Populism: an eclectic view

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Abstract

Populism presented itself several times in the history of mankind, always taking different shapes in different times and different places. This is what makes it difficult to give an unequivocal definition of populism. Contemporary populism is rooted in economic, political and social conditions. Both strict disciplinary analysis and cultural "imperialism" (quite typical of economists) is bound to deliver baffling results. Populism can be understood only by respectfully putting together conceptual tools developed by political scientists, sociologists, economists and historians.