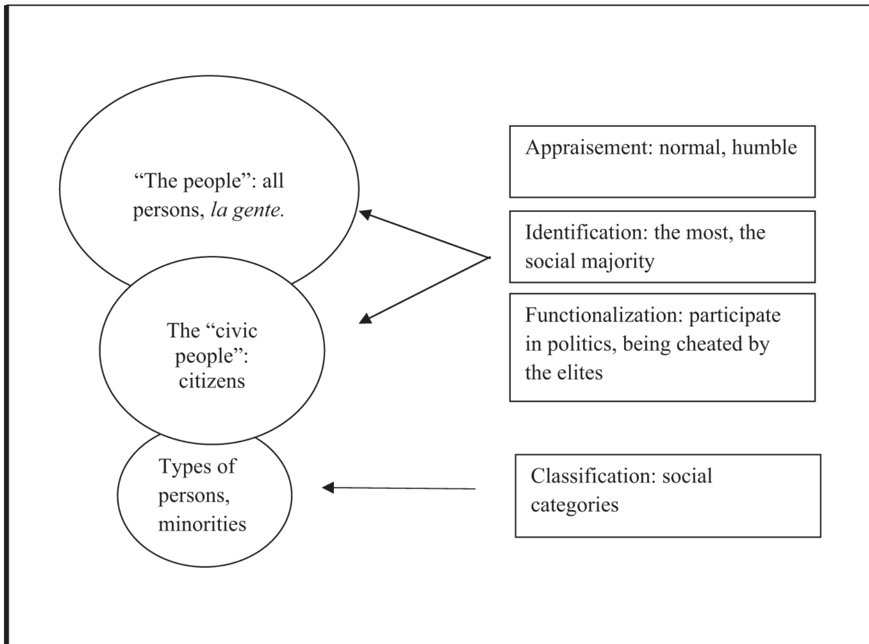

Figure 4.4 Representations of "the people" during the third stage.

hinge upon: (1) the people as the collective and legitimate subject of democracy (*gente*, "all the persons"), the people as the citizens linked to entitlements (*ciudadanos*), and the people as the specific minorities or types of persons that should be actively included in the legitimate people (*personas*). The modalities of appraisement ("humble," "simple," "honest") and identification ("the majority") operate to construct the people as a collective and legitimate subject of democracy. The civic people or the citizens are instead constructed through a functionalization linking the positioned subject with the activities of voting or participating in politics. Finally, the types of persons or minorities are identified through a process of classification: same-sex couples, dependent persons, old persons, and migrant persons (Figure 4.4).

Representing Europe in oppositionlin office

During this third stage, marked by general and European parliamentary elections in 2019, the signifier "Europe" and the discourse topic on the EU is as salient as in the early period of Podemos (corresponding to the *Podemos1* corpus). In the *Podemos3* corpus, Europe is mentioned 105 times (0.07), whereas the EU discursive strand amount to 285 hits and 0.19 of relative frequency. Europe

is co-selected in significant ways with the terms “rights” (*derechos*, 11), “democracy” (*democracia*, 7) and “freedoms” (*libertades*, 5), and “Spain” (*España*, 3) although there are other less significant collocates, such as “social” (*social/sociales*, 6) and “democratic” (*democrática*, 3). Looking at the concordance lines, the three prominent representations of the second stage remain as the fundamental ways to construct the discourse strand about Europe. Europe appears as a positive reference to Spain, in a similar sense as the former stage. Spain, under the policies of the PP government, seems to be flying away from Europe: “The policies of the Partido Popular are inefficient and unacceptable and continue to distance us from Europe in terms of expenditure and revenue” (Iglesias, 2017b).

The *topos of the savior*, crucial in the symbolic order of the dispositifs of Europeanization in Spain, is operative, constructing a problematization of the isolated and underdeveloped Spain in contrast to Europe. Europe serves as a platform to reclaim more social and civil right for LGTBI persons, women, or migrant persons. There is also the reformist articulation, where neoliberal policies should be changed. Podemos depicts a scenario in which Europe is transforming itself from a Europe of social rights to an impoverished Europe with social exclusion and without democracy. This representation of Europe as lacking social rights and with a democratic deficit connects with the critical argument against neoliberalism in Europe. It problematizes certain policies mobilized by the elites governing Europe:

> The advance toward a Europe that was still looked at with the expectation of being that Europe where inequality diminished, where we all had the possibility of improving and not with what is now becoming: a Europe in which there is more and more social exclusion and where there are fewer and fewer who can make decisions about their own lives.
>
> (Montero, 2016)

The aim of Podemos is to build a Europe of more social rights and democracy: “Radically democratizing the EU institutions and the entire functioning of the EU in accordance with the following principles is the best way to prevent the EU from acting again against its peoples” (Podemos, 2019). Finally, the populist discourse affects, although marginally, a less important representation of Europe as abducted by certain elites. The hegemony of Germany, in opposition to southern European countries, with Spain among them, is emphasized. The topic of sovereignty and the populist discourse are entangled in this minor representation of Europe: “To build together a country of decency, a country of social rights, a country that is not a colony of Germany in Europe but a dignified sovereign country” (Iglesias, 2017b). Regarding the EU discursive strand, there are collocates that remain central in the Podemos discursive articulation during this period. For instance, the European social charter is still a critical reference to demand the expansion of social rights from within the EU. Thus, the collocates “social” (*social*, 8) and “rights” (*derechos*, 7) are still significant to provide meaning to the idea of the EU and the European

institutions. In the same vein, the idea of European average (*media*, 6) is used again to create a comparative discourse between Europe, as a positive reference, and Spain, ruined by the elites and especially by the conservative PP government until June 2018.

> Total public spending as a proportion of GDP in Spain is five points below the European average and public revenues are eight points below the European average. This is the economic policy of recovery this is the economic policy of normality.
>
> (Iglesias, 2017b)

In sum, although presented with slight changes, the discursive constellation about Europe and the EU remains threefold: an even less relevant populist representation, a prominent reformist depiction of Europe, and a relevant idealist representation of Europe linked to prosperity, modernization, and democratization.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown the variability of the main elements of populism (the centrality of the people and the antagonism with the elites) for a single party across its various stages of formation and consolidation. The findings reveal three main representations of "the people" responding to distinct discourses and problematizations across the three Podemos sub-corpora. Especially during the first stage, the populist discourse mobilizes a depiction of "the people" as *gente* in antagonism with the elites. The political is represented as a zero-sum game in which the strengthening of one bloc (the people or popular sectors) means the weakening of the other (the elites). The "people" emerges as the democratic subject in a problematization of the political as the struggle between the people and the elites. The popular bloc is constructed via evaluative and descriptive adjectives. The elites are defined by contrast as bad people, selfish, arrogant, and "brazen"; and in concrete terms, they are identified with the economic power—the wealthy people—and political groups (e.g., those old politicians of the traditional parties serving the wealthy people). There is a second representation of the people with the signifier "persons" that serves to designate different types of people actively incorporated within the legitimate popular subject. They are constructed through classification via particular social categories as same-sex couples or persons with special needs (disabilities). Finally, "the people" is also invoked as citizens with certain entitlements. These three alternative representations of "the people" in the Podemos corpus connect with three different discourses: the populist discourse, the discourse of individual and human rights, and the discourse of civic patriotism and defense of the entitlements of the citizenry.

Regarding EU contestation, it is necessary to explore the findings in the light of the power through discourse of Podemos versus the power in discourse of

Europeanization dispositifs in Spain. In the previous chapters, *power through discourse* was defined as the ability of social actors to contest and transform certain symbolic orders. Radical parties may respond to the dispositifs of Europeanization in several ways: opposing/rejecting, rearticulating, or reproducing the dominant representations and problematizations about Europe and the EU. In the case of Podemos, Europe and the EU are constructed through various—sometimes contradictory—problematizations. First, there is a problematization especially relevant during the first stage, representing Europe as a twofold entity: there is a Europe in danger, formed mainly by southern European countries; and another Europe of “the elites.” The antagonist struggle defines the political logic explaining Europe: the problems and the possible solutions (the empowerment of the people and the empowerment of the southern European countries). Hence, this problematization of Europe is anchored in the populist depiction of the political and its antagonistic form. If one contrasts this first representation of Europe and the EU with the dispositifs of Europeanization in Spain, we find that power through discourse is activated during the first stage advancing novel representations and problematizations. Podemos opposed the sedimented representations about Europe and the EU and proposed new ones, including cooperation among the southern European countries against the EU of “the elites.”

During the second and third stages, however, there are at least two additional representations of Europe and the EU that gained ground: *Europe as a site for reform* and *Europe as an ideal of prosperity and democracy.* The first representation inserts Europe in a distinct problematization, bringing about new actors and entities—the main institutions and regimes regulating politics at the level of the EU. The Charter of Fundamental Rights, the health coverage regime and social rights, among others, are mentioned as possible elements in a new form of EU politics, wielding transformative power at the EU level. This problematization connects with the social democratic and federalist discursive constellation operative since the inception of the European Community/European Union. Within this problematization, the problem-solution scheme suggests the active participation of politicians and experts to provide policy-oriented reforms. This can be considered an attempt to rearticulate the federalist and social democratic discourse with new elements. The second problematization connects with a classic narrative of Spanish political parties (both PP and PSOE, but especially the latter). In this narrative, Europe is associated with prosperity, democracy, and social rights. The distinct emphasis of the representation of Podemos is that such an image is under threat, or it is no longer a reality. It existed in the past and should be recovered because the trust in Europe depends on this narrative becoming credible. This problematization brings to the fore the affective dimension between the Spanish people, the European peoples, and the EU. The solution is to instill trust in Europe. This is a strategy of reproduction of the dominant discourses that is especially prominent in the second and the third stages analyzed.

From a diachronic perspective, the populist articulation loses ground over time in the case of Podemos. Interestingly, during the first stage, the populist discourse is central for defining the political, and it permeates the discourse strands about Europe and the EU. During the second stage, the signifier *gente* continues to be a nodal point in the articulations of Podemos but the antagonism index drops from 0.52 to 0.28, signaling a decrease in relevance of the antagonistic construction of *gente* against "the elites." It is during this period that the alternative representations ("reformist" and "idealist") about Europe and the EU emerged strongly. The findings for the third stage confirm the decrease in centrality of the antagonistic form and the consolidation of the reformist and idealist portrayals of Europe. As shown for the case of Podemos, the populist discourse, in certain instances, may have discursive effects on the forms to articulate Europe and the EU. However, the representations and problematizations of the EU and Europe are not confined to the antagonistic articulation of the populist discourse and exhibit, on the contrary, a rich and independent discursive constellation.

Notes

1 In Appendix B, a complete list with the speeches, manifestos, and party leaders corresponding to each stage of the party is presented.

2 A lemma is the stem of a word form. In Spanish, *ciudadan** includes *ciudadanas, ciudadanos, ciudadanía* (citizen [feminine and masculine] and citizenry). For instance, in this case, the frequency and collocates are calculated in relation to the lemma. In Appendix C, I provide detailed information about the lemmatization and the specific translations.

3 The formation of the discourse strands regarding Europe and the EU for the case of Podemos is detailed in Appendix C.

4 The most recognized polling public agency in Spain (CIS, Centro de Estudios Sociológicos; Center of Sociological Studies) polled Podemos in October 2014 at 22.5 percent of the vote and in January 2015 at 23.9 percent, surpassing the PSOE for the first time (see Rodriguez López, 2016: 86; www.cis.es).

5 Iñigo Errejón, "Vamos a construir una maquinaria de guerra electoral," Público, 2014, accessed 11 April 2019, www.publico.es/actualidad/construir-maquinaria-guerra-electoral.html.

6 In Spain, the regional elections of the *comunidades autónomas* (autonomous communities) of Andalusia (March 2015), Catalonia (September 2015), and the Basque Country and Galicia (September 2016) were held separately from the other 14 autonomous communities of Spain, where the regional Parliaments were elected at once, in this case, on 24 May 2015. The local elections were called the same day as the simultaneous regional election, that is, on 24 May 2015.

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5 Europeanization in Germany

Introduction: before reunification—Germany's dependence on Europe

In the literature, Germany is considered a semi-sovereign state until 1989, with strong, political, and economic dependence on the rest of Europe (Katzenstein, 1988; Bulmer and Paterson, 1989; Paterson, 1996; Banchoff, 1999). Even after reunification, and despite of Germany's economic superiority to much of the rest of Europe, the country was still seen as a "tamed power," in the words of Katzenstein (1997). This was due to various post-World War II constraints that governed the international and European politics in the case of Germany. The first and most obvious constraint was the postwar occupation of the territory and the control of the borders of West Germany, which began before the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) was constituted in 1949. The initial steps of the FRG toward the process of European integration were, therefore, a way to gain certain autonomy in domestic and international affairs (Bulmer and Paterson, 1989: 98). However, according to Katzenstein (1997), as well as other scholars (see Bulmer and Paterson, 1989), this autonomy was relative. The very governance network of the European Coal and Steal Community/European Community (ECSC/EC), NATO membership, and the balance between East and West politics imposed certain constraints on the autonomy of Germany in its foreign and domestic policies (Schweiger, 2014: 107).

After the Second World War, the stability of the political sphere in the FRG was based on the so-called "politics of centrality" (Smith, 1976) that facilitated its rapid integration, first, into the ECSC, and then, later, into the EC. After 20 years of Christian democratic (CDU/CSU) governments, the Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD) came to power in 1969. The SPD also provided stability and facilitated European integration (Smith, 1976: 388). Similar to Spain after Franco's dictatorship, the convergence and consensus of the FRG political elites in these initial steps toward European integration were correlated with high levels of fear and prudence among the German population (Wessels et al., 2003: 116). There were, however, minor criticisms at the federal level regarding the project of European integration before the debate over the Maastricht Treaty began. The SPD raised some

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concerns about the social division and Western orientation of the EC, but these questions virtually disappeared during the 1960s. Additionally, from the early period of European integration, there were also tense negotiations about co-determination between the federal and state levels (see Börzel, 1999: 583–5).

Between 1960 and the signing of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, the FRG party system and Germany's social actors entered a consolidated regime of permissive consensus regarding the European integration project (Wessels et al., 2003: 116). Generally speaking, the pre-Maastricht period was dominated by a consensus at the party-system level. Political parties tended to exhibit "grand discourses" about Europe and Germany, whereas in the areas of policy implementation and institutional development, there was a strong fit between EC requirements and the economic and social model of the FRG (Dyson, 2003: 3). Although the FRG has been characterized during this early period of European integration as a country with a "leadership avoidance reflex" (Jeffery and Paterson, 2003: 61), its prominence as an economic power and its increasing influence in shaping European integration is generally acknowledged in the literature (Bulmer and Patterson, 1989; Jeffery and Paterson, 2003; Beck, 2012; Schweiger, 2014). Jeffery and Paterson (2003) refer to a soft institutional power that defined models to be implemented later at the level of the EC/EU, especially those concerning the economic and fiscal policies promoted by the Bundesbank. As opposed to southern European countries, Germany played an active role in the construction and design of the EC/EU; from the European Monetary System (EMS) in the late 1970s to the European Monetary Union (EMU) in the early 1990s to the austerity measures since 2010 (Bulmer and Paterson, 2010: 1055). In other words, Germany had a primary role of "policy uploader" rather than "policy downloader." The power of Germany was not exerted over other countries; rather, it circulated more broadly, with the shaping of policy paradigms and hegemonic views about how to construct the EC/EU. This type of power in discourse, has led Bulmer (1997: 75) to qualify it as "unintentional." In the following section, the variation of these Germany-EU relations and the different forms of the Europeanization will be explained in greater detail.

As a founding member of the European Community/European Union (EC/EU), Germany has played a longer party in the history of European integration in comparison to Spain. Among other things, this means that there were political tensions within Germany regarding European integration before the Maastricht Treaty; for instance, the conflict of competences between the German *Ländern* and the federal government (see Börzel, 1999: 584). Notwithstanding this longer history, the time span under review for Germany (1992–2018) allows us to explore the crystallization of the dispositifs of Europeanization and connect them with EU contestation in the country. As it has been argued in prior chapters Euroscepticism has gained prominence in all EU national political spheres since the 1990s, including Germany's (Staab, 2008 20; Bulmer and Joseph, 2016: 739; Hobolt, 2018: 243). The analysis of Germany is structured according to three main periods: (1) the Kohl era ([1982] 1992–1998) and the

ratification of the Maastricht Treaty and Amsterdam Treaty; (2) the government of Schröder (1998–2005) and the change of relations with the EU and Europeanization processes; and (3) the period from the ascendance to power of Merkel (2005) to the euro crisis (2010–2012). Across these historical periods, the discourses, policies, strategies, and political actors forming the dispositifs of Europeanization in Germany have been reconstructed.

The Kohl era: Maastricht and ordoliberalism (1992–1998)

The decade of the 1990s was a time of radical changes that altered the global political landscape with implications for the FRG. The reunification process in Germany that began in 1990 had a massive impact on the economic, political, and social conditions of the country. It also affected the larger view of Germany regarding European integration and its role in a globalized world (Banchoff, 1999). In the run-up to the Maastricht Treaty, some concerns arose among ordoliberals and sectors close to the Bundesbank who were initially reticent to embrace the EMU, or at least proposed to delay the planned time for its adoption in accordance with the so-called "coronation theory" (Dyson, 2003: 8). This theory claimed that a great convergence was needed before a monetary union would be feasible. Yet, the skepticism toward the EU gradually evolved within the conservative and ordoliberal spectrum, moving to a more positive position regarding European integration. The dominant position finally considered the incipient EU as a catalyst for market and labor liberalization. As Dyson (2003) writes,

> [t]his Ordo-liberal viewpoint both reflected and gained support from within the corporate sector. By 1995–6, the German corporate sector was legitimizing a wave of rationalization and direct investment abroad as making Germany "fit for globalization" and ensuring that Germany was on "the winning side."
>
> (p. 3)

The German government—formed by the the Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands (CDU); its counterpart, the Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern (CSU); and the Freie Demokratische Partei (FDP)—was able to gather considerable support in the German Bundestag for the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty. In December 1992, 546 deputies voted in favor of the Maastricht Treaty, whereas only 17 voted against it, the latter of which came from the left-wing Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus (PDS). There were also eight abstentions that came from the coalition consisting of the Bündnis 90/Die Grünen (the Greens).

The Maastricht Treaty was generally perceived in Germany as the successful exportation of the German model. Thus, the European Central Bank (ECB) would mirror the strong and independent Bundesbank (see Bulmer and Paterson, 2010: 1053; Dyson, 2003: 17). The goodness of fit between the

reforms proposed by the Maastricht Treaty and the German model was related to the previous European Exchange Rate Mechanism (EERM), which was anchored to the currency of the Deutsche mark and adopted by the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1979. In the words of Dyson (2003: 18), the "EMU was in this respect about a 'Germanized' Europe." (see also Bulmer and Paterson, 2010: 1058). In the same vein, Jeffery and Paterson consider that the EMU was a way to enshrine the German model at the European level. This implied the application of "monetary rigor on the more profligate members of the union" (Jeffery and Paterson, 2003: 64). The state secretary in the Finance Ministry defined it as a way of "exporting this fine piece of German identity to Europe" (Köhler, 1992, quoted in Dyson, 2003: 17). Notwithstanding this goodness of fit between Germany and the Maastricht Treaty, the structural changes induced by the treaty had long-lasting, profound effects on EU governance and the politics of every member state. Although the Treaty was designed following the model of the German Bundesbank, it also produced unintended consequences that affected the German polity and the economic governance of the country (Jeffery and Paterson, 2003: 64).

In fact, the relationship between Germany and the EU changed significantly shortly after the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty, in the sense that Germany ceased to be a model for Europe and instead it became a problematic case of unemployment and deficit upgrades. Between 1991 and 1999, the German unemployment rate doubled and country's economic growth stagnated (Schweiger, 2014: 117–18; Dyson, 2003: 19). Before this economic and social crisis, the Kohl government designed a package of reforms regarding privatization, labor market reforms, and taxation. The second Kohl government (1994–1998) attempted to implement several of these economic reforms in Germany and justified them by the need to adapt to the EMU, to globalization, and to the bad situation regarding job creation and economic stability (Dyson, 2003: 20). However, these reforms, especially the tax reform and changes in the welfare system, were watered down by the party opposition in the Bundesrat, which is the second federal chamber with co-decision legislative power in Germany (see Schweiger, 2014: 118–20).

In sum, the first stage of vertical Europeanization in Germany is better understood as Germanization. Germany uploaded policies and forms of governance from the domestic level to the EU level. The process of inertia in relation to Europeanization continued during the 1990s, with several delays that occurred in relation to the implementation of EU-induced reforms in Germany. Hence, there was an absence of vertical Europeanization during this first stage in the country. During the ratification debates on the Amsterdam Treaty (1998), several opposing and divergent discourses in relation to European integration emerged. In comparison to the Maastricht Treaty debate, there was a larger opposition bloc to the Amsterdam Treaty, although it was not fully unified. This opposition was due to the ascendance of the Greens, whose 40 members of Parliament (MPs) abstained from voting. There were also 30 deputies of the PDS party who voted against the Amsterdam Treaty.

Symbolic order of the Germanization dispositif (1992–1998)

The parliamentary group heading the German government, the CDU/CSU, presented Europe as an achievement linked to freedom, peace, and prosperity. This representation was not only an abstract ideal of Europe but was also depicted as the process that facilitates the strong economic performance and welfare of the German citizens:

> This "yes" to Europe is a victory: a victory for our country, a victory for the people. […] If cooperation in the European Union becomes our guiding principle for action, then it must also make a contribution to solving the problems.
>
> (Bundestag, 1992: 10811)[1]

In the representations on the EU, the pronoun "we," referring to the Germans, is prominent— as an active subject in the construction of Europe. This is found, for instance, in the statement, "We are creating the new Europe above all for the young generation" (Ibid.: 10812). The CDU/CSU mobilized the idea that Germans had a significant say and responsibility in the construction of the EU (Bundestag, 1998: 20241). The European project was viewed as compatible with German national interests and the German culture; at the same time, the German culture should be recognized within the EU. During the debate on the Amsterdam Treaty in 1998, this national identity was proudly presented as pivotal for the EU: "Europe has adopted the stability culture of the Deutsche Mark and has done so successfully. For us, that is a reason for satisfaction" (Ibid.: 20242). In sum, Europe was depicted as a vehicle for political influence, economic development, and security. In the view of the CDU/CSU group, these objectives needed to be combined with the preservation of the identity and traditions of the German citizens. In order to do so, Europe needed to remain "a Europe for the people" (Bundestag, 1998: 20244).

Globalization and migration

During the ratification debates on the Amsterdam Treaty, the CDU/CSU also presented the European project—including the new euro currency—as the best way to face the new globalized world challenges (Ibid.: 20243). The same type of discourse topics, together with economic and security-related subjects, were mobilized to defend the planned "big enlargement" or *Osterweiterung* (Ibid.). Especially salient in comparison with the Maastricht Treaty debates were the topics about security and foreign policy. In the case of the CDU/CSU, illegal immigration linked with criminality emerged as a positioned subject in the representations about Europe and the EU:

> Amsterdam is making the greatest progress in internal security, in the fight against organized crime across Europe, in protection against criminals and

> smugglers, in asylum and visa policy—all of which are urgent issues for our citizens [...] the European Union is taking Community action against organized crime and trafficking with human beings and it is protecting itself against illegal immigration.
>
> (Ibid.: 20242)

In this view of the CDU/CSU, illegal immigration in Germany was not comparable to the situation in any other country within the EU, and this was a central concern for many regarding the domestic peace of the country (Ibid.: 20249). Indeed, the connection between immigration and criminality was consistently brought to the fore within the representations about Europe during this period. The pro-European and pro-Maastricht Treaty representations of Europe by the SPD clearly rejected the positive appraisal of German national identity and the distinction between different national hierarchies in general:

> It is no "merit" that we were born as Germans, just as it is not the responsibility of the Turks, Romanians, English, French or Swiss to be born with their respective nationalities. But we are all united by the same dignity of humanity and the responsibility for our brothers or sisters of another nationality.
>
> (Bundestag, 1992: 10813)

In the context of German reunification, several nationalist demonstrations and anti-foreigner actions caused concern among the political class as possible signs of an emergence of neo-Nazism in Germany (Berdahl, 2005: 500–1). As promoted by the SPD, Europe was represented as the project that could save Germany from the re-emergence of nationalist, racist, and destructive practices and ideologies— "the old evil spirit." The unity of Europe and the unity of Germany were represented as inseparable projects:

> If European integration falls behind or even fails and Germany is left to its own devices, *the old evil spirit* will once again become socially and politically capable on a large scale. European integration is also an anchor for Germany's political stability.
>
> (Bundestag, 1992: 10813; emphasis added)

This same argument was repeated in 1998 during the debate on the Amsterdam Treaty. The EU and the cooperation established among its member states were considered the unique guarantee for the peaceful survival of Germany, as well as the way to escape the catastrophes of the twentieth century (Bundestag, 1998: 20247). The SPD also associated Europe to the topic of globalization, as a facilitator to improve the ability to cope of Germany in an increasingly globalized world (Ibid.: 20247): "Only a more interconnected Europe can meet the world economic challenges of the coming years and preserve and develop its own social traditions and the objectives of an ecological market economy" (Ibid.: 10814).

Regarding the common foreign and security policy area—the second pillar established in the Maastricht Treaty—the SPD considered it was a positive step toward a "common defense identity and a common defense policy" (Bundestag, 1998: 20247). The SPD's view of Europe also introduced a third discourse topic: the *kulturellen Gemeinsamkeit Europas* (the cultural commonality of Europe), as a distinct version of European integration (Bundestag, 1992: 10813). This version of European integration was distinguished from a mere monetary and economic Europe. The SPD defended a "political union" that would entail cultural and social dimensions (Ibid.: 10815). This party emphasized that the Maastricht Treaty failed to promote a social and environmental union (*Umweltunion*) (Ibid.), heard in statements such as the following: "One of the central points of criticism of the Maastricht Treaty is that the balance between political union and European Economic and Monetary Union is not sufficiently established and that the political union is insufficiently developed" (Ibid.: 10815). When discussing the Amsterdam Treaty, the SPD linked European integration to the consolidation of women's rights, increasing democracy in the EU, and work and social security rights (Bundestag, 1998: 20244). Euroscepticism, by contrast, was associated with the high unemployment rates in Germany and beyond (Ibid.: 20247). Thus, in the eyes of the SPD, Europe was depicted as a site for "work and social security" (Ibid.: 20245): "We have been able to achieve the commitment of the European Union to an active employment policy and the fight against mass unemployment. That is the most important signal from the Treaty of Amsterdam" (Bundestag, 1998: 20244).

Argumentation schemes and problematizations

There were several argumentation schemes that were mobilized in support of the ratification of both the Maastricht Treaty and the Amsterdam Treaty, as shown in Figure 5.1. First, there was the topos of advantage, exhibited mainly by the CDU/CSU, in which the EU was seen in instrumental terms. The idea was that with the EU, Germany could perform well in economic terms and face the challenges of globalization. In the CDU/CSU representation of Europe, there was also a topos of national identity whereby the EU serves to guarantee national identities. Relatedly, the topos of danger was mobilized, in which the positioned subject of immigrant persons was associated with criminality. Here, the EU was meant to be a buffer against this threat. In the case of the SPD, there were three prominent topoi corresponding to Europe and the EU. First, the topos of the savior, which represented an internal evil—German nationalism—a threat against which Europe and the EU served as the antidote or "the savior." Second, there was also a prominent topos of advantage, especially in 1998, that served to justify the European project as a facilitator to deal with globalization. Finally, another positive argument was mobilized by the SPD, by which Europe was meant to support the fight against unemployment,

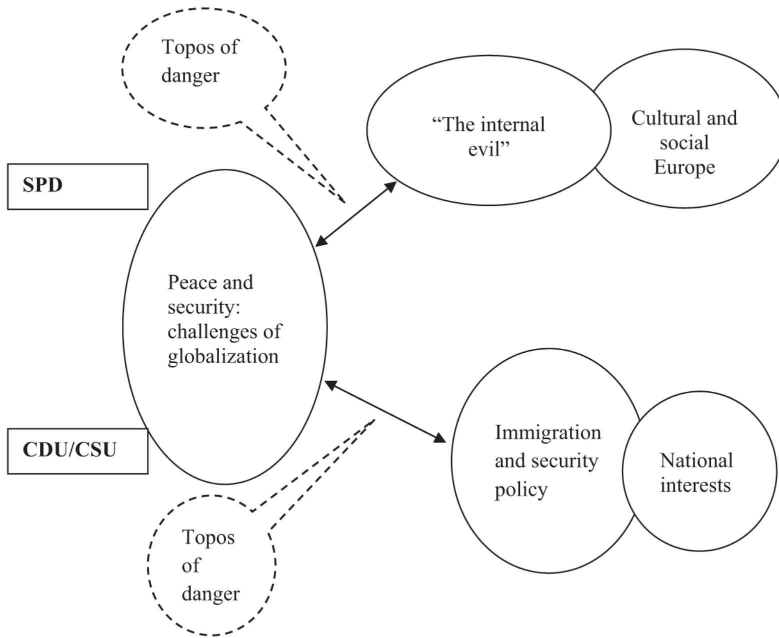

Figure 5.1 Discourse topics and topoi of the dominant parties.

and to push for the general improvement of working conditions standards across Europe.

Overall, European integration emerged in the German political sphere as a process linked to two main contending problematizations. First, a problematization focused on how to promote German interests and defend the German identity in a globalized world (dealing with migration and criminality fluxes). Second, a problematization around German nationalism, which in the past had led to war and destruction. In the following section, I explore the discursive practices that confronted these hegemonic representations and problematizations of Europe.

EU contestation in the first period

Concerns over the Maastricht Treaty were voiced in the German Bundestag by the left PDS party with 17 votes against the Treaty, along with eight abstentions by the Greens. The representations of Europe mobilized by the PDS were shaped by its regional orientation. For the 1991 federal election, the party had little support in West Germany: only 0.3 percent of the electorate in the West voted for the PDS, whereas the 11.1 percent voted the party in East Germany.

Thus, the PDS introduced the topic of the territorial and political division they felt was being promoted by the EU:

> Our objective is a peaceful, non-militarist, democratic, constitutional, social and ecological Europe. When we say "Europe", we mean Europe and not just part of it, a continent in which states, peoples and regions work together voluntarily and on an equal footing.
>
> (Bundestag, 1992: 10819)

The PDS claimed that the Maastricht Treaty created a bureaucratic and centralized supranational state that endangered democracy, social rights, and cultural identity (Ibid.: 10819). The party demanded a referendum on the Maastricht Treaty as in France or Denmark arguing that the supranational governance structure of the EU was qualitatively different from taking part as a nation-state in transnational intergovernmental organizations. Overall, the European project proposed by the Maastricht Treaty, in the view of the PDS, generated further divisions between East and West, rich and poor, and north and south. These negative effects derived from a process of European integration based on monetary integration and marketization instead of solid political principles. The implementation of a common new currency without social or fiscal harmonization among the member states was seen as the start of a negative process. In the view of the PDS, "the people" wanted a different type of Europe opposed to this "bureaucratic" Europe: "The people do not want a Europe of bureaucratic centralism, of political elites, but a Europe of creative diversity and regional identity, a Europe of citizens and democracy" (Ibid.: 10820).

During the Amsterdam Treaty debates, the PDS portrayed Europe as a project that primarily focused on reinforcing security while downplaying the importance of employment and social questions: "clear progress has been made with police and security; no progress has been made in fighting mass unemployment and in establishing social standards. This by itself requires our "no" to the ratification of this Treaty" (Bundestag, 1998: 20255). They claimed that the democratic deficit in Europe and the lack of a European Constitution were negative elements of the Amsterdam Treaty (Ibid.: 20255). The PDS argued that there was still a problematic imbalance between economic and monetary integration and the political dimension of European integration (Ibid.: 20256). The Greens also articulated a sound critique against the Maastricht Treaty, although its eight Members of the Parliament (MPs) finally abstained from voting. This parliamentary group felt that the European project was deviating from a path of social and environmental development:

> Doubts are indeed understandable. There is sufficient reason for a critical view. What is to be adopted today serves the continuity of the economic integration of Western Europe at the expense of its democratization. It is

the union of the rich part of Europe without and, in the worst case, against its poorer part.

(Bundestag, 1992: 10822)

During the debate on the Amsterdam Treaty, the Greens supported European integration but they described the Treaty at the same time as one step in the wrong direction. The party contended that the Treaty had structural deficits in terms of democratic, ecologic, and social issues (Bundestag, 1998: 20251). Similar to the PDS, the Greens believed that the European project was geopolitically-biased because it left behind whole parts of Europe—most specifically, the old Soviet republics. The Greens depicted a Europe with a democratic deficit and demanded a referendum and more inclusive citizen participation in the European integration process (Bundestag, 1992: 10823). To sum up, there were three primary argumentation schemes mobilized within these representations of Europe. First, there was a topos centered on a critique of a neoliberal Europe: the need to oppose the treaties stemmed from the fact that the European project was marked by neoliberal policy orientations, ignoring the construction of a social and democratic Europe. Second, there was the topos of danger in terms of the risks of supranational statehood. Finally, there was another topos of danger, this one against the perceived Western bias. The main problematization of Europe, therefore, was the role of the latter in an increasingly unequal world in which wealth distribution and the division between East and West were central challenges (Figure 5.2).

The political debate over the consequences of the Maastricht Treaty for the German economy—and especially regarding foreign and security

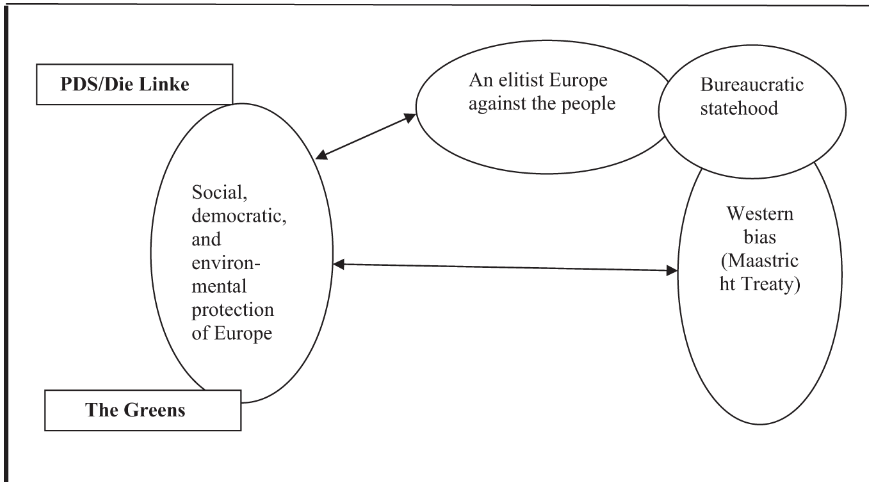

Figure 5.2 Contesting Europe and the EU.

policy—contributed to the erosion of the positive view that many Germans had had regarding European integration. Similar to the situation in Spain, public opinion showed a more marked trend than the apparent party opposition in the Bundestag. In 1988, 64 percent of Germans believed that EC membership was a good thing for Germany—one of the highest percentage ratings for Germany to date (European Commission, 1988: 12). Yet, support for EC/EU membership dropped to 60 percent in 1992, which was one of the largest drops among all member states when compared to 1991 figures. During the 1990s, public opinion in Germany about the EU became even more critical; in 1998, only 48 percent of Germans viewed EU membership as a good thing. However, the opposition—meaning those who saw EU membership as bad—amounted to only 11 percent in that same year (European Commission, 1998: 41). In addition to the hard critique from the left, there were also signals of right-wing criticism regarding European integration. Following Jeffery and Paterson (2003), by 1993, Edmund Stoiber, the CDU/CSU chancellor candidate in the 2002 federal election, as well as other Bavarian conservative politicians, defended a more decentralized EU which respects regional and national sovereignty (p. 72). This "Bavarian position" demanded a clear delimitation of competences between the member states and the EU and greater autonomy for the member states. This was the starting point of what Harnisch (2009: 455–6) calls the "domestication of German EU politics," and it implied additional constraints and levels of co-determination for EU politics in Germany. This eventually led to the greater participation of the *Ländern* governments and the prominent role of the Federal Constitutional Court on EU matters (Bulmer and Paterson, 2010: 1063).

From Germanization to Europeanization (1998–2005)

During the two governments of the Social Democrat Gerhard Schröder (1998–2002; 2002–2005), the federal policy toward European integration was more conditional and calculated. This shift in the political approach by Schröder has been described as an "externalization" process regarding the domestic problems of Germany and an inclination toward multilateral alliances, as opposed to the exclusivity of the Franco-German partnership (Jeffery and Paterson, 2003: 69). In Schröder's view, the domestic problems of Germany were defined as an effect of globalization and the German reunification process (Dyson, 2003: 2; Hay and Rosemond, 2002: 160). Additionally, the EU and the requirements of Europeanization were more actively included in the political debate during the Schröder era. In the words of Bulmer and Paterson (2010),

> Schröder brought a more overt strand of "national interest" into policy debate, especially over the EU budget in the context of eastern enlargement and presented himself in EU negotiations as the defender of German

commercial interests, such as the motor industry, whereas formerly that would have been left to technical ministers.

(p. 1054)

Schröder did not merely adopt the model proposed by ordoliberalism,[2] but he combined it with a social democratic impulse. The political context of the EU, with the government led by Lionel Jospin in France, in addition to other left-leaning government figures, initially facilitated a social democratic policy orientation. However, there were early tensions between ordoliberalist notions that were already included in the design of the EMU and the new policy orientation. This was the case of Oskar Lafontaine, Germany's minister of finance, and his proposal for tax harmonization at the EU level. Lafontaine was finally forced to resign in March 1999, which marked a change toward ordoliberal principles in EU policy (Dyson, 2003: 9). The defeat of Lafontaine after only six months as finance minister meant a detour in the overall policies proposed by the SPD. Even when Europeanization was not as salient in government discourses as globalization and domestic issues were, the EU played an increasingly important role in the design of the main policies of Schröder's two cabinets. For instance, the work of the Germany's Finance Ministry and the Council of Economic Advisers adapted to the parameters of the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines, which were established by the EU (Ibid.: 24).

Taking a broad view, the first period of the Maastricht Treaty (1992–1998) was a period of *inertia* regarding vertical Europeanization (see Table 5.1); that is, the German structures of governance, public policy, or overall discourses did not change due to Europeanization processes. This was the case because Germany clearly shaped the model and the guidelines for the EC/EU, at least in the economic area. Moreover, in this early period the Chancellor Kohl delayed the required reforms for EU integration. By contrast, the period of the two Schröder governments, which lasted until 2005, can be seen as a phase of *accommodation* and *absorption* of the EU guidelines, which required more

Table 5.1 Forms of Europeanization

	Kohl governments	*Schröder governments*
Modes of Europeanization	Uploading negotiation	Facilitated coordination
Intensity and type of change	Inertia	Absorption—medium intensity
Main dimensions of transformation	N/A	Public policy (labor market, EU-promoted adjustment, tax reform, budget consolidation); normative-cognitive structures

changes and reforms at the institutional level in Germany. Among them, the Schröder's government implemented a tax reform and a radical budget consolidation program (Streeck and Trampusch, 2005: 179; Dyson, 2003: 21).

The symbolic order in Germany under Schröder governments

During the ratification debates, the Red-Green alliance forming the two Schröder governments had to face the unique opposition in the Bundestag of the left PDS party. In the ratification debate on the Treaty of Nice in 2001, the PDS was the only group who voted against the Treaty, providing 32 "no" votes. The other Treaty debated at the Bundestag, the Constitutional Treaty, was approved in 2005 with similar opposition: 23 votes against and two abstentions. In this latter case, however, some members of the CDU/CSU also opposed it. In 2001, during the debate on the Treaty of Nice, the SPD resumed its traditional portrayal of Europe as "the savior" of Germany. The two World Wars and the catastrophes of the twentieth century were contrasted with the project of European integration that, in Schröder's view, was "the greatest story of success of the 20th century" (Bundestag, 2001: 18981). To defend the European Constitution in 2005, the SPD once again built upon the memory of the twentieth century catastrophes, in line with its previous arguments. Taking advantage of the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, the SPD linked the progress of European integration to the guarantee to never repeat such atrocities. They suggested to look at the European Constitution through the eyes of those "who witnessed and were victims of the devastations of the twentieth century," who would have dreamt of a united Europe (Bundestag, 2005: 16349).

Furthermore, security and terrorism were mobilized by the SPD together with the representations of Europe. The war in Afghanistan, supported by the international community after the 11 September 2001 attacks against the United States was a reference point for representing Europe. There was an emphasis on international responsibility within the anti-terrorist alliance. As one SPD MP stated, "I am referring to peacekeeping and the creation of security not only on our continent and on the fringes of the European Union. I am referring to Europe's global responsibility in the fight against hunger, oppression, instability and terrorism." (Bundestag, 2001: 18981). The SPD considered Europe to be "the guarantee of a life of freedom and dignity" (Bundestag, 2005: 16351). The Greens, as part of the government, also depicted the Nice Treaty as a positive step, and one that was necessary for European integration:

> Bringing Europe together is in the German interest. Germany, located in the centre of Europe, has a vital interest in the process of European unification, that is, in bringing together the two parts of Europe that were separated by the Cold War for five decades.
>
> (Bundestag, 2001: 18992)

The Greens also showed their support for the development of the third pillar of the EU: taking responsibility for the coordination of defense and security at the EU level (Ibid.: 18993–4). The party justified the intervention of the EU through NATO, like in the Balkans conflict, because there was a humanitarian crisis and a broad international coalition supporting the operation. Therefore, part of the goal of European integration was to bring together Eastern countries with Balkans countries as a "peace political project," which would further expand the EU influence (Ibid.: 18994).

Globalization and Europe as a "model of society"

In the context of globally coordinated actions and challenges, the SPD argued for economic and market integration as a necessary requirement to enable Europe to compete and become a stronger global player. In the eyes of the SPD, globalization was a primary goal for Europe: "Today, the European Union has a dense network of trade relations, direct investment and other transactions. Without this interdependence, Europe had never been able to achieve such a strong position in competition with the United States or Japan" (Bundestag, 2001: 18983). In a similar vein as throughout the Kohl era, Germany was presented as a motor for the development of the EU, and "a motor for the enlargement" (Ibid.: 18984):

> We have the strength and the will to defend our European project and, at the same time, we will continue to seek ways forward for a better and more humane future. We are ready to make Europe an international actor with global influence, and to do so for our common goals: Peace, fair distribution of wealth, solidarity, democracy, human rights and respect for different cultural identities.
>
> (Ibid.: 18984)

The topic of globalization was combined with the social dimension of Europe. Regarding trade cooperation among member states, the SPD depicted the EU as a much bigger project than the mere sum of its parts. The party envisaged Europe as a "model of society" (Ibid.: 18983) and the European Constitution as the culmination of this historical process: "A social, economic, cultural and political community, that consciously wants to be more than a mere geographical entity, more than a single market and a free trade area" (Bundestag, 2005: 16351). In the ratification debates of the Nice Treaty in 2001, the CDU/CSU primarily represented Europe and the EU in relation to foreign and security issues. In the aftermath of the September 2001 attacks, this parliamentary group hailed the anti-terrorist alliance in defense of Western civilization:

> But, of course, it is not just the money that counts. We also have to ask ourselves why the balance sheet of the Common Foreign and Security Policy of

> the European Union, which does exist, is so flagrant; why there has not yet been a single conceptual initiative by the European Union to stabilize crisis regions outside the European Union, for example.
>
> (Bundestag, 2001: 18985)

The CDU/CSU demanded greater coordination in defense and greater power for Europol and for the fight against criminality at the EU level in order to (Ibid.: 18987; 18986) strengthen the role of the EU at the global level. Angela Merkel's speech on the ratification of the Constitutional Treaty expressed her party's majority support, although she recognized some disagreements within her parliamentary group regarding the European Constitution. She claimed that "there is no alternative to strengthening Europe as a community of peace and values" (Bundestag, 2005: 16351). The CDU/CSU agreed that Europe should be something more than simply an economic union:

> Europe cannot and must not remain an economic and technical enterprise. According to Robert Schuman, Europe needs a soul, an awareness of its historical affinities, its present and future tasks, a political will to serve the same human ideal.
>
> (Ibid.: 16352)

Merkel noted that freedom, equality, and solidarity needed to serve as principles of democracy and to form the core, fundamental identity of Europe (Ibid.). Thus, Europe was portrayed clearly as a community of shared values. The CDU/CSU also highlighted various dimensions of European integration requiring improvement or intensive development. First, an identity based on the Judeo-Christian legacy whereby, in Merkel's words, "a clear reference to God would certainly have helped us to define our identity more clearly" (Bundestag, 2005: 16352). Second, the democratic quality of the EU also needed improvement. The advances that had partly been achieved with the European Constitution still needed consistent and further development (Ibid.: 16353). In Merkel's view, EU regulations must be brought in at an early stage for discussion (Ibid.: 16354). Christian Democrats also emphasized the principle of subsidiarity[3] as an essential mechanism to ensure respect and affinity for the people while still balancing the various competencies at the state, federal, and European levels: "If we consider it necessary, we will make active use of these instruments to ensure that this principle of subsidiarity, which I regard as essential in connection with Europe's proximity to its citizens, is better implemented in the future" (Ibid.: 16353). The CSU strongly focused on the subsidiarity principle and the prevalence of the nation-state within the EU. Stoiber, CSU president and Bavaria's prime minister, stressed that "the Member States—this is decisively enshrined in this Constitutional Treaty—remain the 'masters of the Treaties'" (Ibid.: 16364). Stoiber assumed—and respected the fact that—members of his parliamentary group did not vote for the European Constitution (Ibid.: 16365). He defended the need of a critique

of European politics and rejected the easily attributed labels of populist and anti-European (Ibid.).

Topoi and problematizations

During this period, there were several argumentation schemes used by the parties. The topos of danger was used equally by the SPD and the CDU/CSU to represent a strong, united Europe with capacity to face the challenges of terrorism and international security. The main problematization here was constructed around the issue of terrorism and global security, in which the EU emerged as a guarantor against these dangers. There were also two additional argumentations in relation to the EU: on the one hand, the SPD linked Europe to progress in the areas of social rights and ecological sustainability; on the other hand, the CDU/CSU portrayed a desirable Europe as a site of peace and shared values. These were arguments that supported European integration and the two treaties debated in 2001 and 2005. Furthermore, there was a topos of advantage, exhibited mainly by the SPD in relation to the increased opportunities for Germany to compete in the global market within the EU. The SPD also used the classical topos of the savior, by which Europe appears as the savior of Germany and its internal inclination toward war and destruction. However, this last topos was less salient than it was during the Kohl period. The CDU/CSU clearly supported the treaties, and European integration. However, it posited two noteworthy critiques of the model of European integration. These critiques were integrated into an argument in favor of a desired Europe with a firmly established principle of subsidiarity and with a Christian identity. They felt that these were two dimensions that were not sufficiently included in the then-current EU. Therefore, the CDU/CSU mobilized a problematization of the role of the state and the role of Germany in Europe and, within this problematization, the position of the CDU/CSU toward the EU was somewhat ambivalent, as was shown by the division within this parliamentary group itself.

EU contestation during the Schröder governments

With the inclusion of the Greens in Schröder's government, the opposition bloc to European integration was reduced to the PDS alone. This party voiced an openly critical view of European integration. Meanwhile, public opinion about European integration continued to be below the 2001 EU average: only 45–48 percent of Germans considered EU membership as positive, in contrast to the EU average of 50 percent (European Commission, 2001a: 33; European Commission, 2001b: 12). In 2005, it improved considerably, reaching a top level of 58 percent in 2005, above the EU average (Ibid., 2005: 94). In the Bundestag, the PDS party emphasized the need for an alternative discourse and reclaimed politics as the means for outlining different possibilities that seemed to be obscured at that moment (Bundestag, 2001: 18995). this party mobilized

a negative representation of the EU as linked with war and people's suffering, rejecting the consensus around collaboration for the war in Afghanistan:

> In your approach to the fight against terrorism, it is precisely the military dimension that you give absolute priority to. Other options for solving the problem remain behind. That is why, at this point, we say to you once again and with the necessary clarity: we are opposed to the war in Afghanistan because, unfortunately, many of our fears have become true. Innocent people suffer from the bombs; refugees starve to death.
>
> (Ibid.: 18995)

In the ratification debate on the European Constitution, the PDS depicted the EU as the consolidation of a military Europe, with a free market rather than a social market economy (Bundestag, 2005: 16376). The alternative and desirable view of the EU defined the latter capable of facing international challenges and developing international relations through economic and cultural means and not relying on military logic (Ibid.: 18996). The PDS proposed a different vision of the EU that could be more attractive for the people. The party described it in the following terms:

> It could be exemplary the fact that the confrontation between the blocs was overcome by an equal coexistence of East and West; that, in facing the threat of international terrorism, it [the EU] responds to the people's need for protection and to preserve an open society; that, it would be exemplary in providing water, bread and education in poor countries; that it would launch an international and multiethnic cultural policy of de-escalation.
>
> (Ibid.: 18996)

The PDS portrayed the EU as a site for the liberalization of key policy areas, as established in "The Third Way/*Die Neue Mitte* Blair/Schröder paper." The PDS's critique of the European Constitution was centered on the unwillingness of the government to call for a referendum in Germany, as it was the case in France or Spain. In stark terms, they asked President Schröder, "Why did you not fight with the same commitment for a referendum in the Federal Republic of Germany?" (Bundestag, 2005: 16675). To summarize, the PDS mobilized an argumentative critique against the neoliberal EU, one that was more salient than in the previous period. By contrast, the critiques of supranationalism (versus sovereignty) and Western bias declined, although they remained as minor argumentations. There were two additional critiques focused on the democratic deficit and militarism.

If one reflects on the dispositifs of Europeanization in Germany and its contestation at that point, there are several remarks that can be made. During the first period (1992–1998), there was a crystallization of a dispositif of Germanization, supported by the strongest parties in the Bundestag, as well as other minor parties. This dispositif changed during the second period

(1998–2005) in several respects: first, regarding the strategic shape of the dispositif, it was not directed toward Germanization abroad but toward Europeanization at the domestic level; second, in the forms of change and adoption of EU-inspired policies; and finally, in the type of discursive articulations and the position of the actors. The pro-European bloc forming the Europeanization dispositif was more unstable during the second period (1998–2005). In fact, 20 deputies of the CDU/CSU group voted against the Constitutional Treaty of the EU in 2005 while two of the SPD abstained. This implied that one of the fundamental actors within the dispositifs of Europeanization—the CDU/CSU—was positioned against the pro-EU normative pressures and rejected the terms "anti-European" and "populist" (Bundestag, 2005: 16365). In sum, the dispositif of Europeanization during the second period in Germany was weaker and more unstable than the dispositifs in Spain. The bloc of opposition to the EU—primarily the PDS party—also varied over time in comparison with Spain's opposition to the EU. First, during the Maastricht Treaty and Amsterdam Treaty debates, the PDS and the Greens formed the critical bloc and proposed alternative representations and problematizations of the EU. The Greens, however, responded to what I have called in Chapter 5 "invitations to emulate or transform" of the dispositifs; that is, the strategic change or transformation of contesting actors according to the legitimate representations mobilized within the dispositifs. In fact, from 2001 onward, the party presented a positive representation of the EU as part of the two Schröder cabinets. It is possible to identify also "normative pressures," especially during the first period (1992–1998) against the PDS and the Greens, as the EU-criticism was associated with the high unemployment rates and the bad economic performance of Germany (Bundestag, 1998: 20247).

Merkel and the euro crisis (2005–2010)

If Germany had a decisive role in the construction of the EU from the time of its inception, a series of events beginning in 2005 facilitated Germany's consolidation as the hegemonic EU member state. Two main events transformed EU politics and favored a repositioning of Germany in relation to the EU. First, the political crisis of 2005 after the rejection of the European Constitution via the referendums of the French and the Dutch constituencies. Second, the eurozone, beginning in late 2009. These two major events facilitated the greater role of Germany in the governance and design of the EU and in defense of its own interests (see Bulmer and Paterson, 2016: 2–3; Schweiger, 2014: 16). The sociologist Ulrich Beck has dubbed it the new "German Europe" (2012). In addition, the deterioration of the Franco-German partnership as the main force behind European integration also situated Germany in a new hegemonic position at the EU level (Schweiger, 2014: 18; Bulmer and Paterson, 2016: 2). In November 2005, Angela Merkel became the first female chancellor in Germany, leading a grand coalition between the two major parties—the CDU/CSU and the SPD. In her second legislature (2009–2013) the CDU/CSU

formed a coalition with the liberal FDP. Regarding Europe's constitutional crisis, Merkel managed to conduct the negotiation process under her presidency of the EU toward an intergovernmental agreement in Lisbon, trying to recover the fundamental elements agreed upon in the Constitution. This Treaty was finally signed by all member states in December 2007 and ratified by the German Bundestag with a majority of 515 to 58 votes in April 2008.

Nonetheless, the real challenge for the European policy of Germany arrived with the eurozone crisis in late 2009 and the apparent need for coordinated actions at the level of the EU in order to save the euro economies. Germany was initially reluctant to initiate a coordinated bailout to assist the indebted economies in the south in their recovery (Crawford Ames and Rezai, 2017: 96–7). In fact, in 2008, with the support of the Social Democratic finance minister, Merkel rejected the "British and French calls for an EU-wide economic stimulus package and a bailout plan for countries with severe sovereign debt problem" (Schweiger, 2014: 24). When it became evident that countries like Ireland, Greece, Spain, and Portugal were unable to consolidate their budgets, Merkel decided to take actions to remedy the situation and avoid what may have ultimately had serious impacts on the overall sustainability of the eurozone. These actions materialized first in a financial aid program for Greece in May 2010, followed by the creation of the European Financial Stability Facility (EFSF) in October 2010, and then the permanent European Stability Mechanism (ESM) in 2011. The period from 2010 to 2015 was marked by an active role of the EU institutions headed by Germany. Several bailouts' programs and refinancing of the debtor countries were activated, and at the same time, there was a strengthening of the fiscal and pricing discipline required for these countries. This undoubtedly led to political turmoil in debtor countries. As Bulmer (2014) writes, "ordo-liberal medicine is prescribed for the debtor countries, while pro-integrationism has lost importance both as a freestanding goal and as an accompanying set of ideas" (p. 1249).

Especially since the bailout was approved for Greece in 2010, the process of European integration and Europeanization entered a new phase of politicization, even in the German Republic (Niedermayer, 2016: 179). This was also reflected in public opinion. In 2007, 65 percent of Germans judged EU membership in totally favorable terms, above the EU average. By contrast, in 2012, only 32 percent of Germans held such a positive view—six points below the EU average. This higher level of Euroscepticism at the public sphere correlated with the rise of EU contestation at the level of the party system. As Bulmer and Paterson (2010) observe,

> [t]he need to secure parliamentary approval for the €750 billion facility for assisting weaker eurozone members resulted in very high-profile debates in May 2010, in which the SPD failed to support the government position: the first major breakdown in the European policy consensus between the main parties in half a century.
>
> (p. 1062)

Table 5.2 Forms of Europeanization in the three periods

	Kohl governments	*Schröder governments*	*Merkel governments*
Modes of Europeanization/ Germanization	Uploading negotiation	Facilitated coordination	Uploading negotiation
Intensity and type of change	Inertia—soft Germanization	Absorption—medium intensity	Inertia—conflictive Germanization
Main policy areas of transformation	Policy uploaded (the design of the EMU, budget restriction policies)	Public policy (labor market, EU-promoted adjustment, tax reform, budget consolidation) and normative-cognitive structures	Policy uploaded (bailout packages and austerity policies)

The risk of the collapse of the EU banking system and the eurozone forced Merkel's government to support the aid package for Greece in 2010, as well as subsequent financial aid measures accompanied by austerity programs for the countries at risk. This marked the beginning of a period that can be called "conflictive Germanization," in which Germany was forced to drastically change its own role within the EU. Table 5.2 shows the distinct processes of Germanization/Europeanization over the three periods under study. In the following section, both the Lisbon Treaty ratification and the approval in the Bundestag of the first Greek bailout in 2010 are analyzed to examine this increasing politicization at the German party system.

The symbolic order during the euro crisis

In April 2008, Merkel celebrated what she considered a consensus regarding the Lisbon Treaty. She described the new step in the process of European integration as a success for Europe and for the citizens of Germany (Bundestag, 2008: 16451). The CDU/CSU emphasized the great achievements of making the Charter of Fundamental Rights binding, thus unifying the social and economic dimension of Europe:

> The new Treaty makes the Charter of Fundamental Rights binding. The European Union is no longer just a union of peace, freedom and security, but the Charter of Fundamental Rights also makes it clear that it is committed to a European economic and social model in which economic success and social responsibility are united.
>
> (Ibid.: 16452)

The Christian Democrats referred to several dimensions that this new Treaty strengthened or implemented: majority voting, a good quota for Germans, and the fundamental principle of subsidiarity. The European project was emphatically linked to coordination in the areas of justice and home affairs. One of the prominent discourse topics was the improved coordination at the EU level to control borders and guarantee security: "The new Treaty facilitates cooperation in a very important policy area, namely justice and home affairs. In this way we can better secure Europe's external borders and further curb illegal immigration to Europe and Germany" (Ibid.). Notwithstanding the positive portrayal of Europe and European integration, the CDU/CSU also made clear the distinct vision of the EU that they had defended; Europe was presented as a political community, but the state, mediated by the principle of subsidiarity, was only conceivable at the national level:

> This ensures our understanding of Europe as a close political community, which is not and will not be a state, but a sui generis entity, a unique entity. […] I believe that in the future we will be faced more strongly with the task of deciding how to achieve the right balance between national tasks and European tasks.
>
> (Ibid.: 16453)

The CDU/CSU parliamentary group regarded the development and implementation of the subsidiarity principle as critical for the optimal functioning of the EU:

> So all I can say is, let's grab the bull by the horns! Let us get involved in really developing the subsidiarity culture in Europe! Germany has had very good experiences with its federal system, and we should also show that in Europe.
>
> (Ibid.)

According to this model, the step taken with the Lisbon Treaty was depicted as an absolute victory for Germany (Ibid.). Merkel considered the definition of the role of the EU and Germany in the world to be the next big challenge for the EU. Against the globalization background, she defended and emphasized a "social market economy" and an "economic order with a human face" as well as the strengthening of the position of the EU on the global stage (Ibid.). In 2008, the SPD, as part of a government coalition with the CDU/CSU, enthusiastically defended the Lisbon Treaty, and reaffirmed its willingness to move toward the "United States of Europe" (Bundestag, 2008: 16457) and to materialize the "vision" of a European Constitution. In the view of the SPD the EU "is a new concept that transports the idea of European citizenship. Here, too, the final word has not yet been spoken" (Ibid.: 16457). The SPD conceives the EU as a mediator among various national interests to prioritize and guarantee a future of peace, reciprocal cooperation, and integration among states

in Europe: “This process of European unification with the aim of peaceful coexistence, with the aim of forcing sovereign states to share common ground, and of giving justice and freedom an inalienable significance” (Ibid.: 16458). Furthermore, the EU was portrayed as a mechanism to develop worker security and worker rights, as in previous representations of the SPD (Ibid.).

Europe and the discipline of austerity

During the vote of the first bailout package for Greece in May 2010, the representations of Europe changed. The CDU/CSU presented the financial assistance to Greece as a path without alternatives: the Greek bailout was the best solution for a problem affecting Germany and the EU, even threatening the stability of the eurozone itself. It was made clear that the *Hilfpacket* (aid program) was to be accompanied by obligatory measures for Greece to structurally overhaul its economic and fiscal system. Therefore, Europe was portrayed as the vehicle to deliver and exert discipline upon other member states:

> With the strict security conditions agreed, the aid programme has a chance of success. With the drastic austerity measures and the far-reaching structural reforms to which Greece has committed itself, Greece can become competitive again and refinance itself on the capital markets with better conditions.
>
> (Bundestag, 2010: 3990)

Greece, then, was clearly represented as a country that had been unable to manage its financial and economic system. The aid packet was not a guarantee of Greece’s recovery, and the potential failures were the exclusive responsibility of the Greek government and the Greek people: “We are throwing Greece a life preserver. Greece has to swim to the saving shore itself. If it swims in the wrong direction, it lands on the open sea or *even in Turkey*” (Ibid.: 3991; emphasis added). During the debate on the initial aid program, the SPD, as the main opposition party, adopted a critical position toward the CDU/CSU and its approach toward the euro crisis and Greece. The SPD characterized Germany and Europe as decoupled, proclaiming that Germany was not involved enough to find a solution for the euro crisis. The party emphasized the need for the regulation of the financial markets at the EU level to control the crisis and to guarantee the security of Europe and the EU. The SPD depicted a Europe in which the main problem was the banks and other financial actors:

> As indispensable as aid to Greece is—contrary to the terrible populism of your allies in the media—we now need rapid and good progress in financial market regulation and in the fight against currency speculation so that Greece does not lead to a conflagration in the eurozone and beyond. That is what it is all about now. […] For a Europe that makes itself strong and gives

> itself the necessary resources to ensure that it is no longer driven by wildly speculating financial actors in the future.
>
> (Bundestag, 2010: 3992–3)

Table 5.3 presents the main representations of Europe, as well as the phenomena, processes, and events that are related to Europe and the EU in the three periods analyzed. It also summarizes the othering and subject positions that are prominent, and the main problematizations mobilized during these periods. To conclude, after the euro crisis the Germanization/Europeanization dispositif mobilizes two competing problematizations of Europe. The first, promoted by the CDU/CSU, envisioned the EU as a vehicle to control borders and immigration, and to guarantee a clear role for the nation-state. Furthermore, certain nations were construed as unable to cope and manage their own economies. The EU emerged as a vehicle to discipline these countries and reinstall financial order for the EU. The SPD instead problematized the lack of regulation of the financial markets and its institutions.

EU contestation in times of crisis

Die Linke, the party that came from the merger of the PDS and the Wahlalternative Arbeit und soziale Gerechtigkeit (WASG) parties in 2007,[4] was the sole parliamentary group to oppose the Treaty of Lisbon in 2008, providing 54 votes against. This party manifested, however, a clear commitment toward Europe and the process of European integration: "we Die Linke are committed internationalists, and we are pro-European" (Bundestag, 2008: 16461). Regarding the EU of the Lisbon Treaty Die Linke considered that it "did not meet the interests of the majority of the people" (Ibid.). This party focused especially on the elitist profile of European integration and the successive treaties:

> Once again, an Intergovernmental Conference met behind closed doors, once again citizens were unable to participate in shaping the treaty foundations for the future of the Union. They have no say in the outcome. The only thing they are allowed to do is to pay the bill. We reject such a policy. […] European policy must no longer be a policy by elites for elites.
>
> (Ibid.)

The excerpt above shows that the party seems to articulate a populist problematization of the EU in which the separation of the elite-driven EU from the people is the main problem. In line with previous PDS critiques, Die Linke rejected the defense policy promoted by the EU and considered it a danger for the peace in Europe (Ibid.). The party claimed that this type of integration might bring adverse conditions for the majority of the people, and the working people in particular. The desirable Europe of Die Linke was "a Europe of peace, freedom, democracy, social and environmental security and

Table 5.3 The symbolic order of Europe and the EU

	Kohl: *Maastricht and Amsterdam Treaties*	***Schröder:*** *Nice Treaty and Constitutional Treaty*	***Merkel:*** *Lisbon Treaty and Bailout program*
Europe as…	- Prosperity and peace (CDU/CSU) - The future (SPD) - The united nations of Europe (SPD)	- The greatest story of success (SPD) - A social, economic, cultural and political community (SPD) - Productive economy (CDU/CSU) - Community of peace and values (CDU/CSU)	- A unity in economic and social terms (CDU/CSU) - Security and border control area (CDU/CSU) - A network of states (CDU/CSU) - The United States of Europe (SPD)
Social events, processes, and phenomena	- Tolerance, consensus national interests, traditions, culture (CDU/CSU) - Security and asylum politics, visa politics (CDU/CSU) - The Euro currency (SPD) - Human rights, tolerance (SPD) - Democratic deficit (SPD) - Jobs, unemployment (SPD)	- The creation of security (SPD) - Globalization: terrorism (SPD) - Nazi dictatorship, catastrophes (SPD) - The Franco-German alliance (CDU/CSU) - Criminality (CDU/CSU) - Peace, economic prosperity (CDU/CSU) - Judeo-Christian legacy (CDU/CSU) - Subsidiarity (CDU/CSU)	- Charter of Fundamental Rights (CDU/CSU) - Borders, illegal immigration (CDU/CSU) - The nation-state (CDU/CSU) - Austerity measures, discipline (CDU/CSU) - Financial market regulation (SPD)
Positioned subjects and "othering"	- Our country, the people, the young generation (CDU/CSU) - Criminals, illegal immigration (CDU/CSU) - People of other nationalities (SPD) - Eurosceptics (SPD) - European neighbors (SPD) - Workers, people, young people (SPD)	- Germany, the Germans, France, the Populists (SPD) - France and Germany, the member states (CDU/CSU)	- Illegal immigrants (CDU/CSU) - The failed member states (CDU/CSU) - The markets, the people (SPD)
Topoi and Problematizations	- For peace among nations and for freedom (CDU/CSU) - Against nationalism and to face globalization (SPD)	- To have a relevant role to face the globalization challenges (SPD) - There is no alternative to the community of peace and values (CDU/CSU)	- EU as a vehicle to control borders, immigration and guarantee the clear role of the nation state (CDU/CSU) - EU and market regulation (SPD)

solidarity" (Ibid.: 16460). They argued that the social dimensions of Europe had not materialized in practice and in real measures: "A neo-liberal European internal market and a neo-liberal economic and monetary policy, focusing primarily on competitiveness and price stability, have done more harm than good to most people in Europe" (Ibid.: 16462). In 2010, during the debates on the first aid package to Greece, the position of Die Linke was stronger in the Bundestag; they had 76 seats and 11.9 percent of the vote after the 2009 federal election. The left-wing party strongly criticized the position of the CDU/CSU-FDP regarding the euro crisis and the problematic situation of Greece. The EU and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) were jointly presented as forcing Greece to adopt neoliberal measures to punish the Greek population: "In Greece, wages and pensions are being drastically cut. The IMF and the European Union are demanding that the Greeks implement all the neoliberal nonsense that has caused so much damage not only in our country" (Bundestag, 2010: 3996). Die Linke considered these measures as an attack on the "working people, pensioners and unemployed people all over Europe." The critique attempted to portray a different Europe, in which the main problem was not that "the normal people have lived beyond their means," but the tax evaders and wealthy people (Ibid.).

> We live beyond our means. But no finance minister refers to the head of Deutsche Bank, Mr. Ackermann, or the former head of Deutsche Post and tax evader, Mr. Zumwinkel. It is always about the workers, pensioners, families and the unemployed, who allegedly live beyond their means and who are forced to live with starvation wages, cuts in unemployment benefits and pension cuts. This must finally come to an end here in Germany.
>
> (Ibid.)

Die Linke rhetorically asked Merkel: "For whom do you actually make politics, Mrs. Merkel, for the markets or for the people?" (Ibid.). They argued that the CDU/CSU and the elites governing the EU ultimately wanted the decline of social standards in Greece, and in Europe overall. By contrast, Die Linke proposed another way out from the crisis: "We need to tax wealth more in Greece and throughout Europe, and we finally need the banking levy" (Ibid.: 3997). The populist problematization was, therefore, reinforced during the debates about the euro crisis and Die Linke consigned Europe to a major and fundamental dilemma between ordinary people, wealthy people, and the elites. After the debate, the aid program for Greece was supported by the Bundestag with 390 in favor, 72 votes against by Die Linke, and 139 abstentions by SPD and Green MPs.

Conclusion

This chapter concentrated on the analysis of the processes of Europeanization in Germany and the representations and problematizations about Europe and

the EU in the political sphere. In the first period (1992–1998), there is inertia and Germanization, whereby the Kohl governments clearly influenced the economic and financial model at the EU level while, at the same time, delayed the necessary domestic reforms. The second period is characterized by the absorption of EU-inspired policies by the Schröder governments and the formation of a Europeanization dispositif in Germany. Finally, in the third period, there is a sort of conflictive Germanization, especially since 2010 and the euro crisis. What emerges after the euro crisis is a contingent disciplinary dispositif of austerity in relation to Europeanization. As discussed above, there were four hegemonic problematizations of Europe across the different periods of time. First, there was one primarily promoted by the SPD, which constructed Europe in opposition to an “internal evil” and the danger of nationalism. The second, mobilized mainly by the CDU/CSU, represented Europe as a political entity linked to security, borders control, the regulation of immigration, and criminality control. The third problematization emerged strongly in the late 1990s and during the course of the debates on the Amsterdam Treaty; it linked Europe with the challenges of globalization and the ability to compete in an increasingly globalized and complex world. This problematization was promoted by the two main parties, the SPD and the CDU/CSU, but especially by the SPD during the Schröder governments. Finally, during the euro crisis, the EU was represented as a vehicle to discipline various member states, especially Greece.

The main German opposition to the processes of European integration came from the PDS/Die Linke group, but there were also traces of skepticism found within the CDU/CSU in relation to the role of the nation-state within the EU. The PDS/Die Linke party mainly activated the problematization of Europe as an oppressive and bureaucratic statehood. It defined the EU as a neoliberal and elitist project set against the people. Especially with the euro crisis and the euro bailouts, the populist discourse was mobilized against the EU and its responses to the crisis. As it was observed above, there were much more dissent within the hegemonic bloc than in the case of Spain and the power in discourse of the dispositif was less effective. The emergence of the Alternative für Deutschland in 2013 brought about the entrance of a new participant in the turbulent processes of horizontal Europeanization in Germany. The next chapter examines and discusses the impact of this party in Europeanization/Germanization processes and the role of populism therein.

Notes

1 The translations from German to English are my own throughout the chapter.

2 Ordoliberalism was the variant of liberalism dominating in Germany since the 1930s. In contrast to neoliberalism, ordoliberalism promotes the active role of the state as the guarantor of the free market and free competition, but not as an actor intervening directly in the economy. The economic and financial institutions should have substantial autonomy to ensure price and monetary stability (Foucault, 2004; Havertz, 2018).

3 The principle of subsidiarity was introduced in the Treaty of the European Union (Maastricht Treaty) in order to “safeguard the ability of the Member States to take decisions and action and authorises intervention by the Union.” It also seeks to “ensure that powers are exercised as close to the citizen as possible, in accordance with the proximity principle referred to in Article 10(3) of the TEU.” (European Parliament; accessed on 1 April 2019: www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/7/the-principle-of-subsidiarity)

4 This party was formed in 2005 by left-wing activists as a response to the policy approach of the Red-Green government of Schröder.

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6 The emergence of the radical right in Germany

Introduction: the radical right in Germany

As described in previous chapters, the eurozone and especially certain southern European countries suffered a severe banking and financial crisis. In Germany, the first bailout to Greece was approved in the Bundestag in May 2010 and there was a significant opposition to the role played by the government of Merkel in this context (Bulmer, 2014: 1244). In the end, the initial aid package to Greece in May 2010 could not contain the economic crisis of the Hellenic country, which then had to be assisted once again with another bailout in summer 2011. These bailouts could also not prevent the concatenation of crises in Spain and Italy—leading to the need for financial assistance for the former—or the rescue of Ireland in 2010, Portugal in 2011, and Cyprus in 2013 (Bulmer, 2014: 1253). In this period of great financial and political turbulence, the claims of Angela Merkel and her finance minister, Wolfgang Schäuble, about the defense of the "stability culture" in Europe were not effective to calm the domestic waters (Howarth and Rommerskirchen, 2013: 762). Even before the Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) upsurge, several senior politicians of the liberal Freie Demokratische Partei (FDP) party, as well as members of the Christlich Soziale Union in Bayern (CSU), demanded the Greece's exit from the eurozone (Bulmer, 2014: 1257; see also Howarth and Rommerskirchen, 2013). The skepticism and distrust spread beyond the political class, and part of the German press rejected the euro politics of Merkel's government. Furthermore, various surveys indicated that most Germans opposed the Greek bailouts and "wished to see a return to the old currency" (Howarth and Rommerskirchen, 2013: 762).

In this context, the initial formation of the AfD, and its antecedent, the Wahlalternative, involved the politicization of political and economic processes at the EU level. Some scholars consider the initial project of the AfD to be the result of the direct engagement of several economists in the political sphere (see Bebnowski and Förster, 2014: 2; Bulmer, 2014: 1247; Havertz, 2018: 5; Grimm, 2015: 270–1). In fact, the hard core of the AfD was formed by a circle of conservative and well-known economists like Bernd Lucke. Thus, the party AfD in its early times was basically the reaction of conservative economists against

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the euro bailout policies supported by Germany (see Lewandowsky, 2014; Grimm, 2015). The discontent of several former Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands (CDU) members led this group in 2012 to form the Wahlalternative, a party platform mainly focused on the euro bailout program and the demand for the dissolution of the eurozone (Lewandowsky, 2014: 2; Lees, 2018: 5). This was the immediate antecedent of the creation of the AfD in January 2013 in the aftermath of the euro crisis and the euro bailouts, which led to an intense political debate in Germany. Former cadres of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU/CSU), such as Bernd Lucke and Alexander Gauland, became the leading figures of the Wahlalternative, and later, of the AfD.

The first electoral challenge for the young party was the German federal election in September 2013, when the AfD obtained 4.7 percent of the vote, only 0.3 points below the 5 percent electoral threshold to enter the Bundestag. In the next electoral round, the May 2014 European Parliamentary election, the AfD garnered 7.1 percent of the popular vote and obtained its first seven deputies in the European Parliament. Its performance in subsequent German state elections (*Landtagswahlen*) in 2015 and 2016 was, in general terms, highly successful, achieving double-digit percentage numbers in some of them. These elections included those of Baden-Württemberg, where they got 15.1 percent of the popular vote; Rhineland-Palatinate, with 12.6 percent; Saxony-Anhalt, with 24.3 percent; Mecklenburg-Pomerania, with 20.8 percent; and Berlin with 14.2 percent. In September 2017, the party consolidated its power at the federal level with its irruption in the Bundestag, achieving 12.6 percent of the vote and 94 seats.[1] Most recently, it stabilized by achieving 11 percent of the vote in the 2019 European Parliamentary election and 10.3 percent in the 2021 federal election.

The profile of the party has been evolving since these early times by including demands linked to nationalist and traditionalist streams that were present in the party from its inception, albeit as secondary demands. The AfD was initially focused on EU issues, especially on the euro bailouts, which had started in 2010. The party demanded an exit from the eurozone and the renationalization of several policy areas and authority structures, thus jeopardizing the EU project (Havertz, 2018: 5). Currently, most scholars consider the AfD as a right-wing populist party (Grimm, 2015; Franzmann, 2016; Decker, 2016; Lees, 2018), but they emphasize the different dimensions of the discourse and policy approaches of the party. Bebnowski (2016: 27) has even suggested a particular term to refer to the distinct populism of the AfD, *Wettbewerbspopulismus*, which translates as “competitive populism” (see also Havertz, 2018: 3). To explore the emergence and discursive articulations of the AfD, the remaining of this chapter proceeds as follows. First, it contextualizes the emergence of the party and its evolution during its early years and the leadership changes. Next, the chapter turns to the first stage of the AfD, from its origins to the party Congress of July 2015. The central stage of the party was when they prepared to run for the German federal election in September 2017. Finally, the chapter

explores its role as the first opposition party in the Bundestag and after that, as a consolidated party in the Bundestag until 2022.

The AfD as a single (EU) issue party

During this first period of the AfD, the party focused on a hard critique of the euro bailouts and a rejection of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) (Grimm, 2015; Havertz, 2018). The AfD campaigned in two consecutive elections: the federal election of September 2013, and the European Parliamentary election in May 2014, which, as mentioned, is when the AfD entered the European Parliament. Regarding populism, there are authors who consider the AfD a right-wing populist party since its inception (Lewandowsky, 2014; Bebnowski and Förster, 2014). By contrast, other scholars are more cautious of this classification in the party's early phase, instead finding a key moment or turning point where the AfD assumed a more evident populist discourse (Havertz, 2018; Lees, 2018). This controversy about the populist profile of the party also has to do with tensions between at least two ideological streams found within the party: its liberal wing; and its national conservative wing, also denoted as populist. The dominance of one or the other of these two wings partly explains the changes in the discursive profile of the party.

The populist appeal of the AfD in times of Euroscepticism

When exploring the ways to construct "the people" in the *AfD1* corpus, the findings show two primary signifiers referring to the people—*Bürger** (citizen; 120, 0.15 percent) and *Mensch** (persons or human beings; 111, 0.14). As can be seen in Table 6.1, these signifiers are not at the top of the frequency list, although they are indeed relevant among the most frequently used terms. The word form *Bürger** is the most relevant signifier to refer to "the people." As illustrated in Table 6.2, the data shows that *Bürger** is significantly co-selected with "savings" (*Ersparnisse*, 5) and "victims" (*Leidtragende*; 3). Additionally, there are the less significant collocates such as "German" (*Deutschen*, 5), "Germany" (*Deutschland*, 6), and "EU" (5). When looking more closely into the concordance lines, it is apparent that "savings" and "victims" define crucial social and economic processes to represent the citizens, as can be read in an excerpt of a speech given in Berlin:

> We know that what Mrs. Merkel and Mr. Steinbrück have promised will not stand. There may be a great crisis, there may be a great escalation of the euro crisis in Europe. Then, the *savings* of the *German citizens* are just as little secured as the savings of the Cypriots were secured in March this year.
> (Lucke, 2013a; emphasis added)

The previous excerpt exemplifies how German citizens are linked to the economic processes of instability and uncertainty: "The savings of Germans are

Table 6.1 Frequency list nouns

	Word	*Freq*	*%*
1	Euro	282	0.36
2	Germany	255	0.33
3	European	135	0.17
4	Alternative	125	0.16
5	Citizens—*Bürger**	120	0.15
6	AfD	117	0.15
7	CDU	110	0.14
8	Persons, human beings—*Mensch**	111	0.14
9	Greece	107	0.14
10	EU	98	0.13
11	Europe—*Europa**	97	0.12
12	Millions	93	0.12
13	Party	93	0.12
14	States	86	0.11
15	Debts	83	0.11

Note: *Citizens, persons, and Europe are lemmatized words. All lemmas and signifiers in regard to "the popular identity" are detailed in the Appendix D.

Table 6.2 Collocates of *Mensch* and Bürger** in the first period

*Mensch**		*Bürger**	
Are	20	Savings	5
Come	11	Victims	3
Us	10	Germany	6
Many	8	German	5
		EU	5

not secured." The German citizens are portrayed as "the victims," those who suffer (*Leidtragende)* within these misguided economic and political processes, and the diagnosis of the crisis and the policies to counterbalance its effects are crucial:

> *The victims* are also the citizens of *Germany and central Europe* who must pay for it with their taxes, their savings and their pensions. Our model is the victim; our successful model of a social market economy whose resources are overtaxed and whose essential mechanisms are overridden at a frightening pace.
>
> (Lucke, 2013b; emphasis added)

As can be seen above, the German citizens who are paying and suffering because of the euro crisis are associated with the citizens of central Europe.

Under this same rationale, the EU is depicted as the entity promoting this sort of policies, along with the German government. German citizens and the central European citizens increasingly oppose the EU in the view of the AfD:

> This, together with enormous economic and social upheavals in the southern countries, the creeping expropriation of savers and the unfair burden on taxpayers in the economically more stable states, leads to a growing rejection of the EU by its citizens. In some states there are even open calls for withdrawal from the EU.
>
> (AfD, 2014: 2)

The terms "Germany" and "German citizens" operate to provide an origin for the citizen: "the citizens of all over Germany" (Lucke, 2015). The terms also serve to classify the citizens based on their national identity, providing national identification. Additionally, these citizens are classified by their role in the euro crisis as "victims." Thus, there is a process of identification and functionalization of the citizens, who are mainly presented in relation to the euro crisis. Turning to the other word form that refers to "the people," *Mensch**, the data show a different collocation pattern. After selecting those words co-occurring significantly, the collocate list is mainly composed of verbs, and there are fewer adjectives and nouns in comparison with the *Bürger** collocates. In this case, *Mensch** appears co-selected with "are" (*sind*, 20) and "come" (*kommen*, 11). Interestingly, the latter term depicts persons in movement who are coming to some place:

> We really have to make sure that *the people who come to us* have the appropriate qualifications; that this is people who have an adequate school education and have any professional skills that are in demand in the German labor market; that it is people who can speak our language or at least have the prerequisites to learn a language in an appropriate time; that it is people who are not only capable of integration but also are people who are willing to integrate.
>
> (Lucke, 2013c; emphasis added)

The excerpt above exemplifies how "the people" come to Germany and implies that it may be problematic if they are not capable or willing to integrate. In fact, the other collocating verb, "are," serves to identify "the people" with permanent characteristics (see Van Leeuwen, 2008) and confirms that some of "the people" who come to Germany are incapable of integrating into German society:

> The big problems that result from immigration, especially in the big cities in Germany where the people who come are not able to integrate. People who cannot participate in the labor market, who are unable to finance their own

income from gainful employment, and who then stick to the ground of our society and are likely to stick to it for the rest of their lives.

(Lucke, 2013c)

The adjective "many" (*viele*, 8) that also collocates in a significant way with *Mensch** indicates that those coming to Germany are a multitude. This multitude coming to Germany, is what, in the AfD's view, increases the integration problems that may arise from this process. Therefore, the *AfD1 corpus* presents two distinct representations of the people: the *Bürgern*, who are suffering by the misguided policies of the political class within the EU; and the *Menschen*, who come to Germany and central Europe and may produce disturbing effects in German society. Unlike the case of the Podemos in Spain using the signifier *gente* (people) and persons, there are no diverse identities being actively inscribed into the broader popular identity of "the legitimate people." On the contrary, there is a clear demarcation between the German citizens (*Bürger*) and other people who should have some restrictions to access German citizenship (Figure 6.1).

The most prominent argumentation scheme is a topos of danger, by which the euro crisis, the EU, and the general political management of the country are a threat to Germans; essentially, it threatens the security and savings of the German people. Unlike what we found with the case of Podemos, in the *AfD1* corpus, there is no construction of the popular identity in terms of the many—the majority—nor is there a clear appraisal of the people as good or morally superior to the elites. Instead, the AfD portrays the citizens of Germany mainly in relation to their rights as citizens and the economic challenges (e.g.,

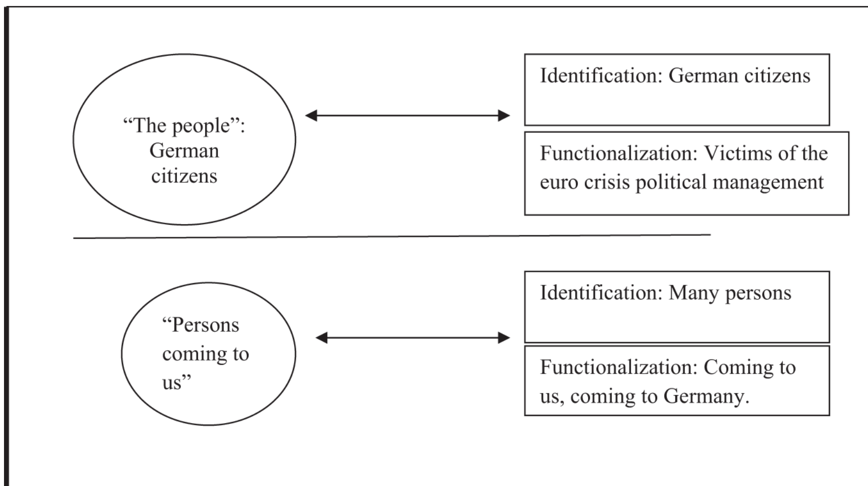

Figure 6.1 Representations of "the people."

the euro bailout, the threat of losing one's savings). The EU emerges within this representation as a negative instance of bad management and bureaucracy.

Anti-elitist or anti-EU?

The main semantic relations of the signifier *Bürger* (German citizens) that are used by the AfD to construct the popular identity do not reveal a prominent antagonistic construction of the people. Rather, the German citizens are portrayed in contrast—although not in evident antagonism—with the political class or certain political institutions (e.g., Merkel and Steinbrück, the EU) and the other people, *die Menschen*. For instance, in the following extract, Lucke distances himself from the politicians, but he does not construct the people in opposition to the elites: "I'm not a politician. I am a father of a family and I am a university professor even now I am a politically engaged citizen but I am not a politician; and I do not feel like a politician" (Lucke, 2013d). Exploring the concordance lines of the primary signifier that refers to "the people" (*Bürger*), it is possible to evaluate the relevance and degree of the antagonistic construction of "the people." In qualitative terms, the findings show a critique of the old parties, *die Altparteien*, and the political class at the EU level, but there is no primary construction of the people in opposition to these political elites. The party does not represent the national parties as a caste separated and opposed to the interests of "the people." Instead, the party focuses its critique on the FDP and the CDU/CSU, and they claim that politics should be closer to the citizens:

> If the hurdle is so insurmountable, then we will not encourage citizens to get involved in politics. We will keep them away from it and we will produce exactly what the other parties supposedly always criticize and lament: namely the so-called political dissatisfaction.
>
> (Petry, 2014)

The political, therefore, is presented as the sphere where the "entitled citizens" should be able to exert their rights, to have security and use their political rights as citizens. On a few occasions, the interests of the citizens are portrayed in opposition to the national political class, or *Altparteien*: "In the old parties you cannot find any more listening, they are at the top and they have become mute towards the citizens. They cannot take the care of the citizens anymore" (Lucke, 2013e). There is also a minor opposition established between the people and the EU elite, with their "alien interests": "Eurozone citizens have a right to know what extraneous interests have played a role in the banking and euro recovery measures taken in the various crisis states" (AfD, 2014: 24). In quantitative terms, however, the antagonism index amounts to only 0.1, which means that only 10 percent of the references to the *Bürger* are based on an antagonistic construction between the people and, in this case, the political

elites (*Altparteien*). With this data, it is difficult to claim that the AfD deployed a populist discourse during these early times.

The representation of Europe in the initial "Eurosceptic period"

During this first period, "Europe" (*Europa/Europas*) ranks tenth in the frequency list, with 97 occurrences (0.12 of relative frequency) and "European" (*Europäischen*) third in the frequency list, with 135 instances and 0.17 percent of relative frequency, as shown in Table 6.1. This indicates the high saliency of the theme Europe and the EU—being "European" the adjective that serves to designate the set of EU institutions, bodies, policies, or politics. Returning to the noun "Europe," it appears mainly co-selected with "currency" (*Währung*, 4), "States" (*Staaten*, 5), "southern" (*Süden*, 4), and "countries" (*Länder*, 4), as well as, in a less significant way, with "Germany" (*Deutschland*, 4). The signifier "state" is used in two different ways: on the one hand, it is applied negatively, as a way to oppose to the current evolution of Europe: "Something that one day will be called the United States of Europe. A federal state in which the current member states of the European Union have only about the same role and freedoms as the federal states" (Lucke, 2014). On the other hand, the term "state," conceived as the nation-state, is positively represented as the essential political unit composing Europe and legitimated on the basis of the national sovereignty: "We are in favor of a Europe of sovereign states with a common internal market. We want to live together in friendship and good neighborhood relations" (AfD, 2013: 1). "Europe" is portrayed as a victim of a misguided monetary policy that is leading to disaster, especially in southern Europe (AfD, 2014: 4). In this vein, "Europe" appears co-selected with "Germany" to defend the need for the sovereignty of the countries and a Europe of sovereign nation-states:

> Only in this way can we decisively resist the creeping expansion of the power of EU institutions. This is the only way to ensure that the budgetary law of the national parliaments is not touched. This is the only way to ensure that economic, social and financial policies remain within the design of the sovereign Member States.
>
> (AfD, 2014: 2)

Turning to the EU, the *AfD1* corpus shows a high saliency of this discourse strand with the term "EU" ranking eighth on the frequency list, with 98 occurrences and 0.13 of relative frequency. The overall EU discourse strand amounts to 381 instances (0.49).[2] When analyzing the EU discourse strand, the main collocates are "treaties" (*Verträgen*, 15), "institutions" (*Institutionen*, 12), "federal state" (*Bundesstaat*, 10), "central bank" (*Zentralbank*, 18), "states" (*Staaten*, 15), and "Germany" (*Deutschland*, 9). The EU, as such, is co-selected with the terms "member states" (*Mitgliedstaaten*, 9) and "citizen" (*Bürger*, 5). The co-selection of "citizen" (*Bürger*) with the EU expresses a critique of the

latter that is presented as "an artificial state remote from the citizens" (AfD, 2014: 2). The EU, therefore, should be reformed in the eyes of the AfD to be closer to the citizens, and it should allow citizen initiatives:

> The EU should serve the citizen, not the other way round. That is why the AfD defends a citizens' veto, along the lines of the "European Citizens' Initiative." Similar to Switzerland, the citizen veto is intended to block EU legislation in the respective member state within a certain period of time (e.g. six months) with a defined quorum.
>
> (AfD, 2014: 10)

Most of the collocates of the EU serve to present the EU dimensions that should be changed. Two of the strongest collocates ("member states" and "states") are used to portray an opposition between the EU statehood and the nation-states. In the view of the AfD, and as the following excerpt exemplifies, the nation-states or member states should prevail and form a "flexible network of European states" (AfD, 2014: 11): "This means that the European Union should have a serving function for the member states and not a dominating function" (Lucke, 2014). The European treaties are mentioned sometimes as a reference for these transformations and sometimes as one of the dimensions that should be changed in the EU. In a section of the European election manifesto titled "return to subsidiarity," the AfD claims that "over the years, the EU has acquired competences for which there is no basis in the European treaties, and which could be decided more appropriately by the individual states" (AfD, 2014: 8). The changes in the EU treaties proposed by the AfD are related to the management of the euro crisis and the financial aid given to the debtor states. The most criticized EU institutions are the European Central Bank and the European Commission, which are blamed for the escalation of the eurozone crisis and the undemocratic conditions in which these institutions operate:

> We have seen that non-elected bodies such as the "troika" consisting of the European Central Bank, the European Commission, and the International Monetary Fund have implemented these measures as if there were no democracy in the European Union. As if they did not respect the national parliaments.
>
> (Lucke, 2014)

To sum up, Europe and the EU are mainly represented in contrast to the nodal point state(s). At the EU level, this representation connects with the intergovernmental discourse by which the European cooperative framework should be a facilitator rather than a developed governmental structure. There is a main argument of danger related to the EU, by which the European statehood represents a threat to the nation-states and the citizens. The citizens of the EU, and German citizens more specifically, are opposed to the European statehood that should develop mechanisms for citizen participation. A more

positive representation of Europe is mobilized with the idea of "the Europe of the sovereign states." These representations and argumentations fit into a general problematization of the euro crisis, especially the capacity and flexibility to react of the member states and the counterproductive dependences between countries in the current structure of EU governance. The nation-states' have little room to maneuver and Germany in particular is not able to "freely" develop in the world in the AfD's eyes. Regarding the the populist discourse, the discourse strands on Europe and the EU are quantitatively and qualitatively more relevant than the discourse strand on popular identity. In quantitative terms, this is evident when looking at Table 6.1, where we find various word forms and lemmas corresponding to the Europe/EU discourse strands. Importantly enough, the main problems of the German citizens are related to the euro crisis and the problematization previously discussed that concerns Europe and the EU, and not the opposition between "the people" and "the elites." In fact, the minor opposition portrayed by the AfD between the German citizens and *die Altparteien* ultimately refers to the latter as "bad mediators" between the real problem—the EU and the little room to maneuver for Germany—and the German citizens (Figure 6.2).

The demarcation of "migrant persons" is also related to the euro crisis, since, in this period, the primary populations referenced by the AfD are Romanian, Bulgarian and Greek. The AfD presents the problem of these "migrant persons" as connected to the policy orientations in the EU that are imposed on

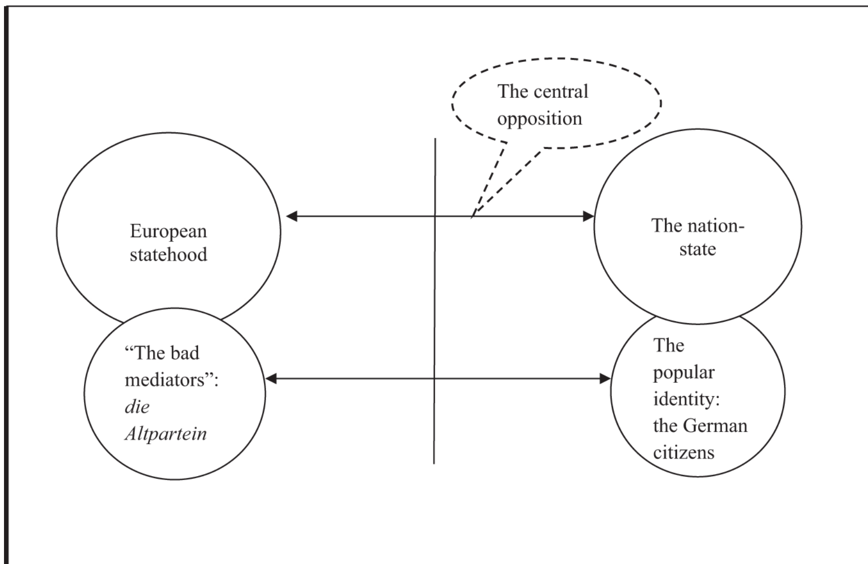

Figure 6.2 The Europe/EU and the popular identity.

the German government. Therefore, there is no apparent populist structuration of the discursive elements related to Europe or the EU, but rather, the opposite, the representations of the popular identity are influenced by the EU problematization.

"Wir sind das Volk" and the populist moment

There seems to be agreement in the literature about the fact that 2015 was a crucial year in the consolidation and evolution of the AfD (Schmitt-Beck, 2016; Havertz, 2018; Lees, 2018). After the emergence of the party in the 2014 European Parliamentary election, where it achieved 7.1 percent of the vote, the AfD succeeded at several regional elections in some eastern states in Germany: 9.7 percent in Saxony, 12.2 percent in Brandenburg, and 10.6 percent in Thuringia. However, two regional elections held in 2015 in Hamburg and Bremen shown the weakness of the party in Germany's western states, where it received only 6.1 percent and 5.5 percent, respectively. The year 2015 was a turbulent period for German politics due in part to the so-called "refugee crisis." In this context, the AfD experienced a process of transformation and internal adaptation to the political turmoil in Germany that was materialized in the July 2015 party Congress. In order to understand the internal transformation of the party, it is necessary to consider the impact of the "Patriotic Europeans against the Islamization of the West" movement, commonly known as PEGIDA. This movement initially emerged in Dresden in October 2014. Under the lemma "*Wir sind das Volk*" (We are the people), demonstrators went to the streets every Monday to protest against the "Islamization" of Germany and in favor of border control. This movement was gradually gaining ground during 2015 and PEGIDA, along with the AfD, consolidated their opposition to the refugee policy delivered by the Merkel government during the "refugee crisis" (see Vorländer et al., 2018: 54; Goerres et al., 2018: 4).

Although the relationship between the AfD and PEGIDA was difficult initially, this changed after the leadership shift within the AfD in July 2015. During the first stage of the AfD, Adam, Lucke, and Petry formed the party's leadership, and the so-called liberal wing dominated the party, with the unquestioned leadership of Lucke. After the 2015 struggle within the party, partially explained by the diverging positions toward PEGIDA, Petry, as one of the leading exponents of the national conservative wing, assumed a more significant role, and began sharing the party leadership with Jörg Meuthen. Meuthen represented the liberal wing, which was weakened after Lucke and most of his supporters quitted the party (Franzmann, 2016: 2; Ciechanowicz, 2017: 2). This leadership change facilitated the convergence of PEGIDA and the AfD in their view of migration, border control, and security questions. According to several scholars, this marked the hegemony of national conservative postulates and the shift of the AfD from a single-issue party focused on EU politics to a right-wing populist one (Grimm, 2015: 272–3; Berbuir et al., 2015: 173–4). In the words of Vorländer et al. (2018: 55), "the AfD managed to

channel the political protest that PEGIDA had taken to the streets and to convert it into parliamentary mandates." The party Congress of the AfD in April 2017 is considered in the literature as the AfD's second turn to more conservative postulates (Lees, 2018; Havertz, 2018). During this Congress, Alice Weidel and Alexander Gauland were elected to be the candidates of the party in the September 2017 German federal election, while the party executive remained under the control of Petry and Meuthen. The next section turns to the discursive articulations of the AfD in regard to popular identity during this second period, from July 2015 to September 2017.

The new popular identity of the AfD

By exploring the *AfD2* corpus, the results show that the primary word forms referring to the people, *Bürger** and *Mensch**, remain operative. However, there are striking differences between the frequency lists of the first and the second periods. In the *AfD2* corpus, there is increasing importance in the word form "Germans" (*Deutschen*) to refer to "the people." The word form "German" with all its variants[3] occurs in 390 instances, with a relative frequency of 0.27 in the *AfD2* corpus. This can be compared to the *AfD1* corpus, which yields 135 instances and only 0.17 of relative frequency. After manually counting the times in which the word form *Deutschen* (German) is in fact used to refer to the people—that is, Germans, German citizens, or the German people—we find that out of 194 instances in the *AfD2* corpus, it is used in this way in 58 cases, the 30 percent of the cases. By contrast, it is only used in this way in 9 out of 81 instances in the *AfD1 corpus*, totaling 11.1 percent. This indicates that the German identity strongly emerges in the *AfD2* corpus to construct "the people." Furthermore, the saliency of "citizens" (*Bürgern*) and "persons" (*Menschen*) decreases to 0.11 and 0.12 of relative frequency, around four points, although they continue to be relevant signifiers to construct "the people." The signifier *Bürger** collocates with "state" (*Staat*, 6), "economy" (*Wirtschaft*, 3), "money" (*Geld*, 3), and "secure/safe" (*Sicher*, 3) (see Table 6.3).

Table 6.3 Collocates of *Mensch* and Bürger** in the second period

*Mensch**		*Bürger**	
Millions	8	State	6
Million	3	Economy	3
Thousands	4	Money	3
Young	4	Secure	3
To come	6		
Mediterranean Sea	3		

Note: All collocates are classified by frequency and are above the values 3 of Mi and 15,13 of log likelihood.

Once again, "state" functions as a nodal point within the discursive articulations of the AfD in this second period, and it serves to highlight a possible threat of an oppressive state toward the citizens. Thus, we find that the state should work as a regulatory framework, which is a fundamental principle of ordoliberalism:

> The state is there for the citizen, not the citizen for the state. Only a "lean state" (*schlanker Staat*) can therefore be a good state. What is needed is a regulatory framework guaranteed by the state in which citizens can freely develop.
>
> (AfD, 2016: 4)

The collocates "economy," "money," and "secure" once again indicate a prominent dimension of the social life of citizens. In a similar vein to the first period of the AfD, the economy and the money of the citizens should be secured. There is a threat by the state (if it is not restricted to its core functions) toward the citizens' financial savings. In the AfD Manifesto of 2017, the appeal is clear: "Your money is safe with us: safeguarding citizens against a euro crisis" (AfD, 2017: 14). If we turn to the word form *Mensch**, it appears more clearly co-selected with a set of adjectives of quantity: "millions" (*Millionen*, 8), "million" (*Million*, 3), and "thousands" (*Milliarden*, 4). It collocates in a significant way, as it was in the first period, with the verb "to come" (*kommen*, 6) with the term "young" (*Junge*, 4) and "Mediterranean Sea" (*Mittelmeer*, 3). Looking in greater detail into the concordance lines, it is apparent how *Menschen* are again represented in the *AfD2* corpus as people coming to Germany:

> Because all the parties, consciously, disregard the law which is in force; for them it is completely right that we have open borders; that men come to us without papers; without having to prove their identity. The task of the state is to secure the state borders.
>
> (Weidel, 2017a)

However, in this second period, the emphasis on the number of persons who come or try to come is greater. These "persons" are represented as the "millions of migrants" coming to Germany, and they are often associated with crime. The representation of thousands or millions of "people" coming or "being lured" generates the construction of an undetermined and dangerous mass of people invading the country:

> Millions of people from other cultures without the qualifications required for integration are lured to Germany with false promises. In their homeland they have broken all bridges. Disappointed hopes of prosperity harbor the danger that many will fall into crime.
>
> (AfD, 2016: 64)

The main argumentative scheme is a topos of danger: in this occasion, it is primarily associated with the figure of millions of migrants or refugees coming to Germany. The argument goes that if too many arrive, they could cause problems in German society and in the German labor market. The second argument is that migrant persons tend to "fall into crime," as can be read in the quote above. Thus, if many of them come, this means a threat to the security of the German people.

If we focus on the collocation pattern of "the Germans" (*Deutschen*[4]), the most relevant co-occurring words are: Bundestag (23), "interests" (*Interessen*, 7), "language" (*Sprache*, 6), "people" (*Volkes*, 6), and "voice" (*Stimme*, 5). The "German interests" must be defined in the context of world politics, in the view of the AfD: "We are committed to a foreign policy geared to German interests" (AfD, 2017: 16). These interests imply a change toward a more positive relationship with Russia (Ibid.: 17). The Germans, in fact, are conceived as a defined community, with specific interests and a particular language that must be defended; they are defined as a historical "people"—*das deutsche Volk*—with specific cultural characteristics corresponding to an ethnic classification of the people. The following extract exemplifies how the AfD uses the term *deutsche Volk*, accepting that it was a taboo phrase, but gradually including this expression as a way to ethnically identify "the people":

> The requirement to the chancellor or to the federal government is to stand up for right and law by the control of the parliament and the interests of the German people [*das deutsche Volk*] (if you say so today, you are seen as nationalistic [*volkisch*] […] To represent the interests of the German people.
>
> (Weidel, 2017b)

The Germans, or *das deutsche Volk*, are represented under threat. The only possibility is to react and change the established politics to allow the German people to survive:

> When I walk through the center of my city, I said that I see only a few Germans. And the bad thing is that this situation will get even worse in the coming years if we don't stop *Merkel, Schulz & Co* energetically. If we look at the demographic facts, the number of Germans is declining. They are becoming less and less because the established politics has allowed itself to be made the vassal of the ideologists of the Frankfurt School.
>
> (Meuthen, 2017a; emphasis added)

Therefore, in the view of the AfD, one of the central problems in German politics is how to stop the invasion of the people coming into Germany and other Western countries (*Abendlander*). There are thus problems concerning the fragmentation of the popular identity (*die Deutschen*), and the "cultural

contamination" caused by excessive and uncontrolled immigration. In their view, this situation is the direct result of the policies of the *Altpartein*, especially those of Angela Merkel:

> What can the Hungarians and the Polish do about the fact that Mrs. Merkel brought these people here into this land? They did not want a multicultural society. They have their own historical experiences: Polish with the Russians and Hungarians with the Ottomans. They do not want a Muslim occupation either. So the eastern European states say and there I am completely with them: this is your task. You have opened the borders and we wanted a different thing.
>
> (Gauland, 2017a)

The construction of "the people" is built upon a central problematization: the preservation of the German—as a culture, as a people, and as an identity. This is clearly separated from the persons coming to Germany. In fact, the *Menschen* are the main problem for the Germans, along with the *Altparteien*. This portrayal of the popular identity has undoubtedly gained ground during this second stage of the party. However, it is still combined with another representation, the one linked to the signifier *Bürger**, as it can be seen in Figure 6.3. This representation of the popular identity is more clearly anchored in the

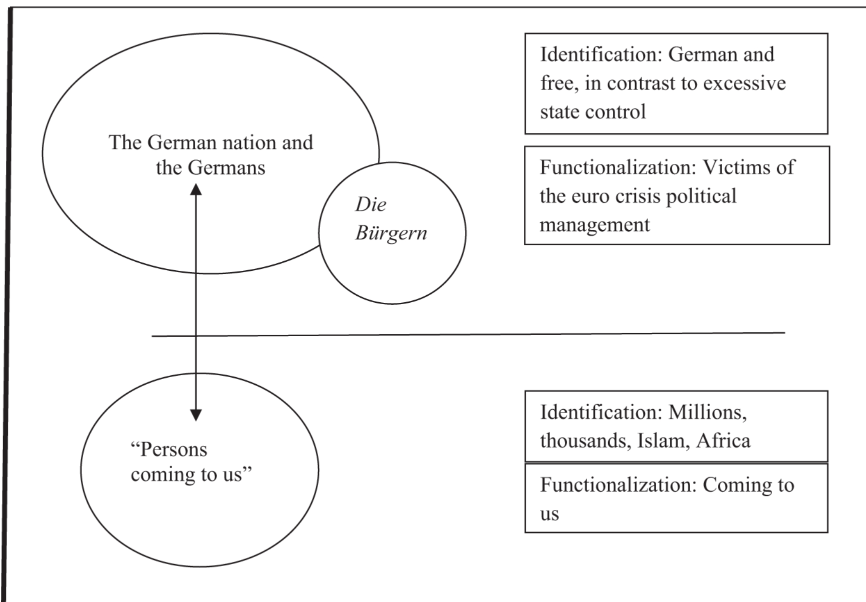

Figure 6.3 Representations of "the people" in the second stage.

classical ordoliberal discourse of the AfD stemming from Lucke's approach. The main problem in this case is the adaptation of the state to the requirements of ordoliberal principles: a flexible framework to permit the free circulation of goods and persons (a *schlanker Staat*). These are not contradictory representations of the popular identity but mutually reinforcing notions. The state and the *Altparteien* are the entities allowing the "open borders" policy and, at the same time, undermining the rights and financial security of the citizens. In turn, the "millions of migrants" that threaten the identity of the Germans also increase the insecurity of the "citizens."

Regarding the populist discourse, the excerpts above show how the interests of the Germans have been opposed to "Merkel, Schulz & Co" (Meuthen, 2017b), the *Altparteien*, and the political class (Weidel, 2017c; AfD, 2016, 2017). However, the construction of the popular identity through antagonism with certain elites continues to be relatively minor in comparison to the AfD's opposition to the state and the migrant people. In fact, the antagonism index for this period is 0.13, three points higher than the previous period but still relatively low compared to Podemos in Spain. The "people" in the *AfD2* corpus is more clearly delimited in two complementary ways to construct the popular identity: on the one hand, *das deutsche Volk* or *die Deutschen*, that is, as an ethnic-nationalist construction of the people; and on the other hand, *Die Bürgern*, meaning citizens with rights and with a need for both the economy and society to be well ordered and structured.

Representations of Europe during the second stage

The signifier "Europe" (*Europa/s*) is less salient in the *AfD2* corpus (129, 0.09 of relative frequency) than it was during the previous stage (0.12). Likewise, the adjective "European," which ranked third on the frequency list of the *AfD1* corpus (0.17), ranks 36th on the frequency list of the *AfD2* corpus (0.06). This can be connected to the different types of the elections, on the one hand, and the change of the party's profile, on the other hand. Exploring the collocates of "Europe," the findings show a consistent co-occurrence with "Germany" (*Deutschland*, 16), "south" (*Süden*, 3), "peace" (*Frieden*, 3), "outside" (*Außerhalb*, 3), and less significantly, "states" (*Staaten*, 4) and "millions" (*Millionen*, 3). Europe is portrayed in contrast with Germany, as differentiated entities with a complicated, one-to-one relationship. Thus, Gauland reflects on the role of Germany in Europe:

> This Germany is still too big for many which are its neighbors and they have big problems with it. But we are too small to dominate Europe. It has been tried twice and it has gone terribly wrong twice. And we have said afterwards and again and it was a right consideration: "We must try to integrate Germany into Europe in such a way that it is neither too big nor too small."
>
> (Gauland, 2016)

The collocates "states" and "fatherlands" continue to operate in opposition to Europe on the one hand, while rejecting European statehood on the other. Europe is presented as an entity at risk, corrupted by an excessive state apparatus that constrain nation-states. The Europe in "peace" (a significant collocate), is also at risk by the policies promoted from the EU: "Stable state systems have been put at risk in these countries in particular. Above all, there is one thing that has been put at risk: the peace in Europe that has been achieved with so much effort" (Petry, 2016). The ambivalent representation of the state, as the positive nation-state and the negative European state, is once again evoked in the *AfD2* corpus:

> We reject the "*United States of Europe*" as well as the EU as a federal state from which withdrawal is no longer possible. Our goal is a *sovereign Germany* that guarantees the freedom and security of its citizens, promotes their prosperity and makes its contribution to a peaceful and prosperous Europe.
>
> (AfD, 2016: 10; emphasis added)

The south and the dangerous other

Europe is also presented as fractured between the south and the north, and this is connected to the debt and the euro crisis. As Meuthen argues in the following excerpt, Germans should not have to pay for southern Europeans. Initially paraphrasing EU elites, he states:

> The Germans have to get used to this. We need an inflation rate of more than 2 percent and for the foreseeable future there must be no interest—we owe it to the south of Europe." [In response, Meuthen says,] No, we don't. It is *only an expropriation*.
>
> (Meuthen, 2017c; emphasis added)

The collocates "outside" and "millions" serve to construct the figure of the migrants—the millions of persons coming from outside Europe. This is an additional risk to Europe and Germany, by the flood of millions of *Menschen* coming to the West. Within this fundamental *othering*, Islam emerges as a new relevant signifier to characterize such *others*:

> Demographers […] estimate that from the Islam arc of Africa up to 240 million are pushing towards Europe and in 2050 possibly up to 1.1 billion people sit on their suitcases. Every migrant who comes to us costs us 13.000 Euros according to calculations by the German Institute for Economics.
>
> (Gauland, 2017b)

When looking at the EU discourse strand, its salience is 0.16, with 232 instances—more than 20 points below that of the *AfD1* corpus. The main

collocations are "Turkey" (*Türkei*, 6), "common" (*Gemainsame,* 6), "central bank" (*Zentralbank,* 4), "ECB" (EZB, 3), "commission" (*Kommission*, 4), "NATO" (4), "nations" (*Nationen*, 3), and "German army" (*Bundeswehr*, 3).

Using the collocate "Turkey" serves to draw another fracture or boundary between Europe and those outside. In this case, besides the southern Europeans and the millions of migrants, the AfD opposes "Turkey's accession to the EU" (AfD, 2017: 17). Europe and Turkey are described as opposing entities with essential differences. The adjective "common" serves to reject European integration, especially that relating to foreign and security policy. The AfD "rejects a formal common foreign and security policy of the EU (CFSP) as well as a common European foreign policy" (AfD, 2017: 18). There is a similar rejection of the EU army: "The AfD rejects a Joint European force and adheres to a comprehensively empowered *Bundeswehr* as the cornerstone of German sovereignty" (AfD, 2016: 31). Likewise, the collocate "nations" serve to emphasize the opposition between national sovereignty and the attempt to construct a European superstructure that sits above the national governments. Thus framed, the party represents a desired Europe of the sovereign nations, and this implies the de-Europeanization of key EU policy areas.

Problematizations and argumentation schemes

In the second period, we find some similarities with the collocation patterns of "Europe" and the "EU" in the previous stage. The main discourse topics (the state, migrants, EU statehood, and citizens) generally remain the same. However, "Germany" collocates more strongly with "Europe," and there are new collocates, such as "peace" and "millions." Furthermore, the relationship between Germany and Europe is problematized in a consistent but more salient way in relation to the previous stage, and Germany and Europe are presented as entities with united but sometimes conflictive destinies. What is different in this second stage is the combination of the discourse topics and the way to structure them. In the second stage, there is a primacy of the representation of the German nation and the Germans that affects the ways in which Europe and the EU are constructed. By contrast, in the first stage, it was rather the opposite: the interests of the German citizens and the European citizens were defined by the problems arising from the euro crisis and the euro bailouts. Thus, in the second stage, Europe and the EU are fundamentally problematized in relation to the problem of the German nation and its threats, as it is shown in Figure 6.4.

Serving this end, there were several argumentation schemes. First, there was a topos of danger, by which the EU was seen to be oppressing the free development of Germany. Therefore, the EU needed to be transformed in order to guarantee the necessary room for Germany to maneuver. Here, Europe was linked to various "others"; for instance, the southern European countries were depicted as "other" countries threatening Germany in economic terms within the EU structure. There were also additional positioned

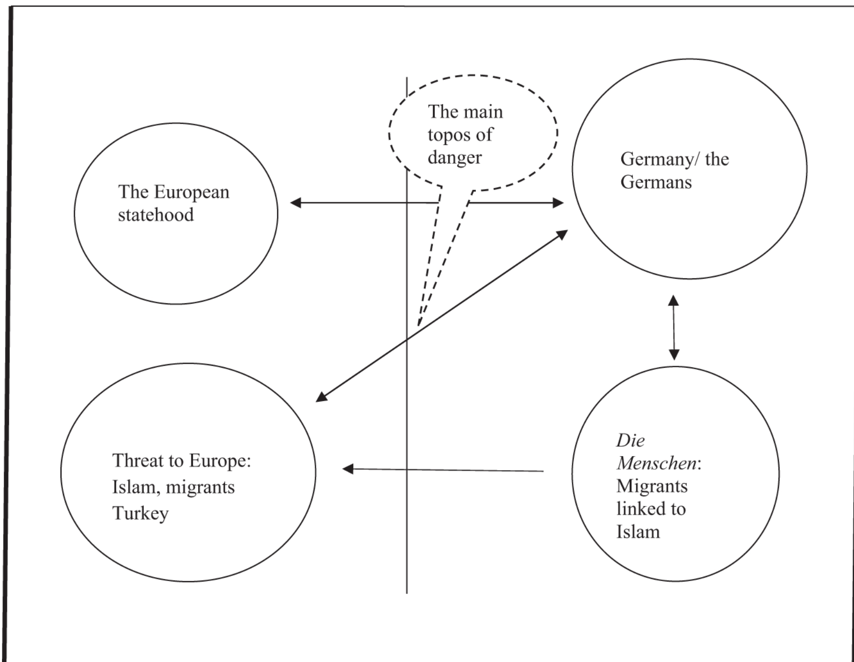

Figure 6.4 The Europe/EU and the popular identity in the second period.

subjects used as "others" within the representations of Europe and the EU. Specifically, the terms Islam and Turkey were applied as signifiers to construct the idea of millions of migrants coming into Germany from different cultural backgrounds. This construction served to form the main topos of danger mobilized by the AfD, namely, that Europe was endangered by the millions of Islamic migrants, and the EU allows this threat to become real.

The AfD as the main opposition party

After the electoral vote on 24 September 2017, Frauke Petry, the most emblematic of the two executive leaders of the AfD—Petry and Meuthen—left the party due to disagreements about the long-term strategy and priorities of the AfD. It has been argued that the main reason was that she had defended a more centered strategy for the party to reach center-right voters (Lees, 2018: 11; Art, 2018: 83). The entrance of the AfD in the German Parliament as the third political force and the fall of the two mainstream parties (the Christian Democratic Union [CDU/CSU],–8.6 percent; and the Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands [SPD],–5.2 percent) produced turmoil in German

politics. The political impact of this earthquake in the German party system increased further with the formation of a grand coalition between the SPD and the CDU/CSU during post-election negotiations, which left the AfD as the first opposition party in the Bundestag. In the following section, the main problematizations and representations of the party during this third stage are examined in order to find divergences and commonalities in comparison with the previous two stages.

The popular identity in opposition

In the *AfD3* corpus, the most prominent signifier to refer to "the people" is *Menschen* (302, 0.16). Meanwhile, the saliency of *Bürger**, which was the most prominent term for "the people" in the previous two stages, remains similar to the previous period (0.11). Looking at the collocates of *Menschen*, the most significant are "millions" (*Millionen*, 18), "Germany" (*Deutschland*, 13), "many" (*viele*, 7), "help" (*Hilfe*; 7), (*Recht*, 7), "country" (*Land*, *Landes*; 8–5), "junkies" (*Junkies,* 4), "migration-background" (*Migrationhintergrund*, 6). Focusing on the collocates absent in the previous two subcorpora (*AfD1* and *AfD2*), "help" and "junkies" serve to introduce a new discourse topic related to the popular identity: the welfare state. The AfD elaborates a critique of the current welfare state and proposes a new one that serves "the people who really need help." The current welfare state, by contrast, creates "junkies," meaning people addicted to the state's social benefits. There is, therefore, a fracture within the category *Menschen* between people who really need help and the others (*Junkies*). In the AfD speeches, there is a dichotomist identification of these two types of persons:

> Instead, the state hangs people like *junkies* on the needle of a supposed welfare state that, with all its hundreds of billions per year, does not even remotely accomplish what its real task would be. The task of a viable real welfare state would be subsidiary help for *the people who really need it*.
>
> (Meuthen, 2018a; emphasis added)

The other collocates ("migration-background," "country," "millions") serve to identify a particular type of person, migrants, and to connect them to criminality, which also happened during the previous stage of the party:

> According to official statistics, the proportion of foreigners in Germany is 10 percent, 11 percent, to be exact. 40 percent of crimes but only 10 percent of the total population. In criminology, however, the term "criminality among foreigners" does not cover people with a migration background. These are not taken into account in the official data collection. Similarly, suspects with a double passport are not statistically recorded.
>
> (Weidel, 2018a)

Likewise, the verbs co-selected with *Menschen*, specifically, “serve” or “come,” are used to represent people coming into the country and threatening the stability of Germany:

> If it turns out that this right of asylum is not sufficient to limit the number of migrants coming into a level that is beneficial to our society, then we need to be ready to rethink and redesign asylum law. Because still the law has to serve the people and not the people the law.
>
> (Meuthen, 2018b)

If we turn to the patterns of co-selection with *Bürger*, the main collocates are “countries” (*Landes*, 9), “demands,” (*Bedürfnisse*, 8), “security” (Sicherheit, 5), and other less significant collocates such as “constitutional state” (*Rechtsstaat*, 4) and “state” (*Staat*, 6). We also find verbs that are significantly collocated with *Bürger*, such as “constrain” or “control” (*gängelt*, 4), and “trust” (*vertrauen*, 7). Exploring the concordance lines, the findings show that the collocates “country” and “demands” serve to produce an identification of the citizens of the country—the interests and the demands of Germans (Meuthen, 2018c). Moreover, once again, the role of the state is crucial for defining the main problems of the citizens: it should be a strong but “minimum” (*schlanker*) state. Yet, in their view, the current state is failing to protect the citizens and is spending money on illegal immigration and on a nonfunctional welfare state: “While the infrastructure of our country is falling, the state can no longer protect its citizens. However, there are billions spent in the reception and feeding of illegal immigrants and in the social systems.” (Weidel, 2018b) Therefore, the state is failing in their main and limited tasks—the protection and guarantee of security and freedom for the citizens—and it is, at the same time, controlling and constraining the citizen (*gängeln*). This is similar to other stages of the party. Additionally, the popular identity during this third stage is occasionally being confronted by the interests of the *Altparteien* and *Kartellparteien* (Meuthen, 2018d). In fact, the antagonism index has increased by four points, to 0.17, in comparison with the previous stage. This indicates that the antagonism constructed between the German citizens and the *Altparteien* is more central in the representations of the popular identity during this last stage.

Representations of Europe during the third period

The saliency of the term “Europe” is three points higher during this stage of the party (215, 0.12) over the previous stage, and similar to the first stage (0.12), which was marked by the 2014 European Parliamentary election. Regarding the pattern of collocation, “Europe” appears especially co-selected with “Germany” (*Deutschland*, 26), “nations” (*Nationen*, 16), “fatherland” (*Vaterländer*, 12), “states” (*Staaten*, 11), “peace” (*Frieden*, 9), “sovereign” (*Souveräner*, 8), “migrants” (*Migranten*, 4), “migration” (*Zuwanderung*, 4). When examining the concordance lines, the findings show a representation

of Europe as clearly fractured by the ethnic or nationalist antagonism. The desired Europe is represented as a fortified Europe that should defend the citizens against mass immigration: "More than ever we need a fortified Europe. There is no other way, we need it. It is indispensable. That is not friendly but there is no other way. And what is done is the exact opposite" (Meuthen, 2018d). The example of Eastern European states like Hungary is given as a model of the proper rejection of immigrants. Europe appears problematized as a territory invaded by mass migration, a problem that should be faced now if Europe aims to survive: "The question of migration is the question of fate for Europe. Without mass immigration, we would not have half the problems. For example, the great hustle and bustle over the lack of affordable housing" (Gauland, 2018a).

When looking at the EU discourse strand, its saliency (0.32) has increased in comparison with the previous period (0.16) but it is lower than the first period (0.49). The main collocates are "states" (*Staaten*, 10) "citizenship" (*Staatsbürgerschaft*, 6), "Turkey" (*Türkei*, 5), "nations" (*Nationen*, 5), "countries" (*Länder*, 5). Following the same pattern, European countries are presented as threatened by migrants (Meuthen, 2018e) and again, Turkey appears as a threat to the EU. At the same time, Europe is depicted as a continent of diverse and particular nationalities and cultures that should be preserved and it is opposed to a European state.

> "Yes" to the common market but "no" to a *European state* that threatens the diversity of the continent […] Each of the peoples [*Völker*] of Europe, each of the nations of Europe contributed in its own way, precisely because Europe is a continent of the diversity.
>
> (Gauland, 2018b; emphasis added)

Once again, the EU is depicted on the one hand as a bureaucratic state that may oppress and blur national identities while, on the other hand, as an apparatus allowing for mass immigration into Germany: "That people who enter the EU, apply for asylum in Spain and then via Austria enter the Federal Republic of Germany that they are finally allocated to" (Meuthen, 2018e). In summary, the crucial problematization governing the discursive articulations on Europe and the EU concerns immigration and the threat to the German nation. Similar patterns of argumentation are applied during this period to justify an anti-EU political approach and the desire for both border and immigration control.

Conclusion

This chapter focused on the discursive articulations and the emergence of the AfD party. The findings revealed variation across the three stages of the party regarding the construction of the popular identity and the representations and problematizations about Europe and the EU. In the first stage, the signifier *Bürger* was found to be the prominent term to construct the popular identity,

and *Menschen* served to demarcate the "other"—the migrants. During this first period, the central discourse topic, the euro bailout and the critique of the EU and the political class, conditioned both the representations about Europe and the EU and the construction of the popular identity. The EU and Europe were presented as endangered by misguided politics but also connected to a reformist articulation that should guarantee the subsidiarity principle and the central role of the nation-states. Hence, the power through discourse of the AfD regarding Europe and the EU was low during this first period. Fundamentally, the AfD reproduced the ordoliberal discourse that was already dominant in the dispositifs of Europeanization in Germany. In a certain sense, this hegemonic discourse was rearticulated as a demand for an exit from the eurozone, considering the EU as an "excess of statehood," according to the ordoliberal criteria.

In relation to the popular identity, the *Bürgern*, as well as their savings, were constructed as the victims of the euro bailout through a topos of threat related to the EU and the political class. In this case, the central representations and problematization about the EU influenced the form to construct the popular identity. This is precisely the opposite of what happened during the first stage of the Podemos party. In the latter case, the representations about Europe and EU were articulated following the populist form ("the people" versus "the elites"); in other words, the form to construct the popular identity affected the ways to represent Europe and the EU.

During the second stage of the AfD, a form of construction of "the people" that already existed as a minor representation during the first stage emerged more forcefully. This was the popular identity as the Germans—the citizens of Germany—defined by a mixture of ethnic and civic terms. During this second stage, Germany and the Germans became the main nodal points and affected not only the way to construct the people but also the forms to represent Europe and the EU. Europe was thus represented as a continent threatened by the mass migration and the dissolution of the national identities, languages, and cultures that had composed Europe in the past. Here, the EU was problematized mainly in relation to this problem (national identity), as an apparatus incapable of controlling the borders and migration. At the same time, the EU was also depicted as an "excessive statehood" constraining the nations and their citizens. This preeminence of the signifier Germany and the German nation as a nodal point is confirmed during the third period. During this period, the saliency of the discourse strands referring to Europe and the EU decreased and the signifier *Bürger* (associated with a civic definition of "the people") also became less prominent.

As it is elaborated on further in the next chapter, the "nationalist turn" since the beginning of the second stage of the party led to an increase in the power through discourse of the AfD. During the second and third periods, the AfD mobilized new representations of Europe as threatened by ethnically and culturally demarcated migration, especially related to the religion of Islam. The next chapter contrasts these elements in the discussion of the comparative findings resulting from this research in the case of Spain and Germany.

Notes

1 In the end, they only got 92 seats after two deputies of the group quitted, including Frauke Petry.
2 The composition of the discourse strands together with the lemmas are described in detail in Appendix D.
3 I detail the lemmatization and discourse strands in Appendix D.
4 In Appendix D, I detail the terms used to analyze “the people” as the Germans.

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7 Comparison and conclusions

> *It is possible, of course, to find lateral co-ordinations, hierarchical subordinations, isomorphic correspondences, technical identities or analogies, and chain effects. This allows us to undertake a logical, coherent, and valid investigation of the set of these mechanisms of power and to identify what is specific about them at a given moment, for a given period, in a given field. Third, the analysis of these power relations may, of course, open out onto or initiate something like the overall analysis of a society.*
>
> (Foucault, 2010: 17)

Introduction

The central question that guided this book was essentially comparative: *How do radical right and left parties articulate populist discourses with representations and problematizations of Europe and the EU?* To respond to the question, this book concentrates on the emergence and the discursive articulations of two parties considered populist in the literature: Podemos in Spain and the Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) in Germany. These parties are analyzed in their contexts because of the great importance of exploring embedded discursive practices within broader contexts of signification, social practices, and dispositifs. The study of the macro-contextual and meso-contextual levels in this book was based on the exploration of Europeanization processes and dispositifs of Europeanization.

This book has privileged qualitative, detailed, and discourse-oriented research over research designs oriented toward finding general patterns of causation to produce generalizations about a population of cases. Thus, the comparative findings of this work are not used to draw consistent generalizations about Western Europe; a different type of comparative study would be needed for that analysis. Rather, these findings mainly serve to uncover fundamental interrelations to understand and explain the phenomena of populism and European Union (EU) contestation. The comparison between the two cases offered evidence concerning the central question and sub-questions of this study. It shines a light on distinct populist contestations of the EU in one southern and one northern Western European country. Furthermore, the comparative findings that are presented in this chapter contribute to "building

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theory" tasks in the interrelated fields of Europeanization, populism, and EU contestation or Euroscepticism.

This final chapter uses the comparative evidence analyzed in the previous four chapters to respond to the main research question of this book, as well as the other sub-questions that oriented this study. Hence, the chapter starts with the comparative findings related to the dispositifs of Europeanization in Spain and in Germany. It compares their main aspects: strategic origin, elements of the dispositifs, and power in discourse. The second part of this chapter concentrates on the populist responses in Germany and Spain. This section details the different modes of construction of the popular identity and EU contestation, as well as the distinctive articulations and power through discourse in the two cases. Finally, the chapter evaluates the implications of the findings of this research for the literature on populism and EU contestation as well as considers the limitations of this work and provides avenues for further research on this topic.

Vertical Europeanization and dispositifs of Europeanization

In this book, the relation between contexts and actors is defined in two respects: first, it is an interactive relation whereby the context affects the practices of the actor, but at the same time the actor affects the definition of the context; second, and related to the former, contexts do not entail deterministic effects but arrays of variable effects filtered by the strategic and interpretive practices of the actors (see Van Dijk, 2015; Trimithiotis, 2018). That said, for the sake of analytical clarity, it is still possible to isolate the effects of the contexts for the macro and meso levels. The macro-contextual level refers to the processes of vertical Europeanization affecting the environment of national politics (Ladrech, 2009; Mair, 2007; Radaelli, 2003). Horizontal Europeanization, by contrast, refers to the meso level context in which the discursive practices of actors originate and interact. Together with the discursive practices of the actors, the dispositif lens allows us to identify temporary arrangements of dominant discourses, strategies, actors, and policies at the meso-level.

The macro and meso contexts in Spain and Germany were analyzed in detail in Chapters 3 and 5. One of the goals of this chapter is to substantiate the arrays of effects and relations of power/knowledge between the dispositifs of Europeanization and the populism–Euroscepticism nexus in Spain and Germany. This aim corresponds to the second sub-question: *How do the Europeanization dispositifs in Germany and Spain affect the discursive articulations of [Podemos and AfD] parties?* Accordingly, the next section summarizes the similarities and differences, as well as the distinctive qualities of these dispositif effects, as they pertain to the following dimensions of the analysis: (1) the forms and effects of vertical Europeanization on the "environments" of national politics in Spain and Germany; (2) the strategic operation and rearticulations of dispositifs of Europeanization responding, in part,

to these environments; (3) the various elements and actors of the dispositifs; and, finally, (4) the *power in discourse* circulating through the dispositifs and its effects.

Vertical Europeanization in Germany and Spain

The historical background of the relationship between Germany and the EU has been marked by three complementary and at the same time contending strategies: first, the aim of the United States to integrate Germany into the Western bloc in military (NATO), economic (Marshall Plan), and political (European Coal and Steal Community [ECSC]) terms. This responded to the so-called "containment strategy" used against Soviet expansion in Europe after the Second World War (Dedman, 1996: 71; Schmidt and Schünemann, 2009: 327; Loth, 2015: 3). Second, there was also a convergent impulse that came from German social forces to prevent an international confrontation (Stabb, 2008 7–8). Finally, there was a goal of West Germany to liberate itself from the occupation of the Allies, although this liberation was contained within Western international organizations (Bulmer and Paterson, 1989: 98). Against this historical background, the Maastricht Treaty (1992) was a turning point in the relationship between Germany and the EU and a moment for the crystallization of a particular dispositif of Europeanization/Germanization. In the first period in Germany (1992–1998), vertical Europeanization is best considered as a process of Germanization (Bulmer and Paterson, 1989 Jeffery and Paterson, 2003; Beck, 2012; Schweiger, 2014).

The Chapter 5 of this book demonstrated that during this first period, the Germany-EU relationships at the macro level were primarily defined as processes of uploading policy frameworks, structures of governance, and discourses. Germany consolidated its ascendant economic power during the 1980s, and the reunification of Germany increased the potential of the country even further as "the most powerful country in Europe" (Banchoff, 1999; see also Bulmer and Patterson, 1989; Schweiger, 2014). In Chapter 5, I discussed a sentence issued by the state secretary of the German Finance Ministry in 1992, who defined the European Monetary Union (EMU) as a way of "exporting this fine piece of German identity to Europe." (Köhler, 1992, as quoted in Dyson, 2003: 17). In this sense, *das Modell Deutschland* (the German model) was uploaded to the EU as specific policies, structures of governance, and discourses. The second period of vertical Europeanization in Germany took on a different shape. The Schröder governments, especially after the resignation of Oskar Lafontaine as finance minister, absorbed several reforms inspired by the EU guidelines between 1998 and 2005. During this period, the model of stability and budgetary control that was exported from Germany to Brussels operated as a reference to implement reforms at the domestic level, including in the labor market, the social security system, and taxation. Finally, in the third period (2005–2013), the role of Germany within the EU changed once again. In reaction to the political crisis of the European Constitution after

2005 and further economic and political crises later in the decade, Germany adopted again the role of uploader, especially after the onset of the euro crisis (2008–2010) (Table 7.1).

By contrast, Spain's trajectory looks quite different. In the shorter history of interrelations between Spain and the EU, the original impulse was linked to a project of modernization/democratization and internationalization of Spain. The primary social problems related to the nation's isolation, and the shadow of Franco's dictatorship and the civil war. Spain adopted a subaltern position in relation to the EC/EU from the beginning, accepting a series of EU-inspired reforms. Therefore, the vertical Europeanization that occurred in Spain resulted in processes of internal transformation rather than processes to govern or negotiate abroad (see Powell, 2018 102; Farrell, 2005: 153; Moreno Juste and Blanco Sío-López, 2016: 8–9). The second Aznar government (2000–2004) and the first government of Zapatero (2004–2008) represented the consolidation of Spain within the EU. However, the role of Spain suggesting policy, discourses, or ways forward in EU politics was always limited, even in these times of greater power over material resources and good economic performance. The processes of vertical Europeanization during the Aznar governments (1996–2004) were restricted to policy reforms and discourses, but they did not affect to the domestic structures of governance (e.g., the Spanish Constitution)

Table 7.1 Vertical Europeanization in Germany and Spain

	Germany	*Spain*
Initial impulse	US strategy Liberation from occupation Peace	Modernization and economic and social progress
Vertical Europeanization and forms of governance	1-Germanization to govern abroad: uploading policy frames, structures of governance, paradigms, and discourses (governance by negotiation) 2-Downloading: processes of absorption. (governance by coordination) 3-Uploading to govern abroad (governance by negotiation)	1-Europeanization—transformation: downloading policy frames, paradigms, structures of governance, and discourses (governance by coordination) 2-Europeanization—absorption (governance by coordination) 3-Europeanization—transformation (governance by coercion)
Power over	High power over resources: economic, material, and symbolic	Low power over resources: material, economic, and symbolic

as in the first period (1986–1996). During the euro crisis (especially between 2010 and 2014), vertical Europeanization was increasingly mediated by coercive forms of governance (see Magone, 2016; Petkanopoulou et al., 2018; Buendía, 2018). The transformations produced during this last period derived from the need to implement austerity policies and they impacted on the three dimensions of change of vertical Europeanization: public policy, domestic structures of governance, and discourses.

Dispositifs of Europeanization

The concept of the dispositif allows us to analyze power relations and the *power in discourse* in the processes of horizontal Europeanization at the meso level. In Germany, there was a crystallization of a contingent dispositif of Germanization/Europeanization during the first period (1992–1998), which was characterized by several elements and actors. First, there was a strategic origin, anchored in the powerful position to govern Europe. Second, the main actors were the Christian Democratic Union (CDU/CSU) and the Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands (SPD), which came together to create a heterogeneous and pro-EU hegemonic bloc. Third, as illustrated in Table 7.2, the policies exported from Germany to the EU were related to economic policy and the European Central Bank (ECB)—policies for providing monetary stability, low inflation, and budgetary steadiness. Finally, there was a dominant *ordoliberal discourse*.

During the second period (1998–2005), a distinct Europeanization dispositive crystallized. The principal actors in the pro-EU bloc in Germany continued to be the CDU/CSU and SPD parties, but the latter became the dominant actor. There was also collaboration between the SPD and the Greens, which formed the two Schröder cabinets during this period. The primary strategy focused on competing in a globalized world, but there was also an impulse to reform Germany internally. Several policies were part of the dispositif of Europeanization during this period, including tax reform and a radical budget consolidation program. The discourses of globalization, global security, and labor flexibility emerged strongly. Finally, in the last period (2005–2011), the dispositif of Europeanization was mobilized by a strategy to govern abroad and upload policies to the EU, being the primary policies austerity measures and a budget and fiscal consolidation plan. There was a similar hegemonic bloc, this time headed by the CDU/CSU, yet this bloc was increasingly fragmented: first, in 2005, 20 CDU/CSU Members of the Parliament (MPs) voted against the European Constitutional Treaty. Second, when debating the aid package for Greece in 2010, the SPD did not support this aid-program and abstained from the vote. In regard to discourse, the ordoliberal discourse in combination with a discourse of austerity was once again dominant.

As Table 7.2 illustrates, the different position of Spain in terms of power over the material and symbolic resources in the EU shaped a strategy that was

Table 7.2 Policy and discourses within the dispositifs

	Germany	*Spain*	
Public Policy	- A monetary stability policy - Low inflation - Budgetary stability: The Stability and Growth Pact (SGP)	- Inflation and fiscal deficit control - Regional development funds - Privatization, labor reforms, and inflation control	1st Period
	- Tax reform - Radical budget consolidation program	- Employment reform 2002	2nd Period
	- Austerity measures - Budget and fiscal consolidation	- Austerity measures - Budget and fiscal consolidation	3rd Period
Discourses	- Ordoliberalism, the state, and the individual	- Modernization	1st Period
	- Globalization. Competition, adaptation, and flexibility	- Modernization and social progress	2nd Period
	- Austerity politics	- Modernization and austerity politics	3rd Period

linked to the modernization of the country and its transformation based on the EU standards. Hence, initially, in the first period (1986–1996), it is possible to identify a first *dispositif of modernization* that was mainly formed by the hegemonic bloc of the Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE) and the Partido Popular (PP); a strategy for the transformation of the country; a series of policies on inflation and fiscal deficit control, regional development funds, privatization, and labor reforms and also a modification of the Spanish Constitution. The dominant discourse was focused on the association between modernization, democratization, Europe and Spain. The dispositifs of Europeanization in Spain were more stable than those in Germany. During the second period in Spain (1996–2004), there was a repositioning within the hegemonic bloc (with the PP as the government party) and a process of absorption of EU policies, including employment reform in 2002 and budgetary and inflationary control. However, the discourses and strategies revolving around this neoliberal dispositif of Europeanization remained quite similar to those of the prior period. In the third stage (2004–2011), there was, once again, a turn toward strategies of transformation in the country with the same bloc of actors—PP and PSOE primarily. In this case, the main policies were defined by the austerity politics promoted at the EU level. This *dispositif of austerity* was characterized by the discourse of modernization and austerity. In the following

section I will examine in greater detail the discourses operating in the various dipositifs in Germany and Spain.

Symbolic orders, power in discourse, and discursive struggles

As it was explained in Chapter 2, *power in discourse* refers to the different modes by which hegemonic discourses limit or condition the discursive practices of actors. It is, therefore, a way to stabilize symbolic orders. Following Saurugger (2013), I referred to these effects as isomorphic changes. In other words, power in discourse concerns "the authority certain ideas enjoy in structuring thought at the expense of other ideas" (Carstensen and Schmidt, 2016: 329). This book identified three types of effects in order to grasp how power in discourse functions: normative pressures, invitations to emulate, and invitations to transform. Regarding the German political sphere, there were several sedimented and hegemonic discourses, as discussed below.

First, the ordoliberal discourse refers to a specific view of the economy, the state, and society. It is mainly based on an economic doctrine developed by the Freiburg School at the end of the 1920s and the start of the 1930s (see Havertz, 2018; Foucault, 2003). This discourse promotes a specific role for the state as the guarantor of an operative framework, but not as a direct actor intervening in the economy; that is, the state's role "is not to regulate the economy but to organize the social environment of the economy to make sure it is conducive to economic activities" (Havertz, 2018: 7; see also Foucault 2008). As explained earlier, the ordoliberal discourse was paramount throughout all the periods of Europeanization-Germanization analyzed in Chapter 5, and it was especially mobilized by the CDU/CSU. In its application to Europe and the EU, ordoliberalism prescribed a limitation of the role of EU political institutions whereby they must merely guarantee free market competition. In other words, the economic and financial institutions should have substantial autonomy to ensure price and monetary stability. This discourse was especially dominant in Germany during the periods 1992–1998 and 2005–2011.

Second, the globalization discourse depicts the transnational environment as an accelerated interconnection of fluxes of capital, persons, and goods that inevitably change the social environment in which actors operate (see Hay and Rosamond, 2002). Following this discourse, the global environment, in which Europe and the EU are embedded, exerts a series of constraints and challenges, and conditions the ability of the actors to act (Ibid.: 149). This general discourse entails two sub-discourses: one focused primarily on migration fluxes, and the other concentrated on economic competition. Both have been hegemonic discourses in the German symbolic order on Europe and the EU, especially since 1998. On the one hand, the discourse on migration as a constraint, a threat, and a risk was primarily exhibited by the CDU/CSU. On the other hand, in relation to Europe and the EU, the SPD primarily constructed their globalization discourse in terms of an economic challenge. Third, there was a prominent nationalist discourse promoted by the CDU/CSU that was based

on the idea of a German identity and the interests emerging from this defined community within Europe and the world. Following De Cleen (2017) nationalism is a discourse "structured around the nodal point nation, envisaged as a limited and sovereign community that exists through time and is tied to a certain space, and that is constructed through an in/out (member/non-member) opposition between the nation and its outgroups" (p. 3). Connected with this nationalist discourse, there were other sub-discourses constructing specific views and positions on EU issues, such as "the principle of subsidiarity," "respect for national sovereignty." and "the threat of criminality and illegal immigration." These discourses were relevant in the first period (1992–1998), especially in the case of the CDU/CSU and also in the last period (2005–2011).

Based on the analysis of the three periods between 1992 and 2011, it can be concluded that these three discourses were sedimented in the dispositifs of Europeanization/Germanization in Germany, and they persist today in the German political sphere. These discourses provide the hegemonic representations and problematizations in the German political sphere to speak and act in relation to Europe and the EU, with isomorphic effects. During the first period in Germany (1992–1998), the normative pressures were used against the most prominent party that was skeptical of the EU project: the Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus (PDS).[1] The SPD linked Euroscepticism with Germany's high unemployment rate and other negative features to discredit the positions of the PDS (Bundestag, 1998: 20247). Due to the rise of the Bündnis 90/Die Grünen (the Greens), the opposition bloc that was set against the processes of European construction expanded after the 1994 federal election. However, with the Greens, the socialization and learning processes were more operative than in the case of the PDS. There was a process of strategic change and transformation with the Greens whereby they moved from opposition to the EU treaties to promoting and advancing the processes of European integration. It was not only a strategic move but also one that changed the party's fundamental positions, since the Greens participated in the two Schröder's cabinets and actively promoted the Nice Treaty and the Constitutional Treaty. Conversely, the PDS/Die Linke did not respond to these invitations to emulate or to transform, but instead, maintained their consistent opposition to the EU treaties. The normative pressures, however, may have contributed to the weakening of the party, which gained only two deputies in the 2002 federal election.

As it was showed in Chapter 5, these normative pressures disappeared between the second and third period (2005–2011), especially from the side of the CDU/CSU. In fact, Stoiber (CSU) rejected the labels "Eurosceptic" or "populist" to refer to, in his view, a reasonable criticism of the path of European integration (Bundestag, 2005: 16365). Overall, the dispositifs of Europeanization/Germanization in Germany (and its effects of power in discourse) weakened since 2005. This can be explained by a double fragmentation of the dispositifs of Europeanization in Germany, especially during the third period: on the one hand, 20 members of the CDU/CSU voted against the European Constitution

in 2005, which signaled an incipient ordoliberal opposition to the direction of the EU; on the other hand, the SPD and the Greens abstained from voting on the first aid-package to Greece in 2010, which was the first time that the SPD opted out of the consensus regarding European integration. Hence, it is clearly shown that the dispositif of Europeanization/Germanization during the third period (2005–2011) appears weakened and fragmented in comparison with prior periods. Consequently, the normative pressures and invitations to emulate or transform are not expected to be especially operative during the period of emergence of the AfD.

Modernization and power in discourse in Spain

Although there have been minor discourses on globalization and market liberalization in Spain, the hegemonic discourse on Europe and the EU during the 1992–2011 period was the modernization discourse. This discourse established a representational link between Europe, modernization (in economic and social terms), and democratization (in political terms) (see López Gómez, 2014; Moreno, 2013). This was the dominant discourse, promoted by the country's two main parties, PSOE and PP. Connected with this "master discourse" there have also been sub-discourses related to a depiction of the "United States of Europe" by the PSOE and a more intergovernmental and neoliberal construction of the EU by the PP. Over time, the dominant discourse on modernization in relation to Europe became sedimented in Spain and limited the ways to think and talk about Europe and the EU. The cohesion and stability of the dispositifs in Spain were greater than was the case in Germany. In Spain, there was only one actor, Izquierda Unida (IU), which opposed or was critical of European integration during the years 1992–2011.

There were various normative pressures that operated during the three periods of Europeanization in Spain, including forms of labeling and discrediting the IU as Eurosceptic, Europhobic, Eurocommunist, and Europopulist, which were persistent in the discursive practices of the PP and PSOE hegemonic bloc (see Congress of Deputies, 1992: 11098, 11085; 1998a: 9215). The invitations to emulate and transform were also effective during the three periods. In the first period (1986–1996), the IU was internally divided regarding the Maastricht Treaty, which ultimately led to eight deputies voting in favor of the Treaty and nine others abstaining. This division over EU issues resulted in an internal struggle and a scission within the IU. The invitations to emulate and transform operated throughout all three periods in Spain, including during the debate on the Treaty of Nice in 2001. Here, the new IU leadership assumed part of the representations mobilized about Europe and the EU by the PSOE: the idea of a "United States of Europe" and a federalist and "social Europe." The position of IU changed to one of direct opposition, however, during the debate on the constitutional reform, which took place in 2011. The period of the euro crisis (2010–2012) was the most transformative and disruptive period in Spain regarding Europeanization but, nonetheless, there was

not fragmentation in the dominant actors within the dispositif. The PP-PSOE hegemonic bloc never showed an internal fracture in their consensus about the EU and Europeanization.

The populist response

This section turns to the populist actors radical parties and their articulations of populism and EU contestation. In so doing, it compares the *power through discourse* of Podemos and the AfD in relation to the symbolic orders described above.

The populist discourse and antagonism

In the case of Podemos in Spain, "the people"—more specifically, the ordinary people, *gente*—was found to be the central signifier to articulate the various representations mobilized by the party. This varied slightly from one stage to the next, from 0.46 in the first stage to 0.42 in the second stage to 0.27 in the last stage in terms of relative frequency. Nevertheless, the signifier *gente* was one of the most prominent terms in the three Podemos sub-corpora analyzed in this study. Conversely, in the case of the AfD, the signifiers referring to "the people" were found to be relevant within the three sub-corpora, but in any case, they were among the most frequent signifiers. In terms of the relative frequency, the main signifier that referred to the people (*Bürger*) yielded a relative frequency of 0.15 to 0.11 to 0.11, respectively, across the three analyzed stages. A key comparative finding regarding populism is that Podemos constructed a popular identity in which different sectors of the population were incorporated in an active way (for instance migrant persons). Thus, the signifier "persons" was used to indicate the diversity within the idea of "the people" and to explicitly include "minorities" into the popular identity. By contrast, the AfD, through ethnic, cultural, and civic markers, demarcated the contours of a more restricted group of people (*die Bürgern*). The AfD used *Menschen* as the signifier to distinguish the German people (*Bürgern*) from other types of persons that they saw as outside the "legitimate" popular identity. These comparative findings confirm previous research on inclusionary/exclusionary populism of right/left parties (see Mudde and Rovira Kaltwasser, 2013; Katsambekis, 2017; Mouffe, 2018).

The findings related to the antagonism mobilized by the two parties to construct the popular identity are more controversial. As explained in Chapter 1, most approaches to populism (whether ideational or not) agree that anti-elitism—antagonism with the elites—is a paramount component of populist discourse (Canovan, 1981; Laclau, 2005; Jansen, 2011; Mudde, 2017). In fact, some argue that if a particular discourse constructs the people without an anti-elitism element, then we should use a different category to identify that discourse, such as "demoticism" (closeness to the people), in order to avoid overstretching the concept of populism (March, 2017: 284). When examining the findings of this study, they show that, on the one hand, there is a clear

although variable anti-elitism element in the case of Podemos, and a minor anti-elitism component in the case of the AfD. These results are illustrated in Figure 7.1. In qualitative terms, with Podemos, the popular identity is constructed in antagonism with the interests and the actions of the elites, especially during the first stage. On more than half of the occasions (0.52) in the initial stage, the party constructed the popular identity by opposing the interests and actions of the elites. Thus, Podemos referred to the elites as a minority of wealthy, powerful people, and expressed antipathy toward elitist institutions, such as banks and other financial institutions. Hence, in these cases, the elites were primarily defined in economic terms, although also referring to certain political actors. The antagonism index declined sharply during the second stage, and slightly less so during the third stage (see Figure 7.1).

If we compare with the results obtained in the case of the AfD during the first stage, we see that the antagonism element is not central for constructing the popular identity. In fact, the AfD constructs the popular identity by positioning the people (*Bürgern*) against the elites during this stage only 10 percent of the instances. Instead, most times, the AfD exhibits a "demoticism" element without the elite antagonism. The party refers to the interests of the citizens, their security and savings, and, of course, to other parties, which are criticized by their management of the economy, and especially the euro crisis. However, there are a small number of occasions when the so-called *Altparteien* are positioned as the clear antagonists against the interests of the people. Overall, in the eyes of the AfD, the elites are understood to be

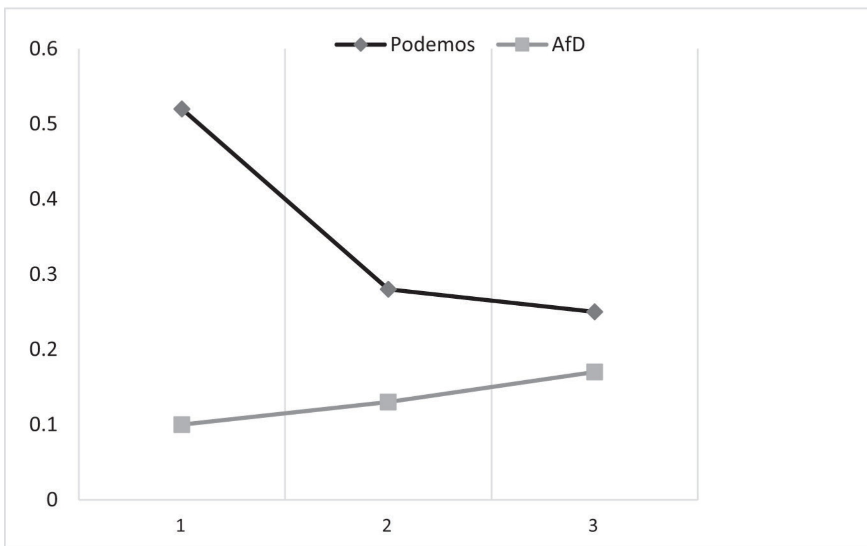

Figure 7.1 Antagonism index of Podemos and the AfD.

primarily political, formed by the old parties and the EU bureaucratic apparatus with its civil servants. The antagonism index increases slightly during the second and the third stages, finally reaching the relative frequency 0.17 in the third period. During this last stage, the AfD more consistently contrasted the interests of the people against those of the *Kartellparteien* or *Altparteien*. The following section compares how these discourses about popular identity were articulated with the representations and problematizations about Europe and the EU.

Articulations between populism and EU contestation

Regarding the articulations between the populist discourses and EU contestation, the comparative findings offer interesting insights in various respects. Across the sub-corpora of the AfD and Podemos, there are various forms of articulation between the populist discourse and the forms of EU contestation. First, in the case of Podemos, there is a first form of articulation in the initial stage, (1) the *populist articulation*. As explained in Chapter 6, EU contestation was constructed following the populist form. Europe operated as a "floating signifier" (Laclau, 2005: 43) oscillating between the "popular" bloc and the opposite bloc of "the elites." On the one hand, Europe was identified with the popular identity (southern Europeans, the Europe of the people) and was inscribed in the discursive chain governed by "the people" (*la gente*). On the other hand, the Europe of the elites, meaning both elite institutions and political and economic elites, was inscribed in the opposite bloc. In this case, the European discursive elements were absorbed by the populist discursive articulation. However, there was also a different articulation of Europe and EU elements, the (2) *reformist articulation*, which was also present during this first stage. In this case, the discursive elements about the EU and Europe were organized as different individual measures related to the social and democratic pillars of the EU. In this articulation, we find that the popular identity was inscribed into a reformist and institutional logic, rather than being a part of the open populist conflict against the elites. Here, the improvement of the social and democratic rights of the people was the crucial problematization of the political. Finally, there is an (3) *idealistic articulation*, whereby Podemos entirely adopted the modernization discourse. This articulation, which was dominant since the start of the second stage of the party, organized the discursive elements about Europe and the EU within a comparative structure, in which Europe was the positive reference. Within this articulation, the popular identity, and the political were problematized under the modernization paradigm—that is, the main problem was the progression toward the European standards.

In the case of the AfD, there was a first articulation of the EU and Europe that was dominated by the ordoliberal discourse, or what we can call the (1) *ordoliberal articulation*. Within this articulation, the central problems were the EU apparatuses and the euro bailout—those elements that were

constraining the free development of the economy and the citizens. The popular identity was represented in relation to a central problem, essentially, that the European and German citizens and their saving were in danger by the excessive overreach by the state (in contrast to minimum involvement by the *schlanker* [state]). In contrast to the case of Podemos, there was no a populist articulation affecting the representations about Europe or the EU. On the contrary, the main problem of the EU influenced the definition of the popular identity and the problems of the citizens (*Bürgern*): the euro crisis. Beginning in the second stage of the party, there was a dominant (2) *nationalist articulation* of Europe-related and popular discursive elements. In this case, the main problem was not the euro bailouts or the EU statehood but the existence and development of the German nation. The popular identity was constructed through the civic and ethnic identification of the Germans and Germany, and this was the articulatory nodal point around which the discursive topics on Europe and the EU revolved: the threats coming from Turkey, Islam-related migrants, criminality, and financial insecurity. All of these were defined as the central problems of the nation. Hence, Europe and the EU were constructed around the migration problem and the perceived threat to European nations, especially Germany. In this second stage of the AfD the representations of Europe and the EU were, indeed, influenced by the construction of the popular identity of the party. But this popular identity was not exclusively constructed under the populist form. By contrast, the popular identity was primarily defined by the national and ethnic definition of the people in opposition to various outsiders.

To summarize, the modes of construction of the popular identity and the discursive elements on Europe and the EU were continually interrelated. Additionally, both the hierarchy and organization of such interrelations between these discourse strands were variable: there were periods in which the popular identity dominated the organization of the discursive elements connected to Europe and the EU, and times when it took a less prominent role.

EU contestation and power through discourse

Following Foucault (1977) and Raffnsøe et al. (2014), a dispositif is an arrangement that does not determine the practices of the social actors but does force them to interact with it. In the following lines, the interactions between Podemos and the AfD and the symbolic orders of the dispositifs in Spain and Germany will be detailed. This corresponds to the third subquestion of this book: *How do these specific articulations [of radical parties] affect the respective symbolic orders and Europeanization dispositifs?*

Podemos and the power through discourse

During the first stage of Podemos the potential of the power through discourse was highly notable. The symbolic order in Spain concerning Europe and the EU

was challenged with a new populist discursive articulation by a political party on the rise. In the view of Podemos, Europe was not a reference to guide the progress of Spain or to rescue Spain from isolation and underdevelopment; rather, it was related to a process of domination over southern European countries based on an undemocratic and elitist system of governance at the EU level. The north-south division in the representations of Podemos, previously mobilized by the radical left-wing party IU in 1992, was opposed to the symbolic order in Spain regarding Europe and the EU. Podemos mobilized a problematization of the asymmetries within the EU, which were strongly connected to the party's populist discourse about the Spanish popular identity. This problematization was built on the central argument against the EU: that it was managed by corrupt and anti-democratic elites. Essentially, the idea of empowering the Spanish people and the peoples of the southern European countries, was proposed by Podemos to rectify the current state of the EU. Therefore, during the first stage, the party mobilized new representations and problematizations about Europe and the EU that destabilized the dispositif of Europeanization in Spain through *discursive contestation*. Podemos exhibited a fundamental critique not only of specific policies promoted by the EU—the "austerity policies"—but also of the whole EU project. It was an integral criticism of the EU—what within the literature on Euroscepticism has been termed "hard Euroscepticism" (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002, 2013; Pirro and Taggart, 2018).

However, this problematization lost relevance during the second and the third stages of Podemos. Since November 2014, Europe and the EU were fundamentally built on the hegemonic discourse of modernization/democratization. This meant that Europe was increasingly represented as a positive reference to construct the political and the Spanish popular identity. On the one hand, Europe was constructed using a normative argumentation that was linked to the positive values of peace and prosperity; and on the other, the EU was connected to an argument of advantage, based on the modernization of the country and the social and democratic standards that Spain should meet. The critical representation of the EU, along with the idea of a democratic and social deficit, persisted as a minor representation. In terms of democratic and social deficits, this critique was concerned with the specific policies of the EU, rather than with an overall critique of the project of European integration. The party's responses to the dispositifs during these stages navigated between the *rearticulation*—a terrain for reform but now with new demands—and the *discursive reproduction* of the hegemonic discourses. The ability to change the symbolic orders regarding Europe and the EU, that is, the power through discourse, was clearly reduced. In terms of the literature on Euroscepticism, Podemos' position on the EU turned more soft-Eurosceptic (Ibid.). However, at this point, one can see the problems of classifying these parties as "hard" or "soft" Eurosceptic: firstly, the representations of the EU and Europe fluctuate; secondly, they are made of several overlapping and interconnected representational layers, some of them critical, and others more positive toward Europe and the EU.

The power through discourse of the AfD

In the case of the AfD, the interrelations between the *power through discourse* and the *power in discourse* and the evolution of the party's articulations were different than Podemos'. In the first period, the AfD articulations revolved around the discourse strands on Europe and the EU, which shown a great prominence. However, these articulations were clearly anchored in the symbolic order of the German public sphere. The AfD reproduced the power in discourse rather than constructing novel articulations about Europe and the EU (*discursive reproduction*). The party AfD was a new agent in the reproduction of the hegemonic ordoliberal discourse in Germany. They focused on the principle of subsidiarity and the central role of the nation-state. The ordoliberal discourse and its principles were used to show the failure of the euro currency and the need for the recovery of the basic competences of the nation-state. Thus, the critique of the EU was basically made in economic terms, based on the failure of the common currency but also against the excessive development of the European statehood. In terms of Euroscepticism, this could be labeled as soft Euroscepticism, as it does not imply a general opposition to the process of European integration.

By contrast, during the second and the third stages, the AfD developed a greater power through discourse, providing relatively novel articulations that vacillated between cultural and civic nationalism and a critique of the EU and European integration. In these periods, the AfD not only reproduced the hegemonic discourses but also rearticulated them in novel ways (*discursive rearticulation*). Therefore, this party held its power through discourse more consistently and could potentially transform the symbolic order in Germany about Europe and the EU. The AfD opposed clearly the various forms of European integration; they rejected the integration in the areas of foreign and security policy and political and social integration. The exception here was the case of market integration, which was supported by the party. Overall, the general critique of the EU was based on a stronger defense of the nation's borders and sovereignty, which they saw as antithetical to the current policy approach of the EU and the general orientation of European integration.

According to the data analyzed in this study, the first thing to note is that the effects of the dispositifs in Spain and Germany did not work historically in the same way. Whereas in Spain, the effects of the dispositifs were effective in marginalizing or absorbing opposition to the EU, in Germany, the dispositifs failed to do so in the majority of the periods analyzed. The hegemonic bloc regarding the EU was intact in the Spanish political sphere (PSOE and PP) and fractured in Germany (CDU/CSU and SPD), especially since 2005. This allowed for greater room for maneuvering and the expansion of the power through discourse of the AfD, while more intensively constrained the discursive practices of Podemos on the EU and Europe. Of course, there was always some room for the actors to maneuver, including in the case of Podemos. With Podemos, the change from *opposition* to *rearticulation* and *reproduction* was

mediated by a strategic decision focused on its primary goals in the second and third stages: performing well in the general election of December 2015. This also explains the gradual decrease in the saliency of the EU and Europe discourse strands across the stages of the party. As an actor, the AfD also had to face such strategic dilemmas. However, the lower effectiveness of the power in discourse in Germany allowed this party to navigate more easily among the modes of opposition to and rearticulation of the hegemonic discourses. This also permitted for the greater saliency of EU issues in comparison with Podemos in Spain.

Implications for the research on populism and EU contestation

Considering the comparative discursive study of this book and its findings, it is crucial to delimitate the capacity and scope of populism to classify, understand, and explain relevant political phenomena in Western Europe, such as the emergence of new challenging parties and the increase in EU contestation. The findings of this research confirm the precautions that were laid out in Chapter 1 regarding the classification of political parties as populist and the nature and functioning of the discourse of populism. The evidence in this book shows that the populist construction of the popular identity varies in its centrality over the three stages of the two parties analyzed. Therefore, it seems reasonable to base the definition of the identity and classification of the parties in more consistent features (e.g., ideology, type of organization). For instance, in the case of the AfD, the populist discourse—as a form to articulate the people in opposition to certain elites—was secondary to construct the popular identity. As was shown, "the people" was primarily constructed in opposition to the state in an ordoliberal fashion. In the case of Podemos, the populist discourse is more clearly central than with the AfD, especially during the first period. However, it lost ground through the second and third stages. Hence, although antagonism with the elites was one feature in the discursive articulations of both the AfD and Podemos parties, this book has shown the need to be cautious and detailed in one's exploration of this question to determine its relevance. This is not to say that "populism" is not useful to understand and explain political phenomena; rather, it invites studying populism as a type of political discourse articulated with other discourses and representations and dependent on contextual and agent-centered drivers.

The articulatory power of populism and EU contestation

Although the articulatory power of populism is limited it may affect other representations and discourse topics in particular circumstances. This articulatory power depends on (1) the communicative genre (e.g., speeches or manifestos), (2) the relative saliency of other representations and discourse topics, and (3) the historical moment and context in which a political party

operates. Depending on the communicative genre, a party's populist articulation can be more or less central. The results show that the interaction between a leader and their constituency during campaign speeches is a privileged site to articulate a populist discourse. The findings also indicate that more formal genres, such as a party manifesto, favor the incorporation of different discourse topics—including ones that are non-populist in nature. For instance, in the case of Podemos during the first stage Europe was articulated under the populist form in the campaign speeches, whereas it was embedded in a reformist articulation in the 2014 Manifesto for the European Parliamentary election. Moreover, the populist discourse is always in tension with other ways to problematize the political. Populism is a form of simplification of the political space whereby a clear boundary is established between "the people," as a broad and open group, and "the elites." The populist discourse represents a struggle between the people and the elites and, as such, is limited to a moment of disruption of the institutional politics. As soon as the political parties are forced to propose specific policies in concrete terms and within the political system, new forms of representation of the popular identity and the political emerge. This was especially evident in the case of Podemos.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the populist articulation fluctuates depending on the strategic repositioning of the party in specific political contexts. The antagonistic structure of the discourse of a challenging party concerns the stability/instability of certain dispositifs of power/knowledge and symbolic orders. In the cases of Podemos and the AfD, the findings indicate the greater prominence of populist articulations in specific periods of crisis, instability, or social protest. Podemos emerged just after a wave of mobilizations against the consequences of the economic crisis and the austerity politics. With the AfD in Germany, the increase in its antagonism index and the prominence of the populist form followed the "refugee crisis" and the "Patriotic Europeans against the Islamization of the West" (PEGIDA) mobilizations. This confirms the necessary caution against causally determining the origin of the phenomenon of populism by merely tracing it back to the identity, ideology, or preferences of political actors. On the contrary, this book suggests the need to analyze and contextualize the phenomenon of populism historically. This also indicates a fruitful research avenue crossfertilizing the study of populism as a discourse and research on related social mobilizations (see Jansen, 2011; Roberts, 2015).

Regarding the articulation between populism and EU contestation, this book has shown the need to explore these articulations at the level of discourse, rather than seeking causal correlations between the reified entities of populism and Euroscepticism *in toto*. Based on this discursive exploration, it is possible, of course, to make more general arguments about populism and EU contestation. However, the findings of this study suggest to always depart from the analysis of the micro-processes of articulation to, in a second step, discuss the more general and always contingent interrelations between the two phenomena. This also seeks to avoid the systematic labeling as "populist" and

"Eurosceptic" of the "usual suspects." This being said, at the level of discursive articulation, the results indicate mutual reinforcement between populism and EU contestation in specific periods. For instance, during the first stage of Podemos, the prominent articulation of an antagonizing populist discourse had important effects on the representations and problematizations about Europe and the EU. In the case of the AfD, the findings reveal a symmetrical process but in the opposite direction. During the second and third stages, the greater prominence of the populist form (the antagonism index increased from 0.10 to 0.17) ran in parallel with its deeper critique of the roots of European integration in cultural and political terms. Hence, the results indicate that the greater the prominence of a populist and antagonistic articulation—whether rightist or leftist—the harder and deeper the critique of the EU. This is probably related to the basic characteristics of the populist discourse, essentially referred to "the people" of a particular nation state (Spaniards or Germans). The prevalence of a populist discourse tends to generate rejection toward institutional or administrative complexes, even more in the case of a transnational and highly bureaucratic set of institutions such as the EU.

Overall, there is promising terrain in political science to further explore populism and its impact on new challenging political parties in Western Europe and across the globe. Populism, as the historically contextualized form to construct the popular identity in antagonism with the interests of the elites, is expected to continue to be a central feature of all European polities. The ontological contingency of the political, as the temporary definition of the main goals, social divisions, and legitimate subjects of a polity implies future struggles around the definition of "the people." More generally, this study shows that discourse research can reveal the contingent articulations producing the phenomenon of populism while, at the same time, offer analytical categories to capture its limits and its constraining and facilitating contexts.

EU contestation, discourse, and power

This discourse study also offers specific implications for the analysis of EU contestation and Euroscepticism. As the findings show, the processes of EU contestation exhibit a much more nuanced picture than the one depicted in classical studies on Euroscepticism (Taggart and Szczerbiak, 2002). This is not, however, the first study noting that EU contestation cannot be reduced to hard or soft Euroscepticism (see Hoeglinger, 2016; della Porta et al., 2017). The findings of this research demonstrate that more encompassing and flexible categories are necessary to capture the different forms of EU contestation that are exhibited by new challenging parties. For instance, in the case of Podemos, the party was shown to be critical of the EU in a consistent way, although it was also pro-European from its inception. The party was in favor of the transnational cooperation implicit in the idea of Europe and the process of European integration, as heard in the lemma, "Another Europe is possible." Although the critique of the AfD was more intense than that mobilized by Podemos, the

German party was also in favor of Europe—that is, a Europe defined in its terms, "a Europe of sovereign nations." Thus, one can see that there is ambivalence in the positions of the parties along the multiple dimensions of the broad theme Europe and the EU and therefore, EU contestation should be studied in its (variable) degree and content. This book has also shown that in the content of the EU critique, the constructions of the objects "EU" and "Europe," by the parties are paramount for understanding the contestation of these challenging actors. This can be overlooked, however, in approaches that describe only the position of the parties vis-à-vis the objects "EU" and "Europe," defined *ex ante* by the researcher, or merely taken for granted. Hence, EU studies must be attentive to the modes of representation of Europe and the EU as embedded in broader problematizations of the political to distinguish among various forms of EU contestation. Van Leeuwen (2008) builds on Foucault to summarize this idea:

> In Foucault's words (1977: 135), discourses not only involve "a field of objects," but also "the definition of a legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge" in a given context (ibid.).They not only represent what is going on, they also evaluate it, ascribe purposes to it, justify it, and so on, and in many texts these aspects of representation become far more important than the representation of the social practice itself.
>
> (p. 6)

This book has revealed that the discursive constellations about Europe and the EU vary across different periods and contexts. With Podemos, the prominence of the EU-critique gradually decreased over the three stages, to the point of becoming a minor theme in the general discursive constellation exhibited by the party. This is relevant for evaluating the potential impact of the forms of EU contestation of certain parties. Conversely, in the case of the AfD, the critique of the EU became more virulent throughout the evolution of the party. These findings suggest that the study of EU contestation must be attentive to the repositioning of the parties within broader contextual relations.

This entails several implications for EU studies. First, this book demonstrates that the study of discourse and power can offer great potential to illuminate, in its complexity, the processes of EU contestation. As Saurugger (2013: 900) notes, this is one of the methodological challenges in EU studies: "it is methodologically challenging to analyze at the same time the influence of ideas as a strategic tool and the influence of the political, social or economic context in which these ideas occur." The analytical approach to discourse used in this book demonstrates that it is feasible to investigate the macro and meso contexts and relate them to the actors' strategic processes of contestation. Thus, dispositif analysis offers an alternative to the "mechanical" analysis between structures and actors, by which the structural effects are constant and not interpreted by dominant and contesting actors. More specifically, in the area of Europeanization studies, this book expands the notion of Europeanization in

order to connect it to discursive struggles at the level of the party system. The concept of "horizontal Europeanization" (Radaelli, 2003) and the discourse-oriented approach of this work illustrates a possible path to expand the studies of Europeanization to parties and party systems.

Limitations, future research, and the future of the EU

The increasing interest in processes of disintegration and de-Europeanization at the EU level indicate a growing concern with the future of the EU. In this respect, what this study shows is that the discursive struggles revolving on the EU are crucial for defining the EU's possible paths of development. The consolidation of new and challenging articulations regarding Europe and the EU entails practical and material consequences for the future of the EU. Brexit is the clearest expression of how certain representations and problematizations of the EU may lead to fundamental changes in its constitution and prevalence. The prominence of the representations promoted by new ascending right-wing actors also shows this potential.

This book contributes to our understanding of these types of processes, but it also has several limitations that may inspire the development of further research on this topic. First, the genres used to explore EU contestation were limited to campaign speeches, manifestos, and debates within the two national Parliaments. There are many other genres and sites to explore EU contestation, for instance, commissions constituted to discuss EU policies or debates in regional or European parliaments. Second, it is worth noting that the conclusions of this book can only be provisional. The struggle of EU contestation is an open-ended and ongoing process. The 2019 May European Parliamentary election signaled a change in the balance of forces at the EU level in favor of radical right parties and it is still uncertain if the upcoming 2024 election will confirm or revert this tendency. Left-wing parties have lost support (for instance Syriza or Podemos), while right-wing parties seems to be more stable and stronger in some countries, such as Italy. Thus, further research could investigate the implications of the contingent success of right-wing parties and the relative decay of left-wing populism. This new research could relate to the results of this book, bearing in mind that the present study was limited to the empirical analysis of Podemos in Spain and the AfD in Germany.

This book has revealed the greater dynamism, prominence, and power through discourse promoted by the rightist representation of the EU. When thinking ahead about the future EU landscape, it is relevant to reflect on how these representations and problematizations of the "new right" are clearly grounded in—although not limited to—the hegemonic discourses promoted by the right mainstream parties. The power through discourse of left-wing alternatives in relation to Europe and the EU, at least in Spain, appears weak and unable to promote consistent alternative representations or problematizations. It is a matter of future research how left-leaning political parties are choosing

to reposition themselves in northern European countries to construct a critique of the EU in combination with the representation of the popular identity. It would also be worth exploring how rightist parties exhibiting populist discourses interact with the symbolic orders pertaining to the EU and Europe in southern European countries. For instance, there are strong radical right parties with critical discourse of the EU in Spain, Portugal, or Italy.

Based on this study, I argue that what will be crucial for shaping the future EU is not the greater or lesser centrality of the populist discourse of these new right–and left-wing parties. Rather, the critical aspect will be the definition of the discourses governing the EU in the next decade; in other words, the ways in which powerful political actors represent Europe and the ways in which challenging actors transform their primary views of the EU. Populism will certainly affect the degree of political conflict in which the "new EU" takes shape. However, it will not determine the new policy orientations or the structures of governance in the EU. The EU *in the making* will be prefigured in the dominant discourses about the nation, sovereignty, ordoliberalism, federalism, and economic globalization. Will we see important changes in the current discursive constellation? Ultimately, only the strategic creativity of the relevant political actors can respond to this question.

> *Individual creative acts cumulatively establish restructured orders of discourse*.
> (Fairclough, 1989: 172)

Note

1 The Bündnis 90/Die Grünen (the Greens) also abstained and were critical of the Maastricht and the Amsterdam Treaties.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Coding scheme used for the first stage of analysis (political sphere)

Representations	• Europe as an idea • The EU project • European integration, Europeanization • The subjects active or salient linked to Europe or the EU. • Processes represented in relation to Europe or the EU
Argumentations	What are the most prominent arguments of the dominant and contesting parties?
Problematizations	• Central problem identified with Europe and with the EU • Central solution related to such a problem • How may Europe or the EU participate in the possible solutions?

Appendix B

Extended coding scheme used for the second stage of analysis (radical parties)

	Europe and the EU	*Populism*
Representations	• Europe as an idea • The EU project • European integration, Europeanization • The subjects active or salient linked to Europe or the EU. • Processes represented in relation to Europe or the EU	• Definition of the people: Who are "the people"? How many "peoples"? • Definition of the elites: forms of identification of the elites • The political. How is the political and the main political activities represented?
Argumentations	• What are the most prominent arguments of the dominant and contesting parties?	• What are the most prominent arguments of the radical parties?
Problematizations	• Central problem identified with Europe and with the EU. • How may Europe or the EU participate in the possible solutions?	• Central problem identified to define the political. • Form and degree of antagonism between the people and the elites
Articulations between EU and populism	• What is the most prominent discourse strand among Europe, the EU and the popular identity? • Is "populist" the form to structure the problematization of the EU? • Is the Europe or the EU discourse strands affecting the construction of the popular identity?	

Appendix C

Lemmas and discourse strands in the case of Podemos

Lemmas of the discourse strand "the popular identity"		*Lemmas and discourse strands of Europe and the EU*	
*Ciudadan** (citizens)	*ciudadanas, ciudadanos, ciudadanía* (citizen [feminine and masculine) and citizenry)	Europa (Europe)	
Persona/s (person/s)	*Persona, personas* (person, persons)	The EU	"European" (*Europea/ s,* feminine/ plural; *Europeo/ s*, masculine/ plural), "euro zone" (*Eurozona*), "European Parliament" (*Parlamento Europeo*) and the "EU" (*UE*).
Gente/s (people/s)	*Gente, gentes* (people, peoples)		

Appendix D

Lemmas and discourse strands in the case of the AfD

Lemmas of the discourse strand "the popular identity"		*Lemmas and discourse strands of Europe and the EU*	
*Bürger** (citizens)	*Bürger, Bürgen, Bürgerin, Bürgerinnen, Bürgern, Bürgers, Bürgerschaft* (citizen [feminine, masculine, and plural] and citizenry)	Europa (Europe)	*Europa, Europas*
Mensch/en (person/s)	*Mensch, Menschen* (person, persons)	The EU	"European" (*Europäische/en/er/es/em, Eurozone, EU, EU-Kommission, EU-Parlaments*)
Deutschen (Germans)	*Deustch/e/en/er/es/em.*		

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