#TwitterTrump

Political Communication and Populist Rhetoric in the Age of Social Media

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On January 20\textsuperscript{th} this year the new president-elect of the United States of America, Donald Trump, took office. Already during the election campaign, which he entered as a political outsider, Trump employed a communication style that was not only different to the communication styles of the other presidential candidates, but also new from every other president before him (Enli 2017). Trump’s rhetoric was widely labelled as populist and the main platform he used to speak to his followers was and is the social media platform Twitter.

Now, this study intends to draw the connection between political communication, social media, and populism. It means to examine how Donald Trump uses Twitter as a political leader to communicate with his audience and thereby focus on the populist content of his tweets. The research aims to investigate patterns of populist rhetoric in Trump’s political communication on Twitter.

Therefore, a quantitative content analysis was conducted. All tweets Trump posted during the first 50 days in office, beginning at the day of his Inauguration, were analysed (in total 267 tweets). To measure populist rhetoric on Twitter posts the main characteristics and indicators of populism were defined as categories (people-centrism, anti-elitism and exclusionism).

The analysis reveals recurring patterns of populist rhetoric in Donald Trump’s tweets. The President attacks political, media, and legal elites, refers to the ‘common people’, claims their sovereignty, and excludes certain actors.

Keywords: Political communication, Donald Trump, populism, Twitter, social media
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Introduction

“Three days after winning the presidency in 2008, President-elect Barack Obama held a press conference, taking questions from reporters. Three days after winning the presidency in 2016, President-elect Donald Trump turned to Twitter.” (Keith 2016)

The phenomenon Keith describes there reflects the shift in the way politicians communicate with their audience. The impact of social media on political communication has grown steadily during the last decade and one could say that Donald Trump introduced a new level of social media campaigning during the 2016 presidential election campaign in the USA.

Social media introduces a new logic of producing content, distributing news and information, and using media. Nowadays, anyone can produce content using information according one’s individual preferences, and also distribute content within networks (Klinger and Svensson 2012). This change from mass media logic to a network media logic also affects political communication. Social media offers new platforms for politicians to reach the general public and potential voters to promote themselves and their goals, and directly interact with the public without the filter of mainstream media (Enli 2017; Klinger and Svensson 2012; Kruikemeier 2014; Hwang 2016). Especially the microblogging platform Twitter as a tool for political communication has recently received a lot of attention due to Donald Trump who showed the public that ‘a 140 character, one-one communication medium’ can replace the traditional form of addressing large rallies of people by political leaders on political issues (Deora 2017, 1).

Next to the increasing significance of social media platforms for political communication, another movement impacted the US election campaign 2016. Within the last years, a prevalence of populist rhetoric in political debates became apparent, not only in the U.S. but also far spread in Western European countries (Rooduijn 2014). In a climate of intensifying globalisation and cultural diversity, it happens that a shrinking faith in the democracy emerges, voters get frustrated with mainstream politics, and are blaming the establishment for political and economic mismanagement. In this environment right wing movements and parties and with them populist voices can arise calling for a change of the status quo (Moffitt 2016). And this is what also happened in the US. The media and academics widely labelled the presidential election campaign of 2016 as populistic. And Donald Trump as the charismatic leader with his powerful rhetoric was defined as the ‘populist par excellence’ (Eiermann 2016; Oliver and Rahn 2016, 189).

Trump’s rhetoric differentiated in language, tone and content from any other former president or presidential candidate of the USA, and has been described as distinctive in its simplicity,
anti-elitism, and collectivism (Oliver and Rahn 2016; Slaughter 2016). His campaign mainly happened on Twitter and therefore represented an ‘unexpected turn away from the norm for political communication on social media’ (Enli 2017, 58). Through the combination of the great network Trump assembled via Twitter and his powerful rhetoric he created a great populist strength during the election campaign (Eiermann 2016).

The tense atmosphere in the country, Donald Trump’s powerful populist rhetoric and his performance on the social media platform Twitter seem to be decisive factors that contributed to Trump’s success. Now, Trump, the candidate without any political experience and the lowest favourability ratings (Kabaservice 2016) is holding one of the most influential and powerful offices in the world. The question arises of whether Trump as the President of the United States continues with his political communication style and language as he did during campaigning or does he change now that he entered office? Since Twitter has been Trump’s main communication channel ever since, this study aims to analyse the rhetoric the President employs on this certain platform.

**Structure**

The thesis at hand begins with some background information on the field of political communication, the social media platform Twitter, and reflects the case ‘Twitter- Trump’. In the next chapter, the previous research that has been conducted in the field of political communication on social media platforms and populist rhetoric in the media will be analysed. A theoretical framework of the concept of populism and network media logic follows. After that, the method and material that have been used to conduct the study are described. Finally, the analysis and results are presented and the thesis completes with a final chapter of concluding discussions.
Background

To put it in simple and general terms, this study intends to draw the connection between political communication, social media, and populism, and aims to understand what impact those variables can have on one another. Therefore, one has to understand the field of political communication, its development over time and the changes it is undergoing these days. Furthermore, the social media platform Twitter, its structures and possible impacts on the communication of politicians shall be illustrated since the platform serves as the basis for the empirical study. Finally, the all connecting case - Donald Trump’s populist rhetoric on Twitter as part of his political communication – shall be reflected upon.

The field of political communication

The field of political communication is generally characterized by the interaction between political actors, the mass media, and the public. The process of political communication includes the production of political messages of general interest, the transmission through direct and indirect channels, and the reception of those messages. The proclaimed aim of political communication is to communicate political processes in order to establish and support an informed and reflected public that is able to express a political opinion (Mancini 2011). The communication processes within politics operate in many directions: ‘downwards from governing institutions towards citizens, horizontally among political actors, including news media, and upward from citizens and public opinion towards authorities’ (Norris 2004).

Although one could retrace the origins of political communication several centuries (Nimmo and Sanders 1981), in this context a more recent consideration of the field is of interest. Various scholars (e.g. Blumler and Kavanagh 1999; Maddalena 2016; Mancini 2011) define three successive phases in the evolution of political communication. The first one designates the time after the Second World War. At the time, mass parties were of great importance and communication happened mainly on an interpersonal level, even though other means of communication such as radio and newspaper existed already. The main role played party activists and party employees reaching out to the citizens to spread the ideas of the parties and mobilize the voters (Blumler and Kavanagh 1999; Mancini 2011). Apart from this, politicians themselves addressed the voters and communicated through rallies that, by times, were broadcasted on radio (Maddalena 2016). Nevertheless, since in most instances voters had long-lasting identifications and relations to a party the communication mainly aimed to reinforce already existing links and opinions (Blumler and Kavanagh 1999; Mancini 2011, 1964).

In the 1960s, the second phase of political communication was initiated. The mass media became the new source of political communication with its new dominant medium the TV replacing interpersonal communication. Voters were not necessarily committed to one
particular party anymore and therefore, political communication then aimed to persuade those volatile voters. As a consequence, a professionalization of political communication began by adopting thoroughly planned tactics to strategically set certain political messages and thereby shape the media agenda. At the same time, the focus shifted from the mass parties towards the individual politician – a tendency that becomes even more important in the further developments. The mass media and political advertisements on TV provided individual candidates the opportunity ‘to enter the electoral arena even without the support of political parties’, as long as they had the necessary financial means. Hence, with the development of mass media, politicians were able to reach a wider audience independent from party politics (Blumler and Kavanagh 1999; Maddalena 2016; Mancini 2011, 1965).

With the rise of the internet and social networks new arenas for political communication emerged and introduced the third phase. Information can now be shared in real time, ‘ordinary people’ can participate and respond interactively – digital platforms increase the amount of information, the speed of communication exchange and the interactivity (Maddalena 2016). Today’s voters encounter the parties and politicians through various media channels – the traditional and the new digital media channels. Especially social media is now central to the politician’s outreach to the public and therefore, social media platforms are playing an increasingly large role in the way campaigns communicate with voters (Pew Research Center 2016). The growing number of information outlets results in a fragmentation of the audience generating different publics, each of them creating and receiving different messages. Mancini (2011) resolves that in today’s environment we have an overflow of information and messages that want to gain the citizen’s attention which results in a lost and confused citizen overwhelmed by the plurality of messages. ‘To be noticed among this enormous quantity each message tends to be increasingly simple and, at the same time, emotional’ what promotes tendencies of dramatization and spectacularisation. (Mancini 2011, 1966). For politicians the new developments mean a shift in the power relation between them and the mainstream media since politicians are now able to produce and distribute their own campaigns without the media as an intermediary (Enli 2017). Still, it seems as if the majority of politicians employing political marketing on social media do not use the platforms to their full potential. Enli (2017) states that most political social media campaigns tend towards one-way communication rather than using the interactivity of the platforms to include the general public in political processes and engage with them.

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1 This is mainly an American development. In Europe political parties still have a greater influence and status. Nevertheless, lately, one can observe tendencies of a ‘personalization’ and ‘Americanization of politics’ since the role of the individual politician is significantly increasing also outside America (Mancini 2011).
In the latest presidential election campaign in the US the social media platform Twitter received particular attention and shall be the basis of this study. Therefore, the structure of the platform and its qualities as an instrument for political communication will be examined in the following.

**The microblogging platform Twitter**

Launched in 2006, the microblogging platform Twitter is today, with 328 million monthly active users worldwide\(^2\), the fourth most popular social networking site after Facebook, Youtube and Instagram\(^3\) and the largest microblogging service. Microblogging could be described as the small scale format of blogging, since its idea is to post messages (called tweets) that are no longer than 140 characters. Every account is open for everyone to follow, which means that anyone can access any information from any profile. Users are able to produce content, share pictures, videos or links to news stories, and also discuss issues immediately with other users (Aharony 2012; Park 2013). Twitter differentiates from other social media mainly in terms of its brevity, fast pace and openness. The time and thought investment when producing content is lower and the content is more volatile than for example on Facebook. The unique design of the platform helps individuals to get involved, interact with other users and create broad networks (Vargo 2014).

As an instrument for political communication Twitter has been used by several presidents and other politicians worldwide. As research shows (see next chapter) the platform and its role in modern political communication grows constantly in particular prior to elections for campaigning reasons. The platform ‘allows politicians to set their political agenda and reach their audience directly’ (Yang et al. 2016, 4). Van Kessel and Castelein (2016, 596) point out that Twitter simplifies reacting fast to current topics and deprecate adversely politicians. Its format of short and concise messages can create an advantage for those politicians with unambiguous messages and mean a disadvantage for ‘mainstream politicians’ with more nuanced and opaque messages’.

**The case: Donald Trump and populist rhetoric on Twitter**

One politician that stands out with his unique engagement with the public on Twitter is Donald Trump – the acting President of the United States. During the 2016 US election campaign, which he entered as a political outsider, Donald Trump employed a communication style that was not only different to the communication styles of the other presidential candidates but also new from every other past presidential campaign (Enli 2017; Pew Research Center 2016, 21).

\(^2\) [https://www.statista.com/statistics/282087/number-of-monthly-active-twitter-users/].

\(^3\) [https://www.dreamgrow.com/top-15-most-popular-social-networking-sites/].
Even though social media got more and more influential as a tool for political communication and campaigning already since the 2008 elections (Adams and McCorkindale 2013), no other politician used it in such a controversial and unexpected way as Donald Trump did and still does. With his ‘amateurish yet authentic style’ Trump seemed to introduce a countermovement to the professionalization of social media campaigning and thereby a new dynamic to political communication (Enli 2017, 54). Trump engages very actively on Twitter with the general public, interacts with his followers, and is emotionally connecting with them. He thereby manages to establish the image of himself as the authentic candidate that is close to the people and says what he thinks (Enli 2017; Hwang 2016). His lack of decorum contributes to the followers’ perceptions of authenticity and differentiates himself from the ‘typical politician’ (Oliver and Rahn 2016).

Trump’s different approach of using Twitter in the context of political communication and especially the rhetoric he employs make the case ‘Twitter-Trump’ relevant to investigate. His communication style has been described as unconventional and informal, and in many cases also as provocative, inappropriate and politically incorrect (Enli 2017). Scholars studying his rhetoric in campaign speeches labelled it as populistic. Donald Trump is said to exploit ‘a large representation gap’ making strong populist claims and ‘employing a rhetoric that is distinctive in its simplicity, anti-elitism, and high degree of collectivist language’ (Oliver and Rahn 2016, 190). Even though, populist rhetoric is widely applied by politicians with different backgrounds and convictions, Oliver and Rahn (2016, 189) describe Trump as the ‘populist par excellence’.

Hence, we know that Trump actively uses Twitter and demonstrably employed populist rhetoric in speeches during the election campaign. Rooduijn et al. (2014) show that populist politicians most likely tone down their populist rhetoric after experiencing electoral success assumably in order to be accepted as a coalition partner. So, the question arises whether Trump sticks with his populist rhetoric and what role the social media platform Twitter plays in the dissemination of populist messages. Even though, there is no research conducted yet on populism in Trump’s tweets, it seems reasonable to suppose that Trump also spreads populist messages via Twitter.
Aim and research questions

The overarching aim of this study is to draw the connection between political communication, populist rhetoric, and social media. It is intended to understand how those different variables impact on one another. Therefore, the communication style of Donald Trump as a political leader on the social media platform Twitter shall be examined focusing on populist content. In connection with that, the study aims to estimate the influence of Donald Trump’s political communication style on Twitter.

Emerging from that aim two research questions can be asked:

1. To estimate Trump’s influence via Twitter: How is Trump performing on the social media platform with regard to his reach and the popularity of his tweets?
2. What patterns of populist rhetoric can one identify in Donald Trump’s political communication through Twitter?

Apart from those main questions, considering the development of political communication, one should bear in mind the question whether Trump has initiated a new era of political communication.

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4 It must be assumed that Donald Trump does not always tweet personally but secretaries or trusted people on his behalf. Yet, Enli (2017) states that Trump writes most of his tweets by himself and is also involved in his staff’s tweeting.
Previous research

This chapter presents a review of existing studies that shall give an insight in the field of research and illustrate the research gap which this study aims to fill. In the following, recent studies on political communication on social media platforms and populist rhetoric in politics are going to be presented.

Political communication on social media platforms

First of all, studies shall be explored that show how politicians use social media for their political communication and with what intentions and success they communicate on those platforms.

Aharony (2012) analysed how three different political leaders – Benjamin Netanyahu, David Cameron and Barack Obama – use Twitter for their political communication. She first conducted a statistical descriptive analysis and then a content analysis examining the quantities and the content of the tweets during three month. Aharony found that the politicians all use Twitter to achieve more transparency and outreach, expressing their own opinions communicating directly with the population. Also, her research shows that Twitter as a tool of political communication is most adapted in the United States by President Obama. Aharony’s study is so far the only research focusing on the communication of political leaders on Twitter.

Enli and Skogerbø (2013) discuss in their study the use of social media of politicians coming from party-centred systems when social media focuses more on the individual politician rather than a political party. They aimed to identify how social media impacts on the content and structure of political communication by conducting an explorative, qualitative and longitudinal research. They found that social media is rather a tool for personal politics than for political parties as the communication on social media platforms is strongly personalized and involves private exposure and individual initiatives. Furthermore, they ascertained that the main aim of the online political communication is the mobilization for the elections. Politicians in disadvantaged competitive positions are among the most active on social media trying to turn their followers into voters.

Another study analysing the political communication on social networks was conducted by Elter (2013). Elter examined the development of social media communication during the country selection in Germany in 2011 analysing Facebook and Twitter profiles on dialogic and interactive communication patterns. He discovered a clear trend towards an activation of social media activities shortly before the elections, thus, only for campaigning reasons. Elter found that the political parties then try to engage political participation and interactivity, but that they are not able to create an ongoing dialog with the citizens.
Adams and McCorkindale (2013) conducted a study on how the 2012 presidential candidates in the United States used Twitter as a campaigning tool. Looking at the content of the tweets, they found that the main topics candidates tweeted about are the economy, events, and specific primaries. Also, the study revealed that the candidates failed to create meaningful dialogue with their followers and therefore did not effectively use Twitter as a campaigning platform.

Also, Medina and Muñoz (2014) conducted a study about campaigning on Twitter, but during the Spanish general elections in 2011 and analysed whether the presidential candidates of the two leading parties in Spain developed a personal strategy. It showed that neither of the candidates followed a clear strategy nor understood how to fully use Twitter to engage voters and properly interact with the audience on a more personalized basis.

Moreover, Kruikemeier (2014) investigated the content characteristics and style on Twitter of candidates during the Dutch national election of 2010 and their effects on preferential votes. Kruikemeier found that Twitter is increasingly used by political candidates during campaigning cycles, that Twitter is clearly personalised and used for the candidates’ self-promotion, and that politicians use it for its interactive features. Most interestingly, the study showed that campaigning on Twitter, especially interactively, has positive effects on the amount of preferential votes. Hence, candidates who communicated (interactively) on Twitter received more preferential votes than those who did not communicate directly on Twitter or those who did not use it at all.

A very recent study by Enli (2017) analysed Twitter strategies and tweeting styles of the presidential candidates Clinton and Trump during their 2016 election campaigns in terms of professionalism versus amateurism. Enli found that Clinton’s Twitter campaign follows a professionalization strategy while Trump’s Twitter campaign, either following a calculated strategy or the candidate’s spontaneity (or both), had more of amateurism. Enli concluded that a candidate like Trump, without any political experiences and support within the Republican Party, profited from his campaign on Twitter bypassing traditional and professional campaigning structures.

Six out of the seven studies presented on the political communication on social media platforms concentrate on the use of social media in the period of election campaigns. Only one study was conducted on the communication of political leaders – hence, how politicians use social media after being elected. Most of the studies show similar results: social media platforms, particularly Twitter, have become an important instrument for candidates to communicate with the voters during election campaigns. Still, most politicians use it inconsistently and fail to actually interact and engage with their followers as they stick to one-way communication, and therefore use social media ineffectively. Especially, in the European
countries with party-centred systems, social media platforms are not as equally established as in the US yet, and the tools are mainly activated during the campaigning process.

Populist rhetoric in the media

Secondly, after exploring research on political communication on social media, studies analysing the usage of populist rhetoric of political parties and politicians have to be evaluated. Different studies analysing populistic rhetoric have been conducted and give ideas on how to categorize populist features.

The first study examining the new right-wing populism in a European country was conducted by Jagers and Walgrave (2007). They analysed the discourse of different political parties in Belgium to see whether one right-wing party employs more populistic rhetoric than other parties. Conducting a quantitative content analysis of the political party broadcasts they searched for references to the people, rated the extent of anti-establishment attitudes and evaluated the population categories mentioned. The more negatively some population categories would be labelled in the party broadcast, the more populist the parties would be considered. With their study Jagers and Walgrave do not only reveal the populist features of the extreme-right party Vlaams Blok but also develop a system to measure populism in quantitative empirical research.

Bos and Brants (2014) conducted a longitudinal research in the Netherlands, covering seven election campaigns in nearly 20 years, analysing on the one hand the rhetoric of politicians in their publicity of party political broadcasts and on the other hand their portrayal in the public media. They aim to find out whether populist rhetoric of political leaders is increasing within their party own broadcasts and/or in free publicity. Therefore, Bos and Brants conducted a content analysis of newspapers, news programmes and five talk shows and of the political broadcast of a party. They develop indicators of populism operationalizing the ideas (anti-establishment, ‘the people/ the common man’), the style (e.g. leader as solver, use of intensifying language) and the policies of populism (speaking about immigration, certain groups).

Rooduijn, De Lange and Van der Brug. (2014) aimed to find out whether the programmes of mainstream parties in Western Europe have become more populist due to the success of populist parties. They conducted a content analysis of election manifestos of parties in five Western European countries coding paragraphs on populist content by indications of people-centrism and anti-elitism. Rooduijn et al. found that mainstream parties do not employ a more

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5 At this point, the findings are not relevant for my studies but more how Bos and Brants measure the populist rhetoric.
populist rhetoric when confronted with electoral losses. Nevertheless, it showed that populist parties themselves tone down their populism after experiencing electoral success, probably in order to become an acceptable coalition partner to mainstream parties.

Since the new-right populism that established during the last decades focuses mainly on topics like immigration and nationalism (Bartlett et al. 2011; Jagers and Walgrave 2007) another study conducted by Hogan and Haltinner (2015) is relevant to include in this review. The researchers analysed immigration threat narratives constructed by four groups of right-wing parties and movements in the USA, UK and Australia examining overlapping themes, imagery and rhetoric. Hogan and Haltinner found striking similarities in the narratives these right-wing populist groups employ: they all identify immigration as a threat to health, culture and economic prosperity and use similar populist rhetoric.

Oliver and Rahn (2016) aimed to demonstrate the extent of populist rhetoric of the election campaign 2016 in the Unites States of America. Therefore, they conducted a quantitative content analysis of the announcement speeches of ‘the seven top presidential hopefuls’ (Carson, Clinton, Cruz, Kasich, Rubio, Sanders, and Trump). As features of populist rhetoric they coded anti-establishment language, the creation of a unified people, and a certain style and structure of the language. Oliver and Rahn found that, compared to the other candidates, Trump’s rhetoric is ‘quintessentially populist’. They found that Trump consistently employed populist syntax, targets political elites, and uses blame language and a simple and repetitive language in his speeches.

Van Kessel and Castelein (2016) explored in a study how two populist party leaders used Twitter as a means of political opposition to criticise their political opponents. They found that populists mainly criticise mainstream parties and politicians, but otherwise tend to choose their enemies selective on the basis of their ideological proximity. Also, they found ‘that ‘genuine’ populist parties are more likely to use Twitter as a means to construct injustice frames than parties with a less outspoken character’ (2016, 611).

Another recent study, conducted by Engesser et al. (2016), explored how politicians in different countries used Facebook and Twitter for populist purposes. They defined five key elements of populism and revealed in a qualitative text analysis that populist statements can be found across countries and parties in social media postings. They showed that right-wing populist are most likely to attack the media elite and exclude others, while left-wing populist tend to attack on the economic elite. In general, a broad range of politician advocate for the people.

The presented studies show that populism in the media has been discussed theoretically and has been empirically analysed in various communication channels, such as party and election manifestos (Rooduijn, De Lange and Van der Brug 2014), political speeches (Oliver and Rahn 2016), the press (Bos and Brants 2014; Rooduijn 2014), political party broadcasts (Jagers &
the studies show different ways on how to measure populist rhetoric and therefore give inspiration and form a basis for the analysis at hand.

Positioning the study

This work wants to focus on the Twitter use of Donald Trump as a political leader after the election campaign. Over all, one can recognize a trend of scholars to analyse the political communication on social media networks during the campaigning period. But how do political leaders communicate on social media when they are in office? Whilst Aharony’s (2012) comparative study focuses on the content and quantities of Twitter communication, I want to put a focus on the populist rhetoric and explore whether Trump uses Twitter as a medium to disseminate populism. A research gap can be identified where political communication, social media and populism meet. Either, the scholars that have analysed politicians’ use of Twitter do not pay attention to the concept of populism. Or the studies on politicians’ use of populist rhetoric do not pay attention to social media in that context (except Engesser et al. 2016 and Van Kessel and Castelein 2016). Therefore, I want to study how a political leader communicates populist rhetoric over Twitter and explore how populism manifests itself in social media. The case ‘Twitter-Trump’ is relevant to investigate since Trump is holding one of the most powerful offices in the world. We know that he has been holding on to controversial populist rhetoric during the election campaign – now it has to be shown whether he is continuing this or mitigates his communication style in order to become more accepted in the ‘mainstream politics’ (a phenomenon that Rooduijn et al. (2014) observe).
**Theoretical framework**

The study draws upon a content analysis of populist rhetoric. Therefore the concept of populism is taken as basis for this research. Also, the concept of network media logic shall be examined.

**The concept of populism**

There exist different conceptual approaches to define the term populism. Scholars refer to populism either as an ideology, a political communication style or rhetoric, or a form of political movement. In this work, populism is considered rather as a communication style than an ideology. Finding a distinctive definition for the concept of populism is challenging, or as Mudde (2004, 542) put: ‘defining the undefinable’. Nevertheless, scholars widely agree on the core of populism as the idea of a division of society in ‘the people’ and ‘the elite’. Since the elite is said to undermined the sovereignty of the people, the proclaimed overarching goal of populists is to give the voice back to the ‘ordinary people’ and challenge the dominant order (Hermet 2011; Mudde 2004, 2014; Oliver and Rahn 2016; Rooduijn 2014; Rooduijn et al. 2014; Van Kessel and Castelein 2016). One very frequently quoted scholar in this context is Mudde (2004, 543) defining populism as ‘an ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous 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’. Hence, the two core elements of populism are ‘the people’ and ‘the elite’ and it ‘is about the antagonistic relationship between these two groups’ (Rooduijn et al. 2014, 564).

Apart from that, populism needs to be understood in its context bound settings of time, place, actors, and culture. A generalisation cannot be done since the concept is prevalent across countries and regions, and movements have emerged in different historical periods and in different cultural settings. Furthermore, populist communication styles are adopted by all kinds of political actors. Populist rhetoric is ‘colourless’ in that sense that one cannot assign an exclusively left of right orientation (Jagers and Walgrave 2007, 323) – it is equally applied by rightist parties and leftist movements. To give an example, during the 2016 presidential election campaign in the US different candidates with clearly opposing values backgrounds were assigned of using populist rhetoric – with ‘Sanders on the Left, Ted Cruz on the Right, and Trump somewhere in between’ (Bos and Brants 2014; Oliver and Rahn 2016, 190).

Even though the concept is context bound populist movements share many latent tendencies. The main characteristics shall be outlined more in detail in the following.

**People-centrism**

One of the central elements of the populism and the most fundamental distinction of populism from other types of discourses is its people-centrism. “Populism always refers to the people
and justifies its actions by appealing to and identifying with the people” (Jagers and Walgrave 2007, 321). The ‘people’ are defined as anyone who is not the elite. They are considered a monolithic group without internal differences. The basis for their shared identity, the ‘we’, can mean different things depending on the circumstances – it can refer to the nation, to the electorate, or the working class (Jagers and Walgrave 2007; Rooduijn et al. 2014).

Populists see themselves on the side of the people, the ‘common man’, and the populist politician appears as the leader advocating for the people. They claim to speak for the ordinary people which have been unheard by the elites. The populist politician signals the people to protect their interests and rights, even if it means bending or breaking the rules (Engesser et al. 2016; Oliver and Rath 2016, 191)

At the same time, populists emphasise the sovereignty of the people and aim to replace the existing dominant system of the establishment with a political order that returns the power to the people (Bos and Brants 2014; Oliver and Rahn 2016).

**Anti-elitism**

Next to the creation of ‘the people’, anti-elitism is the other main element of populism. Generally, it is rooted in anti-elite feelings and populist claim to be opposed to elitist attitudes, policies, or practices. Populists accuse the elite for only focusing on its own interests and not caring about those of the ordinary people. Therefore, elites are often described as corrupt, arrogant and selfish (Rooduijn 2014). Populist actors ‘maintain a negative relation to the respective elite [...] thus attacks, accuses, or blames the elite for the malfunctions and grievances of democracy (Engesser et al. 2016, 1112). By blaming and criticizing elites, populists reduce their individual responsibility and shift the blame outward (Oliver and Rahn 2016).

Anti-elitism can appear in different forms and is usually directed at ‘particularly privileged or powerful segments of the population’ (Engesser et al 2016, 1117). Therefore, elites can be presented as occupying certain parts of society, for example politics, economics, media or legal systems. **Economic populism** refers to the business elites including business man and the capitalist system. **Political populism** invokes political elites and originates from a disillusionment with mainstream politics. Political elites are accused of only caring for their own benefits and ignoring the general will. Another form of populism is **media and cultural populism** directed against media institutions, journalists and intellectuals. Also, **legal elites** such as lawyers, judges or courts in general can be attacked by populists as part of the ‘elitism system’ (Jagers and Walgrave 2007; Rooduijn et al. 2014; Engesser et al. 2016).

Looking at the populistic traditions in the United States Kazin (2016, 17) discusses that Trump, as a ‘right-wing’ populist, belongs to an American populistic tradition that ‘blames elites in big business and government for undermining the common folk’s economic interest and political
liberties’. In this traditions’ context ‘the people’ is ethically districted and only includes citizens of European heritage (‘real Americans’).

**Exclusionism**

People-centrism and anti-elitism are considered the main constitutive recurrent elements of populism that can be applied to both left and right-wing populism. Some scholars consider exclusionism of ‘dangerous others’ as a third fundamental component of populism (Jagers and Walgrave 2007; Rooduijn et al. 2014, 564). The exclusion of minorities is strongly connected to the people-centrism. The construction of the ‘we’ naturally creates a ‘they’ or an ‘other’ and thereby invokes external and internal enemies of the people which is why populism often entails racism and nativism (Bos and Brants 2014; Jagers and Walgrave 2007, 321; Oliver and Rahn 2016). Hence, individuals or groups that are not considered to be part of ‘the people’ are excluded, such as for example immigrants or religious or ethnic minorities. Still, it is claimed that even though exclusionism often goes hand in hand with populism and particularly is a central feature of right-wing populism, ‘it is not part of populism per se’. Exclusionism is not a constitutive element of populism in general but is a significant characteristic of a rightist populist rhetoric (Rooduijn 2014, 564). Considering Trump a more rightist politician, the exclusionism dimension should be involved in this empirical study.

**Immigration threats narratives**

As a part of exclusionism, Hogan and Haltinner (2015) find that right-wing populist groups in Western democratic societies show remarkable similarities in their resentments towards immigration. Immigration is constructed as ‘a threat to prosperity, health and cultural integrity of their respective nations’.

First of all, immigration is framed as an *economic threat* for the native-born citizens arguing that immigrants would take up jobs, increase the cost of living and impose a tax burden. Secondly, framing immigration as *a threat to security* right-wing populist groups claim that immigration increases crime rates (e.g. through increasing street violence, assaults, rape, or murder). By times, the image of the immigrant as the terrorist is constructed and immigrants are presented as being violent, diseased terrorists that aim to destruct the nation. Lastly, immigration is also framed as *a threat to culture*. Right-wing populists argue that immigration threatens to destroy the native-born culture, leading to dangerous social divisions, and multiculturalism undermining native culture. To avoid appearance of racism, populist arguments focus on irreconcilable cultural differences or the refusal of immigrants to assimilate. Since the US and Australia are settler societies, populist in those countries need to make careful distinctions between the ‘good’ (assimilated and largely white) immigrants of the past, and the ‘bad’ (disruptive, non-assimilating, largely non-white) immigrants of today (Bartlett et al. 2011, Hogan and Haltinner 2015).
In general, one can say that populist movements are temporal and fleeting and depend on the alignment of a number of key factors: the right political conditions, a charismatic populist leader, and the receptivity of an audience based on their own grievances and psychological predilections. So, the right person has to phrase the right rhetoric to the right audience at the right time. The 2016 election campaign in the USA seems to have all the hallmarks of a populist moment (Oliver and Rahn 2016, 192).

Network media logic

As already stated before, the traditional model of political communication based on media logic is changing with a transforming media and communication landscape and the development of social media platforms. The remarkable growth of populist movements over the last decades can be mirrored online. “Populist parties are adept at using social media to amplify their message, recruit and organise” (Bartlett et al. 2011, 15). Therefore, it is relevant for the study at hand to take a look at the changing media systems to see in what ways these developments impact political communication, and potentially also influences the performance of populists.

Klinger and Svensson (2015) adapt the theory of mass media logics to the online realm of social media platform and propose the concept of network media logic. Comparing the traditional mass media logic with its professional media outlets to the network logic of social media they find strong differences in terms of production, dissemination and use: In terms of content production, traditional media is based on professional gatekeepers that select information and create news content according to news values, via new media channels the selection of information and creation of content happens only according to individual user preferences and based on the ideal of attention maximisation. In terms of distribution, mass media content is distributed to a paying fixed audience of subscribers while new media users are intermediaries themselves ‘distributing popular content [...] within networks of like-minded others’. In terms of consumption, the mass media information is consumed more passively since the mass media receives a limited selective exposure, while new media presents selective content to a more interest-bound and like-minded peer networks and targets on interactivity of the network. (Klinger and Svensson 2015, 1246).

Engesser et al. (2017, 1113) state that populist actors therefore follow a hybrid communication strategy, taking advantage of both media logic at the same time. “On the one hand, they may address the mass media in order to distribute official statements to larger audiences. These messages have to comply with the mass media logic and may be modified by the journalist accordingly”. Then again, “[...] the populist may turn toward social media in order to circumvent the media institutions and journalistic gatekeepers. In this way, the populist messages do not have to follow the news values and are frequently more personal and sensationalistic in nature.”
**Method and material**

This chapter introduces the chosen methodological approach, and outlines the method of data collection and analysis. Also, the quality of the research at hand will be discussed.

**Methodology**

The nature of the study can be described as descriptive. Descriptive research wants to describe a population or phenomenon (Hansen and Machin 2013). In this case, the study aims to analyse content from a social network in order to investigate a particular phenomenon – the use of populist rhetoric of a politician on Twitter. The research is based on solid theoretical framework of the concept of populism and network media logic. Originating from these theories, own hypotheses are formulated and observed to ultimately find a confirmation of the original theories. Therefore, the study follows above all a deductive approach. Depending on the purpose of the study, different techniques to approach the research and analyse data are conceivable (either qualitative, quantitative or a mixture of both). The research at hand focuses on a quantitative approach since the interest of the study is to summarise and analyse a large quantity of data to detect replicable patterns (Hansen and Machin 2013).

**Content analysis**

The study aims to examine patterns of populist rhetoric in text units, therefore I chose to conduct a quantitative content analysis. A content analysis is an appropriate technique for measuring populist rhetoric in this context since it is ‘well suited for revealing trends and patterns in the large quantities of communication and symbolic content characteristics of modern societies’. Also, it is ‘one of the most efficient and most widely used research methods for the systematic and quantitative analysis of media output/content’ (Hansen and Machin 2013, 85).

Generally speaking, content analysis is a research technique that systematically studies text to identify patterns of specified characteristics, and by that draws inferences about a research question. More in detail Riffe et al. (2014, 19) define quantitative content analysis as a ‘systematic and replicable examination of symbols of communication, which have been assigned numeric values according to valid measurement rules, and the analysis of relationships involving those values using statistical methods, to describe the communication, draw inferences about its meaning, or infer from the communication to its context, both of production and consumption’.

Krippendorff (2004, 18) puts particular emphasis on the attributes reliability and validity defining content analysis as ‘a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the context of their use’.
The problem of quantitative content analysis is not the practice of quantifying itself but rather the interpretation which is attached to the quantitative indicators provided by the content analysis [...]’ Although content analysis initially fragments text down into constituent parts which can be counted, it reassembles these constituent parts at the analysis and interpretation stage to examine which ones co-occur in which contexts, for what purposes and with what implications’ (Hansen and Machin 2013, 90).

A content analysis begins with the development of some precise hypotheses, expectations or questions about a phenomena based on theories. The content analysis then aims to ‘reduce the communication phenomenon to manageable data’ to draw inferences about the phenomenon. This reduction happens by operationalising the concept that is to be measured, sampling the data, constructing a coding schedule and coding it. Therefore, the relevant variables are developed that are composed of different values which are elements of the same logical kind. (Riffle et al. 2014, 18).

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**Data acquisition and sampling**

The research at hand is a representation of Donald Trump’s tweeting patterns as the President of the United States. Due to the limited scope of the study but a tremendous amount of content posted on the Twitter account of Donald Trump a certain time period is defined. Therefore, a sample was collected including all tweets posted during Donald Trump’s first 50 days in office, beginning at the day of his inauguration on January 20, 2017 until March 10, 2017. This particular time frame was selected because it marks the very beginning of Donald Trump as the President and it usually is a period when the newly elected President faces high expectations from the public to deliver what the candidate promised during the campaigning. Also, it shall be analysed whether Trump, who was said to employ populist rhetoric to a great extent during his campaigning, would tone down his populism after experiencing electoral success as Rooduin et al. (2014) experience with other populist parties. In order to gather the sample, the official Twitter account of Donald Trump was identified (@realDonaldTrump) and all tweets were collected. Throughout the time period of 50 days 267 tweets were collected. Due to the great quantity of data based on Trump’s very frequent postings and the fact that all tweets posted during the selected time period were taken into account, one can ensure a reasonable and representative study sample that is adequate to surface patterns in President Trump’s Twitter communications.

The tweets were manually recorded. The full text of each post was provided, along with the quantity and type of audience reaction (likes and retweets) (see appendix 2). It is possible that

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6 https://twitter.com/realdonaldtrump?lang=de
reactions on tweets still change but as the data was capped two months after the original posting date it can be expected that the likes and retweets would not change decisively anymore because of the short lifespan of a tweet and the high topicality of the medium Twitter. Therefore, a comparable and relatively complete set of data can be ensured.

Data analysis

As a next step, after collecting all the relevant data, the sample has to be examined and the content has to be classified. Therefore, a coding system was developed. This part of defining dimensions that shall be analysed is ‘the most taxing aspect of any content analysis’ according to Hansen and Machin (2013, 98). Since the focus of the coding and analysis should be on the relevant characteristics of the theoretical framework (Hansen and Machin 2013), the development of coding categories proceeds deductively through adaption from previous research and based on the theoretical framework (e.g. Aharony 2012; Bos and Brants 2014; Hogan and Haltinner 2015, Jagers and Walgreve 2007; Kruikemeier 2014; Oliver and Rahn 2016). A manual codebook was developed measuring different quantitative indicators. To measure populist rhetoric on Twitter posts the main characteristics and indicator of populism were defined as categories. People-centrism was measured following the question whether Trump refers to the people. This included any reference to the people (for example: ‘the people’, ‘we’, ‘our country’, ‘the society’, etc.). Anti-elitism was measured following the question whether Trump criticises elites. Critique on general elites as well as on individuals representing an elite was coded. Therefore, critique on, for instance, a political party was coded but also on a particular politician as the representative of a political party. Exclusionism was measured following the question whether Trump excludes certain actors from the people. The codebook with a more detailed and extensive list of the employed categories, its descriptions and examples can be found in the appendix 1. Before conducting the analysis, a test coding of a small sub-sample was performed to test the practicability of the coding categories, and to find inconsistencies and revise some minor details.

The coding data was entered straight into the data analysis programme. For this study SPSS was used. Each tweet was coded manually by categorizing them fitting the corresponding definitions. Not all tweets had one code, whereas others fit into several categories.

7 Read more about the pre-test in the upcoming chapter about reliability.
Reliability of the research

Since this research is based on a quantitative content analysis of text units it is essential to reflect upon the reliability of the research design. A content analysis as research method should be reliable and therefore the results it delivers have to be replicable. The analysis has to be consistent insofar that a repeated measurement shows the same results. That means that ‘researchers working at different points in time and perhaps under different circumstances should get the same results when applying the same technique to the same data’ (Krippendorff 2004, 18).

A limitation that might restrain this reliability is the fact that there was only one coder categorizing the tweets. Yet, to assure the ‘consistency of the individual coder’s coding practice over time’ and to test the practicability of the categories a pre-test was conducted. This pre-test shall examine the intra-coder reliability showing whether the same coder categorizes the same material in the same way over time (Hansen and Machin 2013, 109). With a small sample of about ten percent of the material the test coding was performed two days before the main coding was conducted. Over all, the test revealed that the majority of the categories were clear and the coder would categorize the material with almost no divergence over time. Solely for two categories the coding instructions had to be defined more explicitly since there were minor differences in the coding of those categories. Other than that, to make the coding process transparent and to assure that the research design is replicable a detailed and complete codebook with the set of coding instructions to the coder has been outlined. This codebook can be found in the appendix 1.
Analysis and results

This chapter presents the empirical findings of the study. The analysis summarizes the findings of the quantitative content analysis, contextualizes them and relates the findings to the previous research and theories.

Tweeting quantities

During the first 50 days in office, starting at January 20, 2017 until March 10, 2017, Donald Trump posted 267 times on Twitter in total. The number of Trump’s tweeting days are equivalent to the investigation period (50 days) since he is tweeting every day. Therefore, the President is tweeting 5.34 times per day on average. The maximum tweets per day is 13, the minimum tweet per day is one.

Comparing these numbers to the results of prior research on the Twitter use of political leaders one can clearly see that Trump is tweeting considerably more than his colleagues. Analysing the Twitter use of different political leaders Aharony (2012)\textsuperscript{8} shows that in a period of three month Obama also had a great number of tweeting days, but less tweets per day (3.61 tweets per day on 67 tweeting days), whereas, Netanyahu tweeted a lot but not as regularly (5.48 tweets per day on 37 tweeting days)\textsuperscript{9}. Hence, one could conclude that Trump tweets quantitatively the most and also most consistently since he is tweeting every single day often several times. His performance on Twitter can be considered as the most engaged and active comparing to other political leaders.

Trump’s performance on Twitter

There are different tools to measure the performance of individual users on Twitter and therefore their influence. To examine the reach and popularity of Trump’s tweets, looking at the individual’s potential to lead others and engage in a certain act, I want to focus on three different features on Twitter – following, liking and retweeting. The number of followers shows the influence of a person since it directly indicates the size of the audience that is updated on the content that is posted. An indicator of the popularity of the content is the number of likes of a tweet. The most content-oriented interaction is the retweet, which means that one repeats the tweet and publishes it for one’s own followers (Anger and Kittl 2011).

\textsuperscript{8} Even though the study is already old in the fast changing world of social media, Aharony (2012) is the only one examining the Twitter use of political leaders in office whilst other researchers concentrate on (presidential) candidates in the campaigning phases. This data cannot be compared since the ‘communication styles’ during campaigning times are most likely different to those of an office-holder.

\textsuperscript{9} We have to put into account that Aharony is collecting tweets during three month, and my research includes only 50 days.
With around 30 million followers on Twitter, Trump has a very wide network. He is on place 41 of the most followed Twitter users worldwide and after Barack Obama (who is on the third place worldwide) the second most followed politician on Twitter\textsuperscript{10}. The amount of followers shows tendencies concerning the influence of Trump – which in his case can be considered as big since nearly 30 million followers daily receive updates on his tweets.

Still, the number of followers a user has alone, is not sufficient to make a statement about the actual influence (Anger and Kittl 2011). Following someone means that one is constantly updated on their postings but it does not mean that everyone actively perceives the updates. Being influenced means that ‘information must first be perceived and consumed before it triggers an action’ (Anger and Kittl 2011, 3). Therefore, a more precise indicator measuring Trump’s performance on Twitter can be the quantity of likes. The amount of likes shows that the posts has been perceived by the users and presumably evoked agreement and liking with the content. During the investigated time period Trump’s tweets have on average around 120,000 likes with a maximum of 394,000 likes and a minimum of 25,800 likes.

The most content-oriented interaction of those performance indicators is the retweet. A user is repeating a tweet and publishing it on the own news stream for one’s own followers (Anger and Kittle 2011). This can show either consent with the content, but also disagreement. In any case, the tweet gets published and distributed even further. Trump’s tweets are retweeted 25,300 times on average with a maximum of 82,600 retweets and a minimum of 4,900 retweets.

In general one could observe a slight downward trend of likes during the first 50 days in office while the number of retweets stayed stable (see figure 1). A possible explanation for this could be that in the beginning of his presidency Trump received great attention while this attention after some time diminishes. It is interesting to see, that only the likes of his tweets tend to decrease but not the retweets. This could indicate that he lost the consent of his supporters. The amount of retweets stayed stable since it is not only a feature for supporters to show consent but is also used by opponents to criticise the content of a post.

To conclude Trump’s Twitter performance, one can see that he engages very actively on Twitter, also more than other political leaders. He is tweeting several times per day every day and his posts obtain great approval from his followers even though his likes seem to decrease during the observation period.

\textsuperscript{10} \url{https://twittercounter.com/pages/100}.  

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Figure 1 Spread of like and retweet quantities

Measuring populist rhetoric in political communication

To measure the populist rhetoric in Trump’s tweets, the main characteristics of populism are quantitatively recorded in the Twitter data. According to the definition of the concept, the core elements of populism are people-centrism, anti-elitism, and exclusionism. Due to this definition, it is argued that a politician who uses those key elements of populist rhetoric is a populist actor. In the following I will analyse the quantitative results and connect them with previous research and the theoretical concept of populism. Examples of tweets shall help to make the analysis more transparent.

People-centrism

As stated before, the first feature that is associated with populist actors is their emphasis on the central position of the people. Therefore, in analysing the content data, firstly, it is examined whenever Trump refers to ‘the people’. It shows that in more than one fourth of all tweets (28.5%) Trump mentions the ‘common people’ in some way. In general, when referring to the people ‘a political actor claims that he or she cares about the people’s concerns, that he or she is not alienated from the public but know what the people really want’ (Jagers and Walgrave 2007, 323).

Most commonly, in about three quarters of those cases, Trump uses the expressions ‘our’ (e.g. our country, our nation, our government, etc.) (44.7%) and ‘we’ (28.9%) [see examples 9, 249,
Choosing the personal pronouns ‘we’ and ‘our’ when referring to the people shows that Trump sees himself as part of the people or at least he wants to give the impression that he is one of them. He expresses a special closeness to the people and wants to appear closely tied to the people.

“We will bring back our jobs. We will bring back our borders. We will bring back our wealth – and we will bring back our dreams!” [9]

“There is an incredible spirit of optimism sweeping the country right now – we’re bringing back the JOBS!” [246]

“Great news. We are only just beginning. Together, we are going to #MAGA!” [260]

It is striking that when talking about the people, Trump is in half of the cases (45%) emphasizing the sovereignty of the people directly or indirectly. For one thing, Trump refers directly to the people as the origin of power. He claims that the government shall be controlled by the people. He accuses the elites of having taken the power away from the people, and now presents himself as the one that is giving it back to the people [e.g. 4, 5, 6]. So, Trump emphasizes in several tweets that it is the people that actually bring the change and that they are able to ‘Make America great again’, bring back the jobs, the wealth and the dreams – that the people are the ones controlling the country, deciding what to do and where to go [e.g. 9, 246, 260].

“Today we are not merely transferring power from one Administration to another, or from one part to another – but we are transferring power from Washington, D.C. and giving it back to you, the American People #InaugurationDay” [4 and 5].

“What truly matters is not which party controls our government, but whether our government is controlled by the people.” [6]

Those expressions are clearly indicators of a populist communication style stressing the sovereignty of the people and the popular will (Jagers and Walgrave 2007) which is considered as ‘the theoretical origin of power’ (Engesser et al. 2016, 1116).

In 15% of the cases where Trump is referring to the people he is talking to the ‘Americans’ or the ‘American people’ [e.g. 245, 161]. This wording indicates who is considered to be part of

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11 Those numbers, e.g. [9], refer to a certain tweet. A list with the complete sample can be found in the appendix 2. Some examples of tweets will be mentioned in the text, others will only be found in the appendix.
the ‘we’. Invoking the ‘heartland’ shows that Trump considers the nation as the basis for a shared identity (Oliver and Rahn 2016).

“45,000 construction & manufacturing jobs in the U.S. Gulf Coast region. $20 billion investment. We are already winning again, America!” [245]

Another characteristic one can identify when Trump is referring to the people is that he is presenting himself as the advocate of the people. Populist claim to speak for the people, for the majority, that have been silenced by the elites (Oliver and Rahn 2016). Also Trump signals to protect the people’s needs and demands and places them above everything. He refers to positive developments that have been achieved or will be achieved soon for the good of the society. It occurs that Trump presents himself as the manager and problem solver (Bos and Brant 2014) assuring the people that he is taking care of their fundamental needs – above all jobs and healthcare [e.g. 161, 247]. In this context, he also assures that he is the one fixing the mess that the government before him is responsible for. So, he does not only take care of the people’s needs but has to revise what his predecessor have done wrong.


“Don’t believe the main stream (fake news) media. The White House is running VERY WELL. I inherited a MESS and am in the process of fixing it.”[187]

“Don’t let the FAKE NEWS tell you that there is big infighting in the Trump Admin. We are getting along great, and getting major things done!” [254]

“Buy American & hire American are the principles at the core of my agenda, which is: JOBS, JOBS, JOBS! [...]” [247]

To sum this up, one can see that Trump appeals to the people in several ways which is considered the essential core of populism. Jagers and Walgrave (2007) claim that it is not coincidental that populism comes from the Latin word ‘populous’ which means ‘people’. Still, Oliver and Rahn (2016, 191) mention that appealing to the people is a natural political style and ‘nearly all democratic politicians seek to align themselves with ‘the people’, which is partly why the populist label gets so widely applied’. Therefore, it is not sufficient to only take one characteristic in consideration but connect them with other populist attributes.

**Anti-elitism**

Besides people-centrism, most populism scholars consider anti-elitism as one of the main features of populism. An anti-elite politicians oppose to the attitudes and practices of elites, thus, a select group of people that is considered superior by others and particularly privileged or powerful (Engesser et al. 2016).
Analysing Trump’s tweets shows that in 42.3% of all cases the President is criticising and blaming elites for certain problems in society or bad decisions. Since elites can be differentiated by occupying particular parts of society I distinguish political, economic, legal and media elites in my analysis.

Table 1 Criticised elites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criticised elites</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political elite</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>46.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media elite</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal elite</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic elite</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Political elite**

The group that is blamed most by Trump is the political elite. In nearly half of his establishment critical tweets (46%) Trump is referring to a political party or the representative of a political party. He is blaming failures and problems on different actors. Trump is attacking above all the Democrats [e.g. 69, 114, 177, 225, 228] for obstructing his governance process. The Obama Administration is blamed for their policies during their term that is now disrupting the current government [e.g. 77, 234, 249]. Obama directly is attacked for allegedly tapping his wires and passing legislation that are in his opinion ‘a complete and total disaster’ (ObamaCare) [e.g. 239, 250]. Besides Obama; also other individual political actors are blamed for ostensible misjudgements, such as former opposing candidates like Hillary Clinton [163] and Bernie Sanders [212], or Senators (among others John McCain) [58].

“The Democrats are delaying my cabinet picks for purely political reasons. They have nothing going but to obstruct. Now have an Obama A.G.” [69]

“The Democrats are overplaying their hand. They lost the election, and now they have lost their grip on reality. [...]” [225]

“It is so pathetic that the Dems have still not approved by full Cabinet.’ [228]

“How long has President Obama gone to tap my phones during the very sacred election process. This is Nixon/Watergate. Bad (or sick) guy!” [239]

In general, Trump is blaming all these actors for obstructing his administration either by bad and insufficient work in the past or current government. In his eyes, he is the one that is suffering from the actions of the political establishment and has to put the system back in order again. Jagers and Walgrave (2007) state that this apportionment of blame to political elites is
a characteristic of anti-elite populists. ‘All failures and problems are blamed on politics; they are caused by political incompetence, unwillingness and sabotage’ (Jagers and Walgrave 2007, 324).

**Media elites**

The second most attacked societal elite is the media. More than a third (35.4%) of his criticism concerns newspapers, broadcasting services or journalists. Trump refers to the media elite in a more general sense as ‘FAKE NEWS media’ [e.g. 86, 152, 181, 185]. Also, he targets the media elite more specifically by naming particular media organisations. The most blamed media institutions is above all the New York Times [e.g. 51, 174, 108, 205], followed by the Washington Post, CNN [e.g. 148, 184] and others. When addressing to the media elites he is using almost always the expression ‘fake news’ or, addressing the New York Times, ‘the failing @nytimes’ [e.g. 51, 108, 174, 205]. Basically, Trump is claiming in most of the cases that the journalists of the ‘fake news media’ are violating their journalistic ethics and is presenting them as incompetent and untruthfully. He is calling them dishonest [53], spreading lies, writing fiction concerning him, making up sources and stories [108] – all in all claiming that ‘some fake news media lies!’ [106] and therefore their coverage is not credible. Nevertheless, Trump does not consider all media organisations as part of the media elites producing ‘fake news’. The only broadcaster Trump believes is reliable is Fox News [e.g. 162].

> “The FAKE NEWS media (failing @nytimes, @NBCNews, @ABC, @CBS, @CNN) is not my enemy, it is the enemy of the American People!” [184]

> “The failing @nytimes writes total fiction concerning me. They have gotten wrong for two years, and now are making up stories & sources!”[108]

> “The fake news media is going crazy with their conspiracy theories and blind hatred. @MSNBC & @CNN are unwatchable. @foxandfriends is great!” [162]

In summary, many of Trump’s tweets that contain criticism or attacks on media elites are relatively fierce and feature strong allegations. Trump is accusing the news media (except Fox News) of distributing incorrect information and conspiracy theories.

**Legal elites**

Besides political and media elites, legal elites experience some fundamental criticism from Trump. Around 20% of his anti-establishment criticism refers to legal entities such as judges, lawyers, and courts. This great amount of criticism of legal elites arises out of the controversial discussed travel ban executive order that Trump aims to enforce during this time to prevent citizens from several Muslim-majority countries to enter the US.
Trump criticizes the legal elites in a more general sense, claiming that the overall legal system is broken [136]. He questions the authority of judges and courts and is blaming them for allegedly misjudgements. At the same time, Trump targets individual actors directly. He offends a judge referring to him or her as ‘this so-called judge’ and labels his or her decisions as ‘ridiculous’ and ‘terrible’ [94, 98]. Trump claims that the legal elites take away the power and the sovereignty of the country, ‘our country’, and therefore of the people. He argues that the legal establishment is abusing their power to the detriment of the people, their safety and the security of the country [132]. In this context, he gives the impression that he will not accept the court’s decision and that he will fight for the people and their safety [132]. Besides blaming those authorities, he withdraws from taking any responsibility for possible effects [102]. By doing so, he assures to be able to shift the blame in case some incident occurs in the future that can be connected to the judges and courts decision in any way.

“Our legal system is broken! ”77% of refugees allowed into U.S. since travel reprieve hail from seven suspect countries.” (WT) SO DANGEROUS!” [136]

“The opinion of this so-called judge, which essentially takes law-enforcement away from our country, is ridiculous and will be overturned!” [94]

“Just cannot believe a judge would put our country in such peril. If something happens blame him and court system. People pouring in. Bad!” [102]

“SEE YOU IN COURT, THE SECURITY OF OUR NATION IS AT STAKE!” [132]

One can see that Trump employs a powerful blame language when referring to the legal entities, doubting and condemning their judgments and questioning their authority. Engesser et al. (2017) describe this as the style and language of populist actors.

**Economic elites**

Scholars see the economic elites as another option for populist actors to attack. In this case, this assumption does not hold. Different from other populist, Trump does not express any criticism towards economic elites. Nevertheless, this does not come by surprise since anti-elite arguments are more likely employed by the left-wing ideology as is the critique of capitalism, and social equality (Engesser et al. 2017). Also, Trump himself is a declared business man and could be seen as part of the economic establishment. He claims to target to strengthen the economy and provide jobs. Therefore, there is no reason for him to criticize the established economic sector.

In general, the analysis shows that Trump attacks political, media and legal elites. Trump is differentiating the people from the elite and emphasises the distance and estrangement between the two groups. The analysis shows that Trump sides with the people against the elites.
Those aspects are per definition characteristics of a populistic politician (Jagers and Walgrave 2007).

**Exclusionism**

Closely connected to a people-centrism and the creation of a ‘we’ is the creation of a ‘they’. Not only the establishment, but also the ‘dangerous others’ are opposed to the people. The elite is considered to be the danger from above, while ‘the others’ are seen as a threat from outside or within the people (Jagers and Walgrave 2007, 324). Excluded actors can be immigrants, ethnic minorities, religious groups, criminals, etc. (Engesser et al. 2016, 4).

Even though the analysis did not reveal exclusionism to a great extent, one can clearly see indicators for it in certain situations. Trump excludes certain groups in 7.5% of all cases. It is remarkable that Trump never refers to a specific group by name. So, he is excluding ‘others’ from ‘the people’ indirectly or directly but is never explicitly identifying this group. He establishes a ‘we’ and ‘they’ and one can see that he means to differentiate ‘the people’ from a particular group but he avoids to identify the excluded actors. These facts correspond to Oliver and Rahn’s (2016, 193) findings. They conclude that ‘those populist candidates conjure a “people” not by amalgamations of specific groups or by even invoking the institutions of state, but by including themselves as part of the group’.

Although Trump does not name specific groups it becomes apparent that in three-fourth of those tweets he is excluding foreigners. He refers to the excluded actors as people that come from another country aiming to enter the US – therefore, one can define them as foreigners. Trump could refer to immigrants, though foreigners that aim to stay in the US on a long term, or people that enter the country only for a short period. Trump describes the foreigners as ‘(potential) terrorists’ [64, 101], ‘the bad’, ‘bad dudes’ [65], ‘bad (and dangerous) people’ [75, 98, 101], ‘evil’ [90]. Hence, he is generalising the people coming into the country as a threat, as people that have bad intentions, people that are possibly criminal, and bring harm to the American society and the country. With those implications the President is constructing the picture of the foreigner or immigrant as an enemy. Trump expresses this exclusionism of foreigners in the context of the travel ban he aims to establish for six countries. Since this countries have Muslim majorities one could assume that Trump exclusionism applies to foreigners with a Muslim background.

“There is nothing nice about searching for terrorists before they can enter our country. This was a big part of my campaign. Study the world!” [64]

“If the ban were announced with a one week notice, the “bad” would rush into our country during that week. A lot of bad “dudes” out there!” [65]
“We must keep ‘evil’ out of our country” [90]

“The judge opens our country to potential terrorists and others that do not have our best interests at heart. Bad people are very happy!” [101]

The analysis shows that Trump employs exclusionism of foreigners in his tweets, even though it is only the case in less than one tenth of the sample. Trump’s attitude of exclusionism can be reinforced by Rojecki (2016). He finds that Trump already applied it during the election campaigns. The excluded actors were predominantly foreigners that Trump pictured as some kind of threat. For this reason, it is reasonable to suggest analysing the immigrant threat narrative that Trump employs.

**Immigrant threat narrative**

The analysis of Trump’s exclusionism shows that he is mainly referring to foreigners and thereby, considerably, also to immigrants. Furthermore, as already mentioned, those foreigners portrayed as a threat for the people of America. In 6.4% of the cases one can identify that Trump expresses immigrants as a threat. Now, the question arises on what grounds Trump is employing this immigration threat narratives.

Hogan and Haltinner (2015) differentiate between economic threats, threats to security, and threats to culture that right-wing populists tend to bring up. President Trump only pictures immigration as a security threat for the safety and security of ‘the Americans’. He does not refer to immigration as a threat for the culture\(^{12}\) or the economy in his first 50 days of presidency. Trump is referring to bad and evil people coming into the country and in the same context about potential terrorists [64, 101, 111]. Also, he is referring to a great danger talking about the foreigners entering the US [98, 136]. In a certain tweet, Trump is directly mentioning the ‘radical Islamic terrorism’ as a threat for the Western world [111]. Hogan and Haltinner (2015) demonstrate that populists by times construct the image of the immigrant as the terrorist and present foreigners as violent, diseased terrorists that aim to destruct the nation. Therefore, one can say that Trump spreads the image of the foreigner as a threat for security and safety.

> “The threat from radical Islamic terrorism is very real, just look at what is happening in Europe and the Middle-East. Courts must act!” [111]

> “Because the ban was lifted by a judge, many very bad and dangerous people may be pouring into our country. A terrible decision.” [98]

---

\(^{12}\) An explanation for this might be that in the US, a settler society with a great majority of immigrants, it can be risky for Trump to talk about immigrants as a cultural threat since diversity is part of the American culture (Bartlett et al. 2011, Hogan and Haltinner 2015).
Combining people-centrism, anti-elitism, and exclusionism

So far, the main elements of populism have been analysed individually. Since people-centrism, anti-elitism and exclusionism are inextricably related defining populism (Engesser et al. 2017) it is essential to reflect the combination of those three elements. Jagers and Walgrave (2007, 322) distinguish a ‘thin’ and a ‘thick’ concept of populism. The thin definition only takes the first element of populism in account: making reference to the people. Whereas, the thick definition ‘consists of a combination of the three elements and states that populism refers to the people, vents anti-establishment ideas and simultaneously excludes certain population categories’. Hence, after their definition, we can talk about thick populism when, ‘political actors talk about the people and combine this with an explicit anti-establishment position and an exclusion of certain population categories.’ Taking this into account, we can now already say, that Trump employs a thin populism since he is widely making references to the people. As a next step, I want to analyse to what extent Trump applies a ‘thick populism’ in his tweets.

Table 2 Number of populist features per tweet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No populist feature</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One populist feature per tweet</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two populist features per tweet</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three populist features per tweet</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis shows that in the great majority of the cases either no populist element or one populist element is applied in Trump’s tweets (both around 40% each). In 13% of Trump’s tweets two populist features can be identified, and in 4% of all tweets all three main populist elements appear. Since we already analysed the features individually it is now to see when and how Trump is combining two populist characteristics in his tweets. The combination of populist features in a tweet indicates a stronger populist rhetoric (‘thick populism’).

Looking at Trump’s tweets that include two key elements, one can see that Trump usually combines a reference to the people with either a reference to the elite or an exclusion of particular actors. Hence, either the (political [e.g. 67, 71], media [e.g. 184, 204] or legal) elites are blamed for their mismanagement, and for taking bad decisions that have a negative impact on the people, or it is ‘the evil’ from outside the US (immigrants and foreigners) that is a threat and burden to the people [e.g. 65]. Either way, Trump blames a third person or party for undermining the people.
“Where was all the outrage from Democrats and the opposition party (the media) when our jobs were fleeing our country?” [67]

“If the ban were announced with a one week notice, the “bad” would rush into our country during that week. A lot of bad “dudes” our there!” [65]

“FAKE NEWS media knowingly doesn’t tell the truth. A great danger to our country. The failing @nytimes has become a joke. Likewise @CNN. Sad!” [205]

A smaller proportion of Trump’s tweets employs all three investigated elements. Trump refers to the people, criticises the elites and excludes actors. Most of those tweets during the first 50 days in office concern immigration policies that Trump aims to employ (the travel ban) but are not approved by the legal elites [e.g. 97, 98, 101, 102, 103]. Trump claims that by the decisions of the legal elites (anti-elitism) dangerous and bad people from outside come into the US (exclusionism), into ‘our country’, the country of the people (people centrism).

“What is our country coming to when a judge can halt a Homeland Security travel ban and anyone, even with bad intentions, can come into the U.S.?” [97]

“Because the ban was lifted by a judge, many very bad and dangerous people may be pouring into our country. A terrible decision” [98]

“I have instructed Homeland Security to check people coming into our country VERY CAREFULLY. The courts are making the job very difficult!” [103]

All in all, this analysis shows that in the majority (58%) of the cases Trump employs populist rhetoric in his tweets. 42% of the sample does not contain any populist features. Considering Jagers and Walgraves (2007) definition of a thin and a thick populism, one can see that Trump’s tweets mainly contain a thin form of populism referring to one populist feature in 41% of the cases. A smaller part of the sample, around 17% contains two or all three main elements of populist rhetoric and can therefore be defined as ‘thick populism’.

Also, this analysis shows that contrary to the findings of Rooduijn et al. (2014) Donald Trump does not tone down his populism after experiencing the electoral success. He still employs populist rhetoric to a great extent.
Discussion and conclusion

The long and rich history of political communication demonstrates that politicians have used several outlets to reach voters, from newspaper and radio to television and social media. Nowadays, it is possible for politicians to reach millions of users, and strategically set their agenda at all times of the day using new media platforms – and most importantly, bypassing the media and their gatekeeper mechanism (Mancini 2011).

The main goal of this study was to determine how Donald Trump, the President of the United States, uses Twitter as a tool for political communication and to understand patterns of populist rhetoric that Trump is assumably employing. Therefore, Trump’s tweets during the first 50 days of his presidency have been analysed in order to see whether the President uses the social media platform to disseminate populist messages.

In the following, to conclude this study, I want to answer and discuss the research question that have been asked in the beginning. Furthermore, I want to discuss whether Trump has initiated a new era of political communication.

Answering the research questions

First of all, it is about to answer the question on how Trump is performing on Twitter taking his reach in consideration. The analysis shows that Donald Trump is using the platform Twitter for political communication considerably more than other political leaders. The President of the United States is tweeting every single day five times on average which makes him tweet not only quantitatively the most but also the most consistently. In terms of his network potential one can see that with nearly 30 million followers Trump is the politician with the second widest network worldwide.

Secondly, I wanted to find what patterns of populist rhetoric one can identify in Donald Trump’s tweets. The analysis demonstrates clearly that the President applies populist rhetoric throughout his twitter postings on different levels. Three key elements of populist rhetoric appear in Trump’s tweets more or less distinctively.

For one thing, Trump tends to emphasise the central position of the people very distinctively in a great part of his tweets. In this way, Trump describes himself as closely tied to the people, underlines the sovereignty of the people, and presents himself as their advocate claiming that he will take care of the people’s needs and solve all their fundamental problems.

Moreover, Trump shows anti-establishment attitudes to a great extend in his tweets. The President blames above all political, media and also legal elites for certain problems in society. Political elites are criticised for mismanagement in the former government or obstructing his current administration. Media elites such as newspapers or broadcasting services are accused
of distributing incorrect information about him as a President and his governance. Trump also undermines the authority of legal elites such as courts and layers accusing them of allegedly misjudgements. In all of those anti-establishment remarks Trump employs a strong blame language criticising elites for incompetence and wrong decision-making.

In addition to that, one can also observe a third characteristic of populist rhetoric in Trump’s tweets. The President is excluding certain actors from ‘the people’. He is picturing people coming into the country (foreigners or immigrants) as a threat to the security of the people.

In particular the reference of the people and the anti-establishment remarks are recurring patterns that appear again and again throughout Trump’s tweets. The exclusionism statements seem to occur mainly in connection with a certain case (the travel ban executive order), nevertheless it shows that Trump employs all main features of populism in his tweets. All in all, most of his tweets have a thin populism, still, Trump also combines different features in one tweet what can be considered as a ‘thick populism’. To answer the question: one can identify patterns of populist rhetoric in Trump’s tweets since he is targeting elites, blaming those, and referring to the people.

After answering the research questions, I want to discuss a topic that is of a more general interest for this study.

Twitter-Trump - a new era of political communication?

In the beginning of this thesis the development of political communication has been discussed and three main eras in the evolution of the field defined – the latest and most recent phase of political communication characterized by the development of social media platforms. Even though social media has been an influential tool for political communication since a decade, Trump is said to introduce a new dynamic to political communication with his different communication style and way of approaching his audience mainly via Twitter (Enli 2017). Trump showed the world that it does not take a great budget and big television commercials to run a campaign. Trump ‘embraced social media, a tool that proved a powerful counterpart to press attention’ (Well et al. 2016, 670). Twitter became his trademark. Now, the question arises whether Trump introduces a new era of political communication that can do without the traditional media outlets and can solely be based on social media campaigning.

To answer this, one has to consider the main characteristic that distinguishes Trump’s communication to that of his competitors and predecessors on social media (mainly Twitter) and that are crucial for his success: his interactivity and authenticity. Different scholars (e.g. Adams and McCorkindale 2010; Elter 2013; Enli 2017; Medina and Muñoz 2014) state that most politicians do not use the new platforms to their full potential since social media campaigns tend to stick with a one-way communication rather than include the general public.
in the political processes and interact with them. Trump, on the contrary, seems to understand social media, in particular the Twitter environment, and is naturally acting on it. Most importantly, Trump frequently responds to his followers, implements a two-way communication and is pure (Elin and Skogerbo 2013; Hwang 2016). By that, Trump is able to build up a great network on Twitter and produce and distribute his own campaign apart from the mainstream media following the network media logic. Still, Trump gets to be part of the news media because he counts on dramatization and spectacularisation of his messages that then will be picked up by the media (Manicini 2011). Thereby, Trump follows a hybrid communication strategy – taking advantage of both the media logic and the network media logic. His main communication instrument is social media but at the same time he addresses the mass media or his messages get picked up by the traditional media (more detailed description in the chapter about ‘Network media logic’).

Trump employs a new style of political communication but nevertheless, this is not enough evidence to call it a new era of political communication. One can rather say that it is a new stage and a new development of the third era of political communication. One can also contemplate that Trump was the first to introduce the proper and comprehensive way of social media campaigning like it is supposed to be – interactive, short, fast, and emotional.

**Suggestions for future research**

All in all, it becomes clear that it needs more research on the political communication of political leaders through different social media platforms. Until now, mainly the political communication during campaigning periods has been analysed – but the time after the campaigns has been payed to only little attention.

Moreover, the analysis of this study showed that it is complicated to compare the findings since there has been done only little research on the dissemination of populist rhetoric via the social media platform Twitter. In this context, one could also suggest to examine whether in particular the platform Twitter might be a convenient tool for populist politicians.
References


Klinger, Ulrike and Svensson, Jakob (2015). The emergence of network media logic in political communication: A theoretical approach, *new media & society*, 17 (8), 1241-1257.


## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Codebook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr.</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Values</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Follower reaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Likes</td>
<td>Number of likes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Retweets</td>
<td>Number of retweets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>People-centrism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3   | People-centrism              | 0 = Reference not made  
1 = Reference made | “We must keep “evil” out of our country!” [90] |                                                                         |
|     | Type of reference            | 0 = None  
1 = The people/ society/ nation etc.  
2 = The American people, Americans, the USA, etc.  
3 = We  
4 = Our country/ nation/ society etc. |                                                                         |
| 4   | Sovereignty of the people    | 0 = Argument not made  
1 = Argument made | “January 20th 2017, will be remembered as the day the people became the rulers of the nation again.” [7] |                                                                         |
| 5   | The populist leader          | 0 = Argument not made  
1 = Argument made | “As your president I have no higher duty than to protect the lives of the American people.” [35] |                                                                         |
|     | Anti-elitism                  |                                                                        |                                                                         |
| 6   | Anti-elitism                 | 0 = Argument not made  
1 = Argument made | “The fake news media is going crazy with their conspiracy theories and blind hatred. @MSNBC & @CNN are unwatchable […].” [162] |                                                                         |
| 7   | Type of elite                | 0 = None  
1 = Political elites  
2 = Media elites  
3 = Economic elites  
4 = Legal elites  
5 = other |                                                                         |
|     | Reason for criticism         | 0 = None  
1 = Economic and finance  
2 = Immigration and culture  
3 = Law and order  
4 = Politics  
5 = Media coverage  
6 = Other |                                                                         |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exclusionism</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>Exclusionism</th>
<th>0 = Argument not made</th>
<th>1 = Argument made</th>
<th>“If the ban were announced with a one week notice, the “bad” would rush into our country during that week. A lot of bad “dudes” out there!” [65]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excluded actor(s)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Excluded actor(s)</td>
<td>0 = none</td>
<td>1 = immigrants or foreigners</td>
<td>2 = criminals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration threat narrative</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Immigration threat narrative</td>
<td>0 = Argument not made</td>
<td>1 = Argument made</td>
<td>“There is nothing nice about searching for terrorists before they can enter our country. […]” [64]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of threat</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Type of threat</td>
<td>0 = none</td>
<td>1 = Economic threat</td>
<td>2 = Security threat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Coding instructions**

**People-centrism**

Does Donald Trump refer to ‘the people’? Each and every reference to the people is included. This can be directly by means of terms such as ‘the people’, ‘the citizens’, ‘the society’, ‘the men and women of our country’, ‘the Americans’, ‘America’, ‘the American people’, etc. or more indirectly by using terms such as ‘our nation’, ‘our culture’, ‘we’, etc. Anything that is stressing the homogeneity of ‘the people’ is coded.

**Sovereignty of the people**

Does Donald Trump appeal to the sovereignty of the people? The people are indirectly or directly referred to as the origin of power. This category includes any references to the power of the people and the popular will as the ultimate center of democracy. The elites are accused of having taken the power away from the people, the populist says to restore the sovereignty of the people. The people are considered to have the power to change. The popular will (with help of the populist leader) is controlling and ruling, bringing change.

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13 In case one post would contain several values of one variable, the first value was coded. However, this special case only occurred four times during the entire coding process.
“What truly matters is not which party controls our government, but whether our government is controlled by the people.” [6]

“We will bring back our jobs. We will bring back our borders. We will bring back our wealth – and we will bring back our dreams!” [9]

The populist leader advocating the people

Does Donald Trump appear as the problem solver? This category includes any references of Donald Trump being closely tied to the people or as part of the people trying to find solutions for their good. As a problem solver he refers to the positive developments that he has been achieved or is planning to achieve for the people. Does Trump as a leader see the people’s needs and demands as inviolable, places them above everything else in society and signals to protect them (Engesser et al. 2016, 4)? Expressions like ‘I will ... (+action)’ can be indicators.


“Buy American & hire American are the principles at the core of my agenda, which is: JOBS, JOBS, JOBS! [...]” [247]

“I promise that our administration will ALWAYS have your back. We will ALWAYS be with you!” [50]

Anti-elitism

Does Trump criticize elites? The tweet contains a negative statement about another actor(s) or critical remark about proposed or enacted policies. The adversarial tweets can contain criticism directed towards an individual or groups of people. Even though elites are not individuals, criticism regarding individuals can be seen as anti-elitism if these people represent a certain elite (for example Barack Obama represents the Democratic Party). Indicators can also be wordings such as: the establishment, the old parties, the rich etc. (VanKessel and Castelein 2016).

Criticism against politics can be directed against government policies, against an individual politician, against a party, or against a group of parties. Media targets of criticism can be individual journalists, broadcast or television channels, newspapers or magazines, media groups, or all media (the media). Economic elites refer to businesses or businessman. Legal elites include any governmental institutions of the legal system such as courts, judges etc.

“The Democrats had to come up with a story as to why they lost the election, and so badly (306), so they made up a story – Russia. Fake news!” [177]

“It is so pathetic that the Dems have still not approved by full Cabinet.” [228]
“One of the most effective press conferences I’ve ever seen!” says Rush Limbaugh. Many agree. Yet FAKE MEDIA calls it differently. Dishonest.” [185]

Exclusionism
Does Trump express negative opinions regarding ‘others’? ‘Others’ can be persons or groups who are perceived as not belonging to ‘the people’ the authors identify themselves with. Exclusion happens when Trump says for example that people from some countries cannot enter the USA since he is differentiating people from the people living in America. Indicators can be wordings such as: they, these people, certain people, foreign country, etc.

“The judge opens our country to potential terrorists and others that do not have our best interests at heart. Bad people are very happy!” [101]

“Big increase in traffic into our country from certain areas, while our people are far more vulnerable, as we wait for what should be EASY D!” [120]

Immigration threat narrative
Does Trump invoke any kind of immigration threat narrative? The tweet contains any reference of a foreigner or immigrant considered being some kind of threat for ‘the people’, for the American society.

“Everybody is arguing whether or not it is a BAN. Call it what you want, it is about keeping bad people (with bad intentions) out of the country!” [75]

“Our legal system is broken! “77% of refugees allowed into U.S. since travel reprieve hail from seven suspect countries.” (WT) SO DANGEROUS!” [136]
Appendix 2: Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Likes</th>
<th>RT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.01.2017</td>
<td>01:40</td>
<td>Thank you for joining us at the Lincoln Memorial tonight- a very special evening! Together, we are going to MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!</td>
<td>167K</td>
<td>34,5K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>20.01.2017</td>
<td>05:24</td>
<td>Thank you for a wonderful evening in Washington, D.C. #Inauguration</td>
<td>114K</td>
<td>21K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>20.01.2017</td>
<td>13:31</td>
<td>It all begins today! I will see you at 11:00 A.M. for the swearing-in. THE MOVEMENT CONTINUES - THE WORK BEGINS!</td>
<td>271K</td>
<td>71,4K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>20.01.2017</td>
<td>18:51</td>
<td>Today we are not merely transferring power from one Administration to another, or from one party to another - but we are transferring …</td>
<td>111K</td>
<td>20,3K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.01.2017</td>
<td>18:51</td>
<td>power from Washington, D.C. and giving it back to you, the American People #InaugurationDay</td>
<td>92K</td>
<td>18,6K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>20.01.2017</td>
<td>18:52</td>
<td>What truly matters is not which party controls our government, but whether our government is controlled by the people.</td>
<td>182K</td>
<td>43,3K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>20.01.2017</td>
<td>18:53</td>
<td>January 20th 2017, will be remembered as the day the people became the rulers of the nation again.</td>
<td>220K</td>
<td>61,3K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>20.01.2017</td>
<td>18:54</td>
<td>The forgotten men and women of our country will be forgotten no longer. From this moment on, it's going to be #AmericaFirst [Emoji]</td>
<td>149K</td>
<td>35,4K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>20.01.2017</td>
<td>18:54</td>
<td>We will bring back our jobs. We will bring back our borders. We will bring back our wealth - and we will bring back our dreams!</td>
<td>175K</td>
<td>37,9K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>20.01.2017</td>
<td>18:55</td>
<td>We will follow two simple rules: BUY AMERICAN &amp; HIRE AMERICAN! #InaugurationDay #MAGA [Emoji]</td>
<td>163K</td>
<td>38,5K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>20.01.2017</td>
<td>18:58</td>
<td>It is time to remember that… [Link]</td>
<td>59,6K</td>
<td>9,264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>20.01.2017</td>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>So to all Americans, in every city near and far, small and large, from mountain to mountain… [Link]</td>
<td>87,3K</td>
<td>14,1K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>20.01.2017</td>
<td>19:13</td>
<td>TO ALL AMERICANS [Emoji] [Link]</td>
<td>93K</td>
<td>16,7K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>21.01.2017</td>
<td>05:56</td>
<td>THANK YOU for another wonderful evening in Washington, D.C. TOGETHER, we will MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN</td>
<td>292K</td>
<td>53K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>21.01.2017</td>
<td>12:53</td>
<td>A fantastic day and evening in Washington D.C. Thank you to @FoxNews and so many other news outlets for the GREAT reviews of the speech!</td>
<td>179K</td>
<td>23,5K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>21.01.2017</td>
<td>22:40</td>
<td>RT The White House: &quot;Do not allow anyone to tell you that it cannot be done. No challenge can match the HEART and FIGHT and SPIRIT of America.&quot; - @POTUS</td>
<td>127K</td>
<td>28,2K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>22.01.2017</td>
<td>13:35</td>
<td>Had a great meeting at CIA Headquarters yesterday, packed house, paid great respect to Wall, long standing ovations, amazing people. WIN!</td>
<td>129K</td>
<td>17,1K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>22.01.2017</td>
<td>13:47</td>
<td>Watched protests yesterday but was under the impression that we just had an election! Why didn't these people vote? Celebs hurt cause badly.</td>
<td>216K</td>
<td>46,3K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>22.01.2017</td>
<td>13:51</td>
<td>Wow, television ratings just out: 31 million people watched the Inauguration, 11 million more than the very good ratings from 4 years ago!</td>
<td>220K</td>
<td>40,6K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>22.01.2017</td>
<td>15:23</td>
<td>Peaceful protests are the hallmark of our democracy. Even if I don't always agree, I recognize the rights of people to express their views.</td>
<td>394K</td>
<td>82,6K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>23.01.2017</td>
<td>12:38</td>
<td>Busy week planned with a heavy focus on jobs and national security. Top executives coming in a 9:00 A.M. to talk manufacturing in America.</td>
<td>180K</td>
<td>27K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>24.01.2017</td>
<td>12:11</td>
<td>Will be meeting at 9:00 with top automobile executives concerning jobs in America. I want new plants to be built here for cars sold here!</td>
<td>156K</td>
<td>24K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>24.01.2017</td>
<td>17:58</td>
<td>A photo delivered yesterday that will be displayed in the upper/lower press hall. Thank you Abbas!</td>
<td>110K</td>
<td>21,1K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>24.01.2017</td>
<td>18:04</td>
<td>Great meeting with automobile industry leaders at the @WhiteHouse this morning. Together, we will #MAGA</td>
<td>100K</td>
<td>16,4K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>24.01.2017</td>
<td>18:49</td>
<td>Signing orders to move forward with the construction of the Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines in the Oval Office.</td>
<td>113K</td>
<td>26K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>25.01.2017</td>
<td>01:46</td>
<td>Great meeting with Ford CEO Mark Fields and General Motors CEO Mary Barra at the @WhiteHouse today.</td>
<td>102K</td>
<td>18,8K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>25.01.2017</td>
<td>03:16</td>
<td>Congratulations to @FoxNews for being number one in inauguration ratings. They were many times higher than FAKE NEWS @CNN - public is smart!</td>
<td>164K</td>
<td>32,5K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>25.01.2017</td>
<td>03:25</td>
<td>If Chicago doesn't fix the horrible &quot;carnage&quot; going on, 228 shootings in 2017 with 42 killings (up 24% from 2016), I will send in the Feds!</td>
<td>212K</td>
<td>56,8K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>25.01.2017</td>
<td>03:37</td>
<td>Big day planned on NATIONAL SECURITY tomorrow. Among many other things, we will build the wall!</td>
<td>198K</td>
<td>54,7K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>25.01.2017</td>
<td>13:10</td>
<td>I will be asking for a major investigation into VOTER FRAUD, including those registered to vote in two states, those who are illegal and...</td>
<td>131K</td>
<td>26,2K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>25.01.2017</td>
<td>13:13</td>
<td>even, those registered to vote who are dead (and many for a long time). Depending on results, we will strengthen up voting procedures</td>
<td>108K</td>
<td>19K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>25.01.2017</td>
<td>13:17</td>
<td>I will be making my supreme Court pick on Thursday of next week. Thank you!</td>
<td>134K</td>
<td>21,9K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>25.01.2017</td>
<td>23:05</td>
<td>I will be interviewed by @DavidMuir tonight at 10 o'clock on @ABC. Will be my first interview from the White House. Enjoy</td>
<td>76,7K</td>
<td>12,5K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>26.01.2017</td>
<td>01:03</td>
<td>Beginning today, the United States of America gets back control of its borders. Full speech for today @DHSgov; [Link]</td>
<td>111K</td>
<td>23,3K</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As your president, I have no higher duty than to protect the lives of the American people.

72

When will the Democrats give us our Attorney General and rest of Cabinet!
The Supreme Court and mic did not work. They have nothing going but to obstruct. Now have an Obama A.G.
The Democrats are dead! Small business like we haven't had in many, many decades!
The American dream is back. We're going to create an environment for small business to thrive. 01:31

Where was all the outrage from Democrats and the opposition party (the not-so-Cooperative Supreme Court). It will be announced live on Tuesday at 8:00 P.M. (W.H.)

The ban on travel from seven nations is going well with very few problems. MAKE AMERICA SAFE AGAIN!

If the ban were announced with a one week notice, the "bad" would rush into our country during that week. A lot of bad "dudes" out there!

There is nothing nice about searching for terrorists before they can enter our country. This was a big part of my campaign. Study the world!

protesters and the tears of Senator Schumer. Secretary Kelly said that all Big problems at airports were caused by Delta computer outage,….

Enjoy!

I will be interviewed by @SeanHannity on @FoxNews at 10:00pm tonight. Enjoy!

Statement Regarding Recent Executive Order Concerning Extreme Vetting: [Link]

The #MarchForLife is so important. To all of you, enjoy your day and embrace your gavel.

deficits & little help on the very weak border must change, NOW! Mexico has taken advantage of the U.S. for long enough. Massive trade deficits & little help on the very weak border must change, NOW! The U.S. has a 60 billion dollar trade deficit with Mexico. It has been a onesided deal from the beginning of NAFTA with massive numbers of jobs and companies lost. If Mexico is unwilling to pay for the badly needed wall, then it would be better to cancel the upcoming meeting.

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The joint statement of former presidential candidates John McCain & Lindsey Graham is wrong - they are sadly weak on immigration. The two…

Somebody with aptitude and conviction should buy the FAKE NEWS and make it better!

Copyrighted to its….

Congressional @GOP Retreat in Philadelphia, PA, this afternoon w/ @VP, @SenateMajLdr, @SpeakerRyan. Thank you for your support!

Statement on International Holocaust Remembrance Day: [Link] Our country needs strong borders and extreme vetting, NOW. Look what is happening all over Europe and, indeed, the world - a horrible mess!

Looking at the number of lawless illegal aliens entering the country from all over Europe and, indeed, the world - a horrible mess!

There is nothing nice about searching for terrorists before they can enter our country. This was a big part of my campaign. Study the world!

protesters and the tears of Senator Schumer. Secretary Kelly said that all Big problems at airports were caused by Delta computer outage,….

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The joint statement of former presidential candidates John McCain & Lindsey Graham is wrong - they are sadly weak on immigration. The two…

Somebody with aptitude and conviction should buy the FAKE NEWS and make it better!

Copyrighted to its….
Join me live from the @WhiteHouse. [Link]

Hope you like my nomination of Judge Neil Gorsuch for the United States Supreme Court. He is a good and brilliant man, respected by all.

Everybody is arguing whether or not it is a BAN. Call it what you want, it is about keeping bad people (with bad intentions) out of the country!

Iran is rapidly taking over even more and more of Iraq even after the U.S. has squandered three trillion dollars there. Obvious long ago!

Do you believe it? The Obama Administration agreed to take thousands of illegal immigrants from Australia. Why? I will study this dump deal!

If U.C. Berkeley does not allow free speech and practices violence on innocent people with a different point of view - NO FEDERAL FUNDS?

Congratulations to Rex Tillerson on being sworn in as our new Secretary of State. He will be a star!

Attending Chief Ryan Owens’ Dignified Transfer yesterday with my daughter Ivanka was my great honor. To a great and brave man - thank you!

Iran has been formally PUT ON NOTICE for firing a ballistic missile. Should have been thankful for the terrible deal the U.S. made with them!

Iran was on its last legs and ready to collapse until the opinion of this brilliant man, respected by all.

As a country VERY CAREFULLY. The courts are making the job very difficult!

I have instructed Homeland Security to check people coming into our country to potential terrorists and others that do not have our best interests at heart. Bad people are very happy!

The judge opens up our court to potential terrorists and others that do not have our best interests at heart. Bad people are very happy!

Everybody is arguing whether or not it is a BAN. Call it what you want, it is about keeping bad people (with bad intentions) out of the country!

Countries charge U.S. companies taxes or tariffs while the U.S. charges them nothing or little. We should charge them SAME as they charge us!

They know if certain people are allowed in it’s death & destruction!

The opinion of this so-called judge, which essentially takes law-enforcement away from our country, is ridiculous and will be overturned!

After being forced to apologize for its bad and inaccurate coverage of me after winning the election, the FAKE NEWS @nytimes is still lost!

The judge opens up our country to potential terrorists and others that do not have our best interests at heart. Bad people are very happy!

I have instructed Homeland Security to check people coming into our country VERY CAREFULLY. The courts are making the job very difficult!

Enjoy the #SuperBowl with @oreillyfactor airs tonight at 8:00 P.M. Enjoy!

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110 07.02.2017 03:33 The failing @nytimes was forced to apologize to its subscribers for the poor reporting it did on my election win. Now they are worse! 93K 16,6K
111 07.02.2017 03:49 The threat from radical Islamic terrorism is very real, just look at what is happening in Europe and the Middle-East. Courts must act fast! 147K 32,9K
112 07.02.2017 13:11 I don’t know Putin, have no ties in Russia, and the haters are going crazy - yet Obama can make a deal with Iran, #1 in terror, no problem! 190K 51K
113 07.02.2017 17:25 An honor having the National Sheriffs’ Assoc. Join me at the @WhiteHouse. Incredible men & women who protect & serve 24/7/365. THANK YOU! 109K 18,5K
114 08.02.2017 02:04 It is a disgrace that my full Cabinet is still not in place, the longest such delay in the history of our country. Obstruction by Democrats! 159K 36,8K
115 08.02.2017 13:03 If the U.S. does not win this case as it so obviously should, we can never have the security and safety to which we are entitled. Politics! 116K 22,4K
116 08.02.2017 14:04 I will be speaking at 9:00 A.M. today to Police Chiefs and Sheriffs and will be discussing the horrible, dangerous and wrong decision….. 75,7K 10,9K
117 08.02.2017 16:23 Thank you to our great Police Chiefs & Sheriffs for your leadership & service. You have a true friend in the @WhiteHouse. We support you! 90,9K 16,3K
118 08.02.2017 16:51 My daughter Ivanka has been treated so unfairly by @Nordstrom. She is a great person -- always pushing me to do the right thing! Terrible! 144K 27,5K
119 08.02.2017 16:54 "16 Fake News Stories Reporters Have Run Since Trump Won" [Link] 64,9K 19,3K
120 08.02.2017 18:41 Big increase in traffic into our country from certain areas, while our people are far more vulnerable, as we wait for what should be EASY DJ! 89,5K 17,7K
121 08.02.2017 20:22 Thank you Brian Krzanich, CEO of @Intel. A great achievement ($7 BILLION) in American INNOVATION and JOBS! #AmericaFirst [Emoji] 98,7K 22,2K
122 08.02.2017 20:39 "Immigration Ban Is One Of Trump's Most Popular Orders So Far" 124K 30,7K
123 08.02.2017 22:46 "Majority in Leading EU Nations Support Trump-Style Travel Ban" Poll of more than 10,000 people in 100 countries… [Link] 83,9K 22K
124 08.02.2017 23:07 "Trump administration seen as more truthful than news media" [Link] 88,8K 17,8K
125 09.02.2017 02:05 Congratulations to our new Attorney General, @SenatorsSessions! [Link to live event] 165K 32,9K
126 09.02.2017 12:57 Sen. Richard Blumenthal, who never fought in Vietnam when he said for years he had (major lie), now misrepresents what Judge Gorsuch told him? 85,7K 19,5K
127 09.02.2017 14:19 Chris Cuomo, in his interview with Sen. Blumenthal, never asked him about his long-term lie about his brave "service" in Vietnam. FAKE NEWS! 74,5K 15K
128 09.02.2017 14:26 Sen. McCain should not be talking about the success or failure of a mission to the media. Only emboldens the enemy! He's been losing so….. 86,6K 15,9K
129 09.02.2017 14:31 …long he doesn't know how to win anymore, just look at the mess our country is in - bogged down in conflict all over the place. Our hero.. 68,7K 11,9K
130 09.02.2017 14:52 …Ryan died on a winning mission (according to General Mattis), not a "failure". Time for the U.S. to get smart and start winning again! 92,1K 15K
131 09.02.2017 16:58 Join us live in the Oval Office for the swearing in of our new Attorney General, @SenatorSessions! [Link to live event] 71,9K 10,8K
132 10.02.2017 00:35 SEE YOU IN COURT. THE SECURITY OF OUR NATION IS AT STAKE! 239K 67,1K
133 10.02.2017 14:15 LAWFARE: “Remarkably, in this entire opinion, the panel did not bother to cite this (the) statute.” A disgraceful decision! 90,2K 17,7K
134 10.02.2017 14:35 The failing @nytimes does major FAKE NEWS China story saying “Mr. Xi has not spoken to Mr. Trump since Nov. 14.” We spoke at length yesterday! 108K 24K
135 11.02.2017 00:24 Heading to Joint Base Andrews on #MarineOne with Prime Minister Shinzo earlier today. 162K 41,3K
136 11.02.2017 13:12 Our legal system is broken! “77% of refugees allowed into U.S. since travel reprieve hail from seven suspect countries.” (WT) SO DANGEROUS! 102K 23,2K
137 11.02.2017 14:18 I am reading that the great border WALL will cost more than the government originally thought, but I have not gotten involved in the….. 77,9K 14,1K
138 11.02.2017 14:24 …..design or negotiations yet. When I do, just like with the F-35 Fighter Jet or the Air Force One Program, price will come WAY DOWN! 84,6K 13K
139 11.02.2017 14:33 Melania and I are hosting Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Mrs. Abe at Mar-a-Lago in Palm Beach, Fla. They are a wonderful couple! 121K 17,1K
140 11.02.2017 19:28 Having a great time hosting Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in the United States! [Link to Facebook page] 93,2K 17,1K
141 12.02.2017 00:00 I am so proud of my daughter Ivanka. To be abused and treated so badly by the media, and to still hold her head so high, is truly wonderful! 209K 28,7K
142 12.02.2017 00:15 Played golf today with Prime Minister Abe of Japan and @TheBig_Easy, Ernie Els, and had a great time. Japan is very well represented! 85K 13,4K
143 12.02.2017 00:24 A working dinner tonight with Prime Minister Abe of Japan, and his representatives, at the Winter White House (Mar-a-Lago). Very good talks! 98,5K 14K
144 12.02.2017 04:20 RT Dan Scavino Jr.: LIVE Joint Statement by President Trump and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe: [Link] 25,8K 4863
145 12.02.2017 06:02 #ICYMI: Joint Statement with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on North Korea. 62,9K 14,8K
146 12.02.2017 12:34 The crackdown on illegal criminals is merely the keeping of my campaign promise. Gang members, drug dealers & others are being removed! 150K 29,7K
147 12.02.2017 12:55 72% of refugees admitted into U.S. (2/3-2/11) during COURT BREAKDOWN are from 7 countries: SYRIA, IRAQ, SOMALIA, IRAN, SUDAN, LIBYA & YEMEN 81,4K 22,7K

148 12.02.2017 13:14 While on FAKE NEWS @CNN, Bernie Sanders was cut off for using the term fake news to describe his network. They said technical difficulties! 114K 25,2K

149 12.02.2017 14:04 After two days of very productive talks, Prime Minister Abe is heading back to Japan. L 83,7K 13,3K

150 12.02.2017 14:23 I know Mark Cuban well. He backed me big-time but I wasn't interested in taking all of his calls. He's not smart enough to run for president! 83,2K 15,4K

151 12.02.2017 16:41 Congratulations Stephen Miller - on representing me this morning on the various Sunday morning shows. Great job! 104K 16,2K

152 12.02.2017 23:19 Just leaving Florida. Big crowds of enthusiastic supporters lining the road that the FAKE NEWS media refuses to mention. Very dishonest! 143K 25,7K

153 13.02.2017 16:53 Today I will meet with Canadien PM Trudeau and a group of leading business women to discuss women in the workforce. [Link] 75K 11,8K

154 13.02.2017 17:59 Welcome to the @WhiteHouse Prime Minister @JustinTrudeau! 85,6K 13,5K

155 13.02.2017 19:50 Wonderful meeting with Canadian PM @JustinTrudeau and a group of leading CEO's & business women from Canada [Emoji] and the U.S [Emoji] 88,2K 15,5K

156 14.02.2017 03:57 Congratulations Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin! ICYMI - watch here: [Link] 64,6K 11K

157 14.02.2017 04:30 Congratulations to our new #VSA Secretary Dr. David Shulkin. Time to take care of Veterans who have fought to protect our country! 91,7K 16,4K

158 14.02.2017 15:28 The real story here is why are there so many illegal leaks coming out of Washington? Will these leaks be happening as I deal on N.Korea etc? 113K 26,8K

159 14.02.2017 21:21 Great parent-teacher listening session this morning with @VP Pence & @usegov Secretary @BetsyDeCor. Watch [Link to Youtube video] 59,6K 11,4K


162 15.02.2017 12:40 The fake news media is going crazy with their conspiracy theories and blind hatred. @MSNBC & CNN are unwatchable. @foxandfriends is great! 106K 26,1K

163 15.02.2017 13:08 This Russian connection non-sense is merely an attempt to cover-up the many mistakes made in Hillary Clinton's losing campaign. 119K 27,8K

164 15.02.2017 13:19 Information is being illegally given to the failing @nytimes & washingtonpost by the intelligence community (NSA and FBI?). Just like Russia 81,3K 21,3K

165 15.02.2017 13:28 Thank you to Eli Lake of The Bloomberg View - "The NSA & FBI … should not interfere in our politics … and is "Very serious situation for USA 78,6K 16,5K

166 15.02.2017 13:42 Crimea was TAKEN by Russia during the Obama Administration. Was Obama too soft on Russia? 102K 25,6K

167 15.02.2017 14:13 The real scandal here is that classified information is illegal given out by "intelligence" like candy. Very un-American! 128K 28,9K

168 15.02.2017 17:34 Great listening session with CEO's of the Retail Industry Leaders Association this morning! 66,8K 10,7K


170 15.02.2017 20:45 Join me in Florida this Saturday at 5pm for a rally at the Orlando-Melbourne International Airport! Tickets: [Link] 72,9K 18K

171 15.02.2017 22:43 Aetna CEO: Obamacare in 'Death Spiral' #RepealAndReplace 59,3K 14,7K

172 16.02.2017 00:59 Venezuela should allow Leopoldo Lopez, a political prisoner & husband of @lilian_tintori (just met w/ @marcorubio) out of prison immediately. 110K 53K

173 16.02.2017 12:34 Stock market hits new high with longest winning streak in decades. Great level of confidence & optimism - even before tax plan rollout! 129K 23,8K

174 16.02.2017 12:58 Leaking, and even illegal classified leaking, has been a big problem in Washington for years. Failing @nytimes (and others) must apologize! 90,7K 17,2K

175 16.02.2017 13:02 The spotlight has finally been put on the low-life leakers! They will be caught! 128K 25,4K

176 16.02.2017 15:10 FAKE NEWS media, which makes up stories and "sources", is far more effective than the discredited Democrats - but they are fading fast! 100K 20K

177 16.02.2017 15:39 The Democrats had to come up with a story as to why they lost the election, and so badly (306), so they made up a story - RUSSIA. Fake news! 122K 27,1K

178 17.02.2017 00:44 "Trump signs bill undoing Obama coal mining rule" 94,7K 18,8K

179 17.02.2017 11:13 Despite the long delays by the Democrats in finally approving Dr. Tom Price, the repeal and replacement of Obamacare is moving fast! 104K 17,4K

180 17.02.2017 12:38 Going to Charleston, South Carolina, in order to spend time with Boeing and talk jobs! Look forward to it. 100K 14,4K

181 17.02.2017 12:43 Thank you for all of the nice statements on the Press Conference yesterday. Rush Limbaugh said one of the greatest ever. Fake media not happy! 152K 26,6K

182 17.02.2017 14:16 General Keith Kellogg, who I have known for a long time, is very much in play for NSA - as are three others. 70,4K 11K

183 17.02.2017 16:34 Join me at 11:00am: Watch here: [Link] 57,2K 10K

48
224 223 222 221 220 219 218 217 216 215 214 213 212 211 210 209 208 207 206 205 204 203 202 201 200 199 198 197 196 195 194 193 192 191 190 189 188 187 186 185 184

184 17.02.2017 22:48 The FAKE NEWS media (failing @nytimes, @NBCNews, @ABC, @CBS, @CNN) is not my enemy, it is the enemy of the American People! 162K 51,2K
185 18.02.2017 00:15 "One of the most effective press conferences I've ever seen!" says Rush Limbaugh. Many agree. Yet FAKE MEDIA calls it differently! Dishonest 122K 21,9K
186 18.02.2017 01:02 Looking forward to the Florida rally tomorrow. Big crowd expected! 100K 14,2K
187 18.02.2017 14:31 Don't believe the main stream (fake news) media. The White House is running VERY WELL. I inherited a MESS and am in the process of fixing it. 188K 39,5K
188 18.02.2017 14:51 Will be having many meetings this weekend at The Southern White House. Big 5:00 P.M. speech in Melbourne, Florida. A lot to talk about! 100K 15,4K
189 19.02.2017 22:57 My statement as to what's happening in Sweden was in reference to a story that was broadcast on @FoxNews concerning immigration & Sweden. 114K 26,5K
190 20.02.2017 15:15 Give the public a break - The FAKE NEWS media is trying to say that large scale immigration in Sweden is working out just beautifully. NOT! 143K 35,3K
191 20.02.2017 15:33 HAPPY PRESIDENTS DAY - MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN! 245K 49,4K
192 20.02.2017 22:00 Just named General H.R. McMaster National Security Advisor. 108K 15,9K
195 22.02.2017 00:23 The so-called angry crowds in home districts of some Republicans are actually, in numerous cases, planned out by liberal activists. Sad! 120K 26,3K
196 22.02.2017 13:20 One thing I will say about Rep. Keith Ellison, in his fight to lead the DNC, is that the was the one who predicted early that I would win! 80,2K 12,2K
199 24.02.2017 01:01 Seven people shot and killed yesterday in Chicago. What is going on there - totally out of control. Chicago needs help! 110K 23,4K
200 24.02.2017 01:06 Big interview tonight by Henry Kravis at The Business Council of Washington. Looking forward to it! 58,8K 8348
201 24.02.2017 13:13 The FBI is totally unable to stop the national security "leakers" that have permeated our government for a long time. They can't even..... 81,1K 17,8K
202 24.02.2017 13:36 find the leakers within the FBI itself. Classified information is being given to media that could have a devastating effect on U.S. FIND NOW 102K 21,8K
203 24.02.2017 14:49 Going to CPAC! 72,5K 9022
204 24.02.2017 18:04 "Trump vows to fight 'epidemic' of human trafficking" 92K 20,4K
205 25.02.2017 04:09 FAKE NEWS media knowingly doesn't tell the truth. A great danger to our country. The failing @nytimes has become a joke. Likewise @CNN. Sad! 110K 26,6K
206 25.02.2017 13:25 Maybe the millions of people who voted to MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN should have their own rally. It would be the biggest of them all! 160K 34,9K
207 25.02.2017 14:19 The media has not reported that the National Debt in my first month went down by $12 billion vs $200 billion increase in Obama first mo. 203K 62,2K
208 25.02.2017 14:27 Great optimism for future of U.S. business. AND JOBS, with the DOW having an 11th straight record close. Big tax & regulation cuts coming! 105K 19,9K
209 25.02.2017 19:12 Weekly Address from @WhiteHouse:[Link] 46,3K 10,1K
210 25.02.2017 22:53 I will not be attending the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner this year. Please wish everyone well and have a great evening! 125K 24,1K
211 25.02.2017 23:02 Congratulations to Thomas Perez, who has just been named Chairman of the DNC. I could not be happier for him, or for the Republican Party! 132K 29,1K
212 26.02.2017 12:33 The race for DNC Chairman was, of course, totally "rigged". Bernie's guy, like Bernie himself, never had a chance. Clinton demanded Perez! 88,2K 19,3K
213 26.02.2017 12:42 For the first time the failing @nytimes will take an ad (a bad one) to help save ist failing reputation. Try reporting accurately & fairly! 111K 22K
214 26.02.2017 19:16 Russia talk is FAKE NEWS put out by the Dems, and played up by the media, in order to mask the big election defeat and the illegal leaks! 114K 24,8K
215 26.02.2017 21:13 Big dinner with Governors tonight at White House. Much to be discussed, including healthcare. 107K 15,9K
216 27.02.2017 18:06 Great meeting with CEOs of leading U.S. health insurance companies who provide great healthcare to the American people. 90,4K 15,5K
217 27.02.2017 22:48 GOP now viewed more favorably than Dems, in Trump era (per NBC/WSJ poll) via @HotlineJosh: 71,3K 14,8K
218 28.02.2017 03:43 I will be interviewed on @foxandfriends at 6:00 A.M. Enjoy! 83,7K 11,1K
219 01.03.2017 02:30 Join me live at 9:00 P.M. #JointAddress [Link] 55,4K 7454
220 01.03.2017 02:42 #JointSession #MAGA [Emoji] 64,3K 10,2K
221 01.03.2017 14:38 THANK YOU! 186K 27,7K
222 02.03.2017 12:00 Since November 8th, Election Day, the Stock Market has posted $3.2 trillion in GAINS and consumer confidence is at a 15 year high. Jobs! 177K 37,6K
223 03.03.2017 03:22 Jeff Sessions is an honest man. He did not say anything wrong. He could have stated his response more accurately, but it was clearly not... 103K 20K
224 03.03.2017 03:27 …intentional. This whole narrative is a way of saving face for Democrats losing an election that everyone thought they were supposed… 91,3K 17,6K
225 03.03.2017 03:35 …to win. The Democrats are overplaying their hand. They lost the election, and now they have lost their grip on reality. The real story… 111K 23,4K
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>03:38</td>
<td>...is all of the illegal leaks of classified and other information. It is a total &quot;witch hunt!&quot;</td>
<td>94,2K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>Nick Adams new book, Green Card Warrior, is a must read. The merit-based system is the way to go. Canada, Australia! @foxandfriends</td>
<td>67,4K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>11:19</td>
<td>It is so pathetic that the Dems have still not approved by full Cabinet.</td>
<td>138K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>17:41</td>
<td>Weekly Address. Join me here: [Link]</td>
<td>54,6K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>18:54</td>
<td>We should start an immediate investigation into @SenSchumer and his ties to Russia and Putin. A total hypocrite!</td>
<td>152K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>21:48</td>
<td>We must fix our education system for our kids to Make America Great Again. Wonderful day in Saint Andrew in Orlando.</td>
<td>84K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>22:02</td>
<td>I hereby demand a second investigation, after Schumer, of Pelosi for her close ties to Russia, and lying about it.</td>
<td>123K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>23:13</td>
<td>MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!</td>
<td>124K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>12:26</td>
<td>The first meeting Jeff Sessions had with the Russian Amb was set up by the Obama Administration under education program for 100 Ambassadors....</td>
<td>89,1K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>12:35</td>
<td>Terrible! Just found out that Obama had my &quot;wires tapped&quot; in Trump Tower just before the victory. Nothing found. This is McCarthyism!</td>
<td>145K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>12:42</td>
<td>Just out: The same Russian Ambassador that met Jeff Sessions visited the Obama White House 22 times, and 4 times last year alone.</td>
<td>122K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>12:49</td>
<td>Is it legal for a sitting President to be &quot;wire tapping&quot; a race for president prior to an election? Turned down by court earlier. A NEW LOW!</td>
<td>125K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>12:52</td>
<td>I'd bet a good lawyer could make a great case out of the fact that President Obama was tapping my phones in October, just prior to Election!</td>
<td>133K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>13:02</td>
<td>How low has President Obama gone to tapp my phones during the very sacred election process. This is Nixon/Watergate. Bad (or sick) guy!</td>
<td>164K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>14:19</td>
<td>Arnold Schwarzenegger isn't voluntarily leaving the Apprentice, he was fired by his bad (pathetic) ratings, not by me. Sad end to great show.</td>
<td>108K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>12:32</td>
<td>Is it true the DNC would not allow the FBI access to check server or other equipment after learning it was hacked? Can that be possible?</td>
<td>97,4K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>12:40</td>
<td>Who was it that secretly said to Russian President, &quot;Tell Vladimir that after the election I'll have more flexibility?&quot; @foxandfriends</td>
<td>127K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>13:30</td>
<td>Thank you for the great rallies all across the country. Tremendous support. Make America Great Again!</td>
<td>174K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>22:19</td>
<td>&quot;President Trump Congratulates Exxon Mobil for Job-Creating Investment Program&quot; [Link]</td>
<td>77,4K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>22:22</td>
<td>45,000 construction &amp; manufacturing jobs in the U.S. Gulf Coast region. $20 billion investment. We are already winning again, America!</td>
<td>118K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>22:49</td>
<td>There is an incredible spirit of optimism sweeping the country right now - we're bringing back the JOBS!</td>
<td>110K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>04:49</td>
<td>Buy American &amp; hire American are the principles at the core of my agenda, which is: JOBS, JOBS, JOBS! Thank you @exxonmobil.</td>
<td>88,1K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>04:50</td>
<td>Thank you to @exxonmobil for your $20 billion investment that is creating more than 45,000 manufacturing &amp; construction jobs in the USA!</td>
<td>100K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>12:04</td>
<td>122 vicious prisoners, released by the Obama Administration from Gitmo, have returned to the battlefield. Just another terrible decision!</td>
<td>93,8K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>13:13</td>
<td>Our wonderful new Healthcare Bill is now out for review and negotiation. Obamacare is a complete and total disaster - it is implosion fast!</td>
<td>82,2K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>14:13</td>
<td>For eight years Russia &quot;ran over&quot; President Obama, got stronger and stronger, picked-off Crimea and added missiles. Weak! @foxandfriends</td>
<td>79,6K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>14:41</td>
<td>Don't worry, getting rid of state lines, which will promote competition, will be in phase 2 &amp; 3 of healthcare rollout. @foxandfriends</td>
<td>82,9K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>14:46</td>
<td>I am working on a new system where there will be competition in the Drug Industry. Pricing for the American people will come way down!</td>
<td>126K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>15:14</td>
<td>Don't let the FAKE NEWS tell you that there is big infighting in the Trump Amin. We are getting along great, and getting major things done!</td>
<td>123K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>01:14</td>
<td>I feel sure that my friend @RandPaul will come along with the new and great health care program because he knows Obamacare is a disaster!</td>
<td>82,2K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>12:12</td>
<td>I have tremendous respect for women and the many roles they serve are vital to the fabric of our society and our economy</td>
<td>122K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>12:13</td>
<td>On International Women's Day, join me in honoring the critical role of women here in America &amp; around the world.</td>
<td>116K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>13:11</td>
<td>LinkedIn Workforce Report: January and February were the strongest consecutive months for hiring since August and September 2015</td>
<td>85,7K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>00:50</td>
<td>Met with @PrepCummings today at the @WhiteHouse. Great discussion!</td>
<td>54,7K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>00:54</td>
<td>Great news. We are only just beginning. Together, we are going to MAGA! [Link]</td>
<td>90,7K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>02:16</td>
<td>RT Fox Nation: @realDonaldTrump's First Full Month in Office Sees Biggest Jobs Gain 'In Years': Report: [Link]</td>
<td>48,8K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>18:01</td>
<td>Despite what you hear in the press, healthcare is coming along great. We are talking to many groups and it will end in a beautiful picture!</td>
<td>112K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03.03.2017</td>
<td>23:36</td>
<td>U.S. Consumer Comfort Just Reached Ist Highest Level in a Decade' [Link]</td>
<td>68K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>264</td>
<td>09.03.2017</td>
<td>00:54</td>
<td>Great news. We are only just beginning. Together, we are going to #MAGA! [Link]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>265</td>
<td>10.03.2017</td>
<td>14:29</td>
<td><em>RT Fox&amp;friends:</em> “Never give up… that's the worst thing you could do. There's always a chance.” - Kyle Coddington's message to those also fighting cancer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>266</td>
<td>10.03.2017</td>
<td>14:41</td>
<td><em>RT Drudge Report:</em> GREAT AGAIN: +235,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>267</td>
<td>10.03.2017</td>
<td>16:40</td>
<td>Weekly Address - 11:00 A.M. at the @WhiteHouse! #MAGA [Emoji] [Link]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>