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Reactionary Politics:
Explaining the Psychological Roots of 'Anti' Preferences in European Integration and
Immigration Debates

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Abstract

The concurrent strong waves of anti-EU integration and anti-immigration preferences sweeping across Europe, capitalized on by populist discourses, reflect citizens' economic anxieties brought about by the financial crisis, dormant cultural fears, widespread suspicion towards international institutions, and frustration with 'politics as usual'. Extant electoral and public opinion research provide fragmented and conflicted accounts about the psychological origins of these 'anti' preferences. In this article, a) we articulate a novel overarching theoretical framework that focuses on *reaction as a political orientation* and b) we provide an empirical test of the proposed theory using data from the 2004 and 2014 European Social Survey. Explication of political reaction as driver of political preferences can move research on challenges to democratic representation forward, particularly political disengagement, violent protests, and populist and anti-establishment party vote in the context of the financial crisis.

“The scale of attitudes which different men and women take toward social change may be compared to the solar spectrum. At the opposite ends stand extreme radicalism and uncompromising reaction“.

A. B. Wolfe (1923), p. 229.

This article has a twofold aim: to articulate theoretically the psychological properties of *reactionism* as a cluster political orientation in the context of the financial crisis and the rise of populist party-politics; and to provide an empirical test of reactionism as key driver of co-occurring ‘anti’ preferences on EU integration and immigration. Wolfe (1923) identified *reactionism* as the ideological counterpart of radicalism and progressivism. In its contemporary form, it is increasingly used by scholars to describe the discourse of right-wing populist parties and the political outlook of their supporters in the USA and western Europe (see Corey, 2011; Frazer, 2016; Gervais & Morris, 2018; Harrison & Bruter, 2011; Lilla, 2016; Tenenhaus, 2016; Sullivan, 2017; Wodak, 2015). References to the ‘reactionary mind’, ‘reactionary mood’, ‘reactionary heart’, ‘reactionary tide’, ‘reactionary voter’, ‘reactionary and xenophobic populist parties’, recognize the conceptual links of *reaction* with xenophobia, anti-immigration demands, racism, anti-expert skepticism, anti-establishment sentiment, anti-EU attitudes, but leave its psychological properties largely unexplored.

Capelos et al. (2017) defined *reactionism* as a cluster concept that describes a complex political orientation, combining resentful affectivity with the forceful desire to return to the past. The reactionary orientation draws on conservation values and aversion to what is new. Its affective undertone is the complex emotions of resentment and *ressentiment*, blending anger, fear, nostalgic hope, betrayal and sense of perceived injustice (Capelos & Demertzis, 2018; Lilla, 2016). Evidence of reactionism is empirically traced in engagement and dormant support of illegal and violent political actions, powered by a deepening sense of economic stagnation, anxiety brought about by the financial crisis, and economic and cultural fears of many citizens.

Our proposition to apply the concept of *reactionism* as driver of bundled anti-immigration and anti-EU preferences rests on extant research showing them sharing affective and motivational psychological properties (see also in this volume Curtis & Hassing Nielsen; Manners; Andreouli & Nicholson; Mahendran; Rico & Guinjoan; Peitz et al.), which invites the hypothesis that these preferences could stem from a common orientation. Anti-EU preferences¹ are explained by affective attitudes towards the EU feeding from cultural and identity issues, authoritarian tendencies, opposition to cosmopolitanism and openness (Boomgaarden & Freire, 2009; Boomgaarden et. al., 2011; Evans, 2000 Otjes & Katsanidou, 2017; Teney et. al., 2013). And as the EU requires more transfer of national sovereignty, it stimulates considerations of national identity and immigration². In turn, anti-immigration preferences are linked to feelings towards out-groups (which also shape inter-group relations) and are dependent on socioeconomic vulnerability (low education, weak position in the labour market, economic deprivation) (Kriesi et. al., 2008). And since immigration is portrayed by many right-wing parties as the central danger against the nation-state, anti-immigration preferences are used to explain right-wing voting (Gorodzeisky, 2011; Kunovich, 2004; Semyonov & Glikman, 2009; Sniderman et al., 2000; de Vreese, 2017). Anti-immigration preferences are also linked to conservation values (Davidov et. al., 2008), EU identity considerations and anti-EU attitudes (De Vreese et al., 2008). Many of those who see threat from immigrants to their national identity dislike migrants and do not see any benefits in international cooperation even in the form of EU membership (Boomgaarden et. al., 2011).

These models offer valuable insights to understanding anti-EU and anti-immigration preferences but fail to account for their common core: the resentful reaction towards the

¹ Anti-EU attitudes are framed in the literature as Euroscepticism, and are expressed as the negative preferences towards membership to the European Union and prospects of further integration

² Support for the EU is also linked to utilitarian attitudes connected to economic performance. As a common market, the EU opens national borders to new economic regulations and immigrants, influencing many aspects of life. As the EU regulates economic conditions in its members on issues like wealth redistribution within a state, taxation and government intervention in the economy, it creates tensions for those opposing its economic policies (Kitschelt, 1994).

present and the motivation to change it backwards, in other words the affective and motivational drivers of the reactionary orientation. We propose that analyzing these preferences under the conceptual lens of reaction when they co-occur, instead of considering them as independent phenomena, will allow for a clearer understanding of their complex psychological drivers. Reactionism consolidates under one cluster concept the current piecemeal approaches that examine only some of its parts, compartmentalizing this complex political orientation. As such, it can provide valuable insights towards the understanding of contemporary challenges to democratic representation.

In Europe's current heightened populist environment, reactionism is on the rise. The bundling of anti-immigration and anti-EU preferences is frequent in political rhetoric aimed at strengthening a sense of national sovereignty (Mudde, 2007). The non-specific time where all was better, when the nation thrived using its own powers and was seemingly independent, is captured perfectly by Trump's slogan "Make America Great Again" in the USA, or UKIP's chant to 'take back control' in the UK. In such populist narratives, ethno-cultural diversity, cultural assimilation and globalization impinge upon the sovereignty of the homeland, in ways that integrate cultural, economic and political fears. To be clear, these anti-preferences can occur unbundled and here there is no presumption that they necessarily draw on reactionary orientations. It is our hypothesis that when they co-occur, they are likely evidence of reaction.

We test this theory with data from the European Social Survey, which has been used extensively to study anti-EU and anti-immigration preferences (Hooghe, Huo & Marks, 2007; Bello, 2015; Karreth et. al., 2015). We find that the components of what we label *reactionary orientation* predict bundled anti-EU and anti-immigration preferences across electorates in Europe, and perform particularly well after the financial crisis. Our contribution is two-fold: we articulate a novel overarching theoretical framework that focuses on *reaction as a political orientation*, and we empirically demonstrate that reaction sits at the heart of contemporary

anti-EU and anti-immigration preferences, drawing on a combination of affective and motivational psychological properties.

Reactionism: separating reaction from other -isms

Defining concepts alongside neighboring terms provides construct clarity and is essential for theory development as well as empirical research. Here we briefly discuss the properties that distinguish reactionism from related-isms: populism, radicalism, conservatism, and progressivism.

First, reactionism is neither a by-product of, nor a synonym for *populism*. Reactionism is a *political orientation* shared among citizens that adopt a back-route outlook for the present. Populism, approached either as a thin ideology or as a type of discourse, feeds on the tension between ‘the people’ and the ‘corrupt elite’ (Mudde, 2004; Stavrakakis, 2017) and to this day the literature has failed to demonstrate a single “populist” orientation or ideology among citizens (Rooduijn, 2018). Reactionism can be one such political orientation that explains why individual citizens support populist parties. We argue that populist parties harness the retrospective gaze of reactionism, combining it successfully with anti-establishment and anti-elite narratives. Reactionism will always look backwards (Wolfe, 1923); populist parties *are not necessarily reactionary* but can appeal to citizens’ reactionary orientations; when the mood of the people rests strongly on reaction, populist narratives thrive.

Reactionism is also neither *right nor left*. Although the backward gaze of reactionism is often associated with right ideologies (Gervais & Morris, 2018; Harrison & Bruter, 2011), it is worth noting that left ideologies and narratives are not necessarily forward looking. As Tenenhaus (2016) notes, ‘the left has reactionaries too’. Although they might not want to return *to the past*, they deploy memories and ideas *from the past* to articulate a particular kind

of present and vision for the future (Robinson, 2016), for example leftwing Eurosceptic arguments for the return of an old social Europe (Wallace, 2014). As a case in point, Capelos et al. (2017) identified left-leaning reactionary orientations in Greece during the financial crisis. Reactionism is often confused with radicalism (particularly in references to ‘the radical right’) as both orientations advocate uprooting and a *break from the status quo*. They do however do so in *opposing directions*. Radical politics harbor a desire for the new, whereas reactionary politics foster the desire to return things to the way they were (Capelos et al., 2017).

Reactionism is not *conservatism* either, because conservative politics support the status quo, want to keep things as they are, and oppose change (Hirsh et al., 2010; Wolfe, 1923). The reactionary orientation celebrates the past, dislikes current political developments and does not experience enjoyment in the present. Resentment and melancholy sit at the core of reactionary nostalgia (Demertzis, 2018). Conservatives take comfort in the familiar and embrace tradition, but from a different affective base: their degree of life satisfaction can be high, and they can be hopeful. *Conservatives gone sour* about current conditions could adopt a reactionary longing to return to the safety of the past once they abandon hope for the present.

Reactionism relates to traditionalism, which expresses the willingness to maintain beliefs and practices akin to one’s familiar culture and a clear unwillingness towards change, but it adds resentful affect to traditionalist values. The frustrations of the reactionary orientation are consolidated in the determined desire for change backwards, the restoration of an undefined time in the past, combined with a resentful affectivity and sense of injustice. The

preference for retreat and the preoccupation with what is lost sets reactionism at the opposite side of *progressivism*, evidenced clearly in alt-right verbal attacks against progressive elites³.

Reactionary orientation: the complex cluster of preferences, desires, and emotions

To appreciate the appeal of reaction, we engage with its psychological roots: its perceptions, understandings and insights (cognitions) expressed as issue positions, the values and goals that drive it (motivations) with the aim to achieve goal-oriented outcomes, and the emotions that are inspired by it⁴.

Reactionary issue preferences in the socioeconomic environment of the crisis

We postulate that the content of reaction is a function of the supply side of politics. Currently, reactionism is embedded in a political context where nationalist and populist parties thrive.

Anti-immigration and anti-EU integration narratives are used by niche parties promoting nostalgic evocations of a glorious imagined past, where anxieties were not felt and uncertainties were calmed (Kenny, 2017; Lilla, 2016). While ‘anti’ positions can originate in non-reactionary components, and reactionary positions can extend beyond anti-EU and anti-immigration policies, it is worth exploring *how much* the reactionary cluster of backward-gazing values and resentful affectivity can explain this anti-EU anti-immigration bundle.

Determining other anti- positions related to reactionism depends in part on the availability of data and opens up a significant potential for future studies. Climate-skepticism, anti-expert sentiment, anti-globalization, anti-free trade, anti-science, anti-political correctness are likely candidates in the current populist context.

³ See the reactionary blog *Unqualified Reservations*, and “An Open Letter to Open-Minded Progressives” at <http://unqualified-reservations.blogspot.com/>

⁴ Cognitions, emotions and motivations are related constructs and intimately linked intrapsychic processes. Although conceptually not identical, these domains are intrinsically intertwined and frequently integrated, both in scientific inquiry and everyday life (Crocker et al., 2013; Locke, 2000). The complex nature of the reactionary orientation invites us to incorporate cognitive, motivational and emotional components instead of focusing exclusively on one.

Core values as motivational drivers of reactionism

Political values, like egalitarianism and equality, ethnocentrism, minimal government, economic security, law and order and moral traditionalism reflect normative beliefs or ideals about political matters (Goren, 2005; Schwartz, Caprara & Vecchione, 2010). They inform political behaviour and serve as the foundation of political attitudes and individual preferences for government spending, abortion, campaign finance reform, social welfare, political culture trends, and orientations towards liberty (Alvarez & Brehm, 1995; Davis, 2007; Grant & Rudolf, 2003; Inglehart, 1997; Jacoby, 2006; McClosky & Zaller, 1984).

The internal constraint of political values is traced to *core personal values*, which operate in all domains of life linking political preferences to life circumstances and choices (Ciuk & Jacoby, 2015). Core values (achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity, security, power) are enduring beliefs, connected to desirable goals and modes of conduct and guide behavior and action. They exist in clusters spanning across openness versus conservation and self-transcendence versus self-enhancement⁵ (Schwartz, 1992). For the average citizens who are not very engaged, not very ideological, and not very informed about political events and policies, political values might not be salient, but core personal values predict their political preferences (Glynn et al., 2004; Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992).

Core values operate across cultures (Bilsky et. al., 2011), are more consistent than transient preferences but also change slowly over time according to societal and political conditions. They provide a stable but flexible basis for the study of reactionism. We theorize core values pointing to support for tradition and aversion to change as the central motivational elements of reactionism. There is an established link in the literature between core values (universalism, conformity and tradition) and positions towards immigration (Davidov et al.,

⁵The Schwartz core values are discussed by Rokeach as terminal (non-reducible normative stipulations guiding personalities and society's organizational principles) and instrumental (means for the realization of terminal values).

2014). Moreover, since populist narratives label EU integration as a threat to the people, we expect anti-EU integration preferences are motivated by core values related to aversion to risk taking. Here reactionism makes its clear distinction from economic conservatism, which draws on traditional values but positive risk taking. This is possibly why reactionary orientations which predict anti-EU preferences do not necessarily translate to (or originate only from) conservative votes but span across the right and left party preferences. It can combine left-wing protectionism opposition to the open market forces, as well as traditionalist cultural opposition.

Competing explanations: reactionary orientations vs personality indicators

Extant studies find close associations between core values, ideology, political preferences and personality measures. These constructs are interlinked and empirically difficult to distinguish: the desire for certainty and security (values) is high among conservatives (ideology) who also score high on conscientiousness and low on openness to experiences (personality) (Feldman, 2003; Feldman & Johnston, 2014). Authoritarianism as a personality measure combines respect for tradition, conformity, obedience to authority, and a well-developed ideological outlook and might seem as the obvious predictor of support for populist parties. While authoritarianism and populist support appear to be linked in some countries they are not in others (Arceneaux & Nicholson, 2012; Dunn, 2015). Authoritarianism might have a similar value base to reactionism but it does not seem to employ or imply the resentful and sour desire to turn things back. Moreover, the reactionary orientation *is not a personality trait* and thus it does not define individuals during their lifetime. Rather it is a self-ascribed way of relating to the political world: for some citizens it is a meaningful orientation, for others less so (Capelos & Demertzis, 2018). Over time, it is strengthened, moderated, superseded based

on how citizens interact with their political environment. It shapes how citizens experience politics but it does not require a firm ideological outlook.

It follows that the conservative ideology, the authoritarian personality and the reactionary orientation rest on core values that show preference for the familiar, i.e. respect for tradition, conservation of the old family and religious norms. They are different in as much as the conservative would argue the status quo is worth preserving, the authoritarian personality would obey authority and follow structured ideological preferences, whereas the reactionary orientation would position itself against the undesirable status quo and require urgent improvement by longing to moving backwards.

Low agreeableness is another personality measure linked to voting for populist parties in the USA, Germany and the Netherlands (Baker et al., 2016). They see populist voting as an action congruent with one's personality and argue that low agreeable (labeled 'skeptical') voters are sensitive to the anti-establishment messages of populist parties. But let's pause here. Traits are *unobserved* character qualities measured by approximation, with the use of behavioral indicators (Allport, 1961; Eysenck, 1975). So what is observed at best is a consistent pattern between political and non-political behaviors. In addition, agreeableness, like all traits, is by definition a more-or-less permanent feature of personality. Does this mean that populist parties gain traction in societies of particular personality types? This is an unlikely scenario. Moreover, low agreeableness individuals are not necessarily 'skeptics'; they could be disconnected, cynical, apathetic, or indifferent to politics, qualities with distinct psychological properties. It is more likely that the link between personality measures and political preferences is an artifact explained by values. We essentially see low agreeableness as a behavioral measure of individuals' desire to resist change, associated with low social and political trust, intolerance, lack of cooperation, and low altruism (Costa, McCrae & Dye, 1991; Mondak & Halperin, 2008) all compatible with the reactionary orientation. Our

proposition is that deep-seated values (and not citizens' personalities) motivate reactionary orientations, which are cultivated, strengthened or lessened; and in populist environments, they are expressed as bundled anti-immigration and anti-EU preferences⁶.

Resentful affectivity: the complex emotional origins of reactionism

To capture the complex content of the reactionary orientation we also need to engage with its affective core. Recent studies turn to emotions like anger and fear, to explain anti-EU orientations, contributing to debates that focus on identity or cue-taking (Vasilopoulou & Wagner, 2017). Although valuable in highlighting how affect shapes political decision making about the European Union, models that rely on discrete emotions are limited by the static operational boundaries of these measures⁷.

Capelos and Demertzis (2018) argue that reactionism is founded on *complex clusters of resentful affective experiences* that are fluid and ever-evolving rather than a discrete emotions. Because the vision of reaction is located in the past, its emotional origins are not simple. Those who feel left behind want to turn backwards (Lilla, 2016). Reaction is a response to anxiety and uncertainty, the feelings of loss from thinking one is abandoned, which also generate anger and grievance. In other words, the reactionaries are not *just* or *mainly* angry. There is (ir)rational fear in the feeling of 'being left behind', in experiencing the realization that one is not able to keep up with contemporary social and economic complexity (Kenny, 2017).

The sentimental talk of reactionaries harbors resentment. Reactionaries feel neglected by their own state, that their interests are overlooked (Sullivan, 2017). This resentful affectivity supplies an important resource to anti-establishment populism from which it also

⁶ See Curtis and Hassing Nielsen (2018) for an interesting discussion of B5 interactions with ideology as predictors of EU attitudes.

⁷ For an interesting discussion of affective reactivity (affective coping style) and attitudes towards the EU see Nielsen (2018)

feeds (Capelos & Demertzis, 2018). The populist nostalgic accounts of pride, feeling of strength, but also frustration and anxiety about the state of affairs are an appropriate fit for the reactionary orientation which is already familiar with these emotions. Populist leaders and parties draw on this complex emotional environment promoting narratives and outlooks of national greatness and strong anti-establishment sentiments (Baker, Rooduijn & Schumacher, 2016; Magni, 2017). They invoke the affective power of resentment to highlight binary us' and 'them' distinctions '. When political elites are repeatedly portrayed as evil (Mudde, 2004), citizens' sense of political efficacy and trust erodes, and political cynicism finds fertile ground (Bergh, 2004). It follows that citizens oriented towards reaction will be less hopeful and more agitated than conservatives, and when in contact with populist discourses, they will feel envious and less efficacious too. They would be unhappy with the present and want to retreat into the past. For the reactionary orientation, the solution is the liquidation of the present political order, the return to a past that no longer exists. Reactionism likes the predictable: traditional family structures, common culture, one sovereign nation-state and strong border controls. But moving beyond traditionalism, *reactionism is hot*: its resentful sentiment is expressed as xenophobia and veiled racism. It is acted out as support for populist parties but is not contained nor does it stop with populism. It can also be channeled into violent and extreme behaviors or lead to cynicism and disengagement (Capelos et al., 2017).

Towards an empirical investigation of the political psychology of reaction

We theorize that the reactionary orientation carries resentful affective energy and is motivated by conservation promoting values. We also theorise that anti-EU and anti-immigration preferences, when bundled together, are a likely indicator of reaction. We therefore expect conservation values to be significant predictors of bundled 'anti' preferences and their effects to be weaker when anti-immigration and anti-EU preferences are not coupled together. The reactionary resentful affectivity can be expressed as general dissatisfaction, negative

sentiments towards a future that reproduces and preserves current trends, low efficacy, high sense of injustice, low levels of social trust, and distrust of national and international institutions. Resentment has not been studied in relation to anti-immigration and anti-EU preferences, due to the lack of available empirical measures, but its affective expressions have demonstrated links: feelings of low external efficacy are linked to populist discourse; low trust towards individuals and political institutions is linked to Euroscepticism and anti-immigration preferences⁸ (Loveless & Rohrschneider, 2011). We thus expect their significant impact as predictors of bundled anti-EU and anti-immigration preferences.

Previous research demonstrates that the reactionary orientation predicts engagement in anomalous political acts and lowers conventional participation (Capelos et al., 2017). We therefore expect that resentful reactionism would hold citizens back from engaging actively in mainstream politics, manifested as low participation in political demonstrations and low turnout rates. .

In our theoretical model, the reactionary orientation is more than the sum of its parts. It is manifested as *a cluster of co-occurring components*: values that denote a preference for changing things back, resentful emotionality manifested as low interpersonal trust, low confidence in institutions, low efficacy particularly in populist times, low participation (as vote frequency or demonstration potential). Naturally some of these elements serve as determinants of unbundled opposition to immigration or opposition to the EU, but their effect should be stronger for bundled anti-preferences. We also theorized that reactionary orientations are heightened in the aftermath of the financial crisis where populist discourses are prominent. We therefore expect that the motivational and affective components of reactionism will be stronger predictors of bundled anti-preferences in the post rather than the pre-crisis environment.

⁸ In pre-crisis times, levels of trust for national political institutions resulted in stronger support for the EU (Sanchez-Cuenca, 2000).

Empirical test

To operationalize reactionism at pre- and post-crisis points, we used the European Social Survey (European Social Survey, 2016) which has been used extensively to study anti-EU and anti-immigration preferences⁹. We selected the 2004 and 2014 modules because they contain proxies needed to profile reactionary orientations: personal values of tradition and aversion to new experiences, resentful emotional dynamics connected to dissatisfaction, low trust, low efficacy and feelings of injustice, and controls of ideology and demographics. To ensure measurement equivalence, we included 17 countries where the same measures were available for both data points: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Finland, France, Great Britain, Hungary, Ireland, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Slovenia and Sweden¹⁰.

Our dependent variable is categorical, capturing four combinations of preferences towards EU integration and immigration. The bundled anti-EU integration anti-immigration preferences (Anti-Anti), the anti-immigration pro-European (AntiIm-ProEU), the anti-EU integration pro-immigration (AntiEU-ProIm), and the supporting views for EU integration and immigration (Pro-Pro baseline). To map empirically our theorized model of reaction we employed proxies for its components¹¹. To approximate backward-looking core values we relied on *respect for tradition* and aversion towards *openness to change*. To account for resentful emotionality we measured general satisfaction, sense of injustice, social and political trust, and sense of efficacy. To test active political engagement we used vote and demonstration activity.

⁹ The ESS is widely used to study attitudes towards immigration (the ESS bibliography gives over 100 hits) and the EU including the seminal work of Hooghe, Huo & Marks (2007).

¹⁰ The 2004 analysis excludes France, since the income variable was unavailable. For measurement equivalence we run the analysis without France in 2014 (not presented here) and the results were robust.

¹¹ For detailed descriptions of the dependent variable, value orientations and affective components please see Section A, Online Appendix.

Analyses

Analyses of variance provided mean comparisons on the motivational, affective and behavioral scores of the four preference bundles for 2014 and 2004 (Figures 1 and 2) with notable differences¹². First, measures associated with reactionism changed significantly ($p < .05$) between 2004 and 2014. Respect for tradition increased, overall satisfaction dropped, and extreme ideological leaning increased. On the whole, social trust, institutional trust, internal political efficacy, vote and participation in demonstrations increased, which shows that interrogating reaction requires a deeper look into its bundled preferences.

Noteworthy is the significant lead of the Anti-Anti bundle ($p < .05$) compared to the Pro-Pro on respect for tradition, and its lower scores on social and institutional trust, general satisfaction, internal efficacy, and perceptions of fairness. This was consistent with our expectations that see reactionary orientations reflected in the Anti-Anti preferences. The bundle of AntiImProEU had higher scores on adventurousness, social trust, institutional trust, and general satisfaction ($p < .05$) compared to the Anti-Anti bundle and similar scores on desire for tradition, internal political efficacy and left-right placement. The AntiEU-ProIm had similar scores for aversion to adventure with the AntiIm-ProEU, and scored similarly to ProPro on everything else. The Anti-Anti and AntiIm-ProEU combinations had significantly lower scores on voting and participating in demonstrations compared to the AntiEU-ProIm and Pro-Pro bundles.

*** Please Insert Figure 1 and 2 Here ***

To examine differentiations between the Anti-Anti bundle, the Pro-Pro and the anti-pro combinations, while accounting for country-level differentiations and individual differences, we run a multilevel fixed-effects multinomial logit using HLM 7 (Pforr 2014). A multinomial logit is more adapted to analyze our dependent variable as it differentiates

¹² Detailed description of the results of mean comparisons are available in Section B, Online Appendix.

between the Pro-Pro bundle (baseline), and combinations of anti-preferences (Anti-Anti, AntiIm-ProEU, and AntiEU-ProIm). We measured the effects of the reactionary values and affects, and controlled for left/right placement, ideological extremity (folded left/right scale, extreme orientations at upper end), family income, subjective personal finances, age, education and gender. Two dummy variables identified east European member countries (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia), and countries hit hard by the financial crisis (Portugal, Ireland, Spain). The results appear in Tables I, II and III, organized as comparisons with the Pro-Pro baseline.

*** INSERT TABLES I , II and III HERE ***

Comparing Pro-Pro and Anti-Anti we noted the significant effect of values that motivate reactionism. As respect for tradition and aversion to adventurousness increased, so did the probability of moving from Pro-Pro to Anti-Anti. The weight of these values was comparable in 2004, but following the financial crisis in 2014, traditional values doubled in weight. On the affective factors, as overall satisfaction, social and political trust declined, the probability of shifting from Pro-Pro to Anti-Anti increased. Noteworthy is the direction change of efficacy from 2004 to 2014. Before the crisis the probability of moving from Pro-Pro to Anti-Anti increased as self-perceptions of efficacy increased. We expected declines in efficacy to be associated with reactionism, and indeed, in 2014, the negative efficacy sign increased the probability of moving from Pro-Pro to Anti-Anti bundle. This is consistent with the mean comparisons showing a decline in efficacy from 2004 to 2014 for Anti-Anti preferences. In addition, a sense of injustice driven by the feeling that immigrants are treated better than one self was significant predictor of moving from Pro-Pro to Anti-Anti preferences in 2014. Voting and taking part in demonstrations decreased the probability of moving from Pro-Pro to Anti-Anti in both years, but several demographic factors were significant push-forces towards the anti-anti choices. Being right-wing, with lower levels of religiosity, lower

income and education, and being older, all increased the probability of moving from Pro-Pro to Anti-Anti preferences pointing to a particular demographic and ideological trend in reactionary orientations in Europe.

Overall, a complex mix of factors consistent with reactionary orientations contributed to moving to 'anti' preferences but psychological dynamics aside, context matters. In 2004 living in a former communist regime decreased the probability of moving from Pro-Pro to Anti-Anti. In 2014 however, Eastern Europe was equally susceptible to the reactionary shift. Living in the bail-out countries (Portugal, Ireland, Spain) also decreased the probability of moving from Pro-Pro to Anti-Anti. The effect, which is consistently negative in 2014, suggests that economic deprivation on its own does not justify nor generate these policy preferences but rather mitigates them. The additive impact of psychological factors is what drove the move from support of immigration and the EU, to 'anti' reaction.

In Table 2 we examined the factors that shifted immigration preferences from a pro- to anti-, while maintaining EU support. In 2004, traditional values and opposition to adventure together with negative affect (decline in overall satisfaction, social and political trust) increased the probability of moving from a pro to an anti-immigration position, Being right-wing, male, with lower levels of education, voting less and participating less in demonstrations contributed to this effect. As in Table 1, by 2014 traditional values become an even stronger predictor of anti-immigration preferences overall dissatisfaction increases its anti-immigration effect, lower efficacy and feelings of injustice become significant, and lower education and low participation have the expected effect.

In Table 3 we turn to the probability of change from pro- to anti-European positions while maintaining support for immigration across the two time points. In 2004 values were non-significant for Eurosceptic preferences which were predicted by affective considerations (evident in the decline of general satisfaction, and social and institutional trust) higher levels

of internal efficacy, and moderate ideological orientations. Declines in voting and demonstrations and lower education also increased Eurosceptic preferences pointing to disengagement rather than reactionism. By 2014 the content of Euroscepticism changes significantly. Traditional values and aversion to adventure became relevant in the post-crisis setting. In addition, dissatisfaction and distrust maintained a Eurosceptic push, combined with feelings of being treated unfairly, ideological extremity and right wing positioning. With the above in mind we would argue that the psychological profile of Euroscepticism underwent a significant change pointing to extreme ideological preferences, reactionary values, and resentful affect that operated above and beyond traditional education, age, and religion barriers. Similarly to Table 1, living in the bail-out countries or eastern Europe consistently decreased the probability of adopting anti-European preferences.

Discussion: reactionary orientation and anti-preferences

Evidence reviewed here established that the shift to anti-immigration and anti-EU integration preferences is driven by a complex combination of core values and emotions consistent with a reactionary orientation. We theorized that the backward gaze of reactionism rests on conservation and aversion for adventure. The Anti-Anti bundled preferences displayed the highest score on such value orientations . Unbundled anti-immigration and anti-EU preferences also showed traces of reaction: respect for tradition predicted anti-immigration alongside affective elements of dissatisfaction, sense of injustice and low efficacy; and anti-EU preferences acquired a reactionary hue, driven by values, negative affect, sense of injustice and low efficacy.

We also theorized that the affective tone of reactionism rests on resentment, a cluster emotion combining negative affect, feelings of perceived injustice and low self-worth. Dissatisfaction combined with a sense of injustice explained anti-EU and anti-immigration preferences and this warrants further investigation. Emotions can be directed to specific

objects and acquire different meanings for those experiencing them. Citizens who are anti-EU and pro-immigration are likely to be sensitive to anxieties related to the unknown (economic) future of the EU and less to concerns about tradition and culture. Opposition to immigration combined with support for the EU is linked to concerns about the erosion of traditions. In both cases, citizens experience anxieties, but the *content* of their anxieties is different. This fits well with extant explanations of Euroscepticism suggesting that left-wing euro-critical parties like Podemos and Syriza mobilize anti-austerity sentiments, whereas right-wing parties like the National Front (France), the Danish People's Party or the Freedom Parties in the Netherlands and Austria, feed on anti-immigration anxieties (Hobolt and De Vries, 2016).

Our findings also reconcile the tension between studies that link risk propensity to increased support for UKIP in the UK, and others that link populism with risk aversion personality traits (Steenbergen & Siczek, 2017). As we noted earlier, a reactionary orientation is not identical to conservatism, and not all reactionaries wish to avoid risk. For conservatives, the inertia of the status quo is significant. For reactionaries that oppose the status-quo but backwards, risk taking can be acceptable, and with risk comes anxiety. Anxiety can also result from fearing the unknown that is deemed undesirable. And with it comes resentment (Salmela & von Scheve, 2017), feelings of betrayal, and nostalgic longing for restoring an (imagined) past (Lilla, 2016). The resentful emotionality of reactionism is complex and our scholarship requires the design and use of sophisticated measures to capture its impact (Capelos & Demertzis, 2018).

Conclusion: the need for a theoretical framework for the political psychology of reaction

It has become clear that reactionism deserves its own entry as a tool to understand the challenges to democratic representation in Europe and the world today. The psychological foundations of this orientation can shed light on fundamental concerns involving the rising

appeal of populism and nationalism, anti-establishment and anti-liberal preferences, alienation, anomic or violent political action, societal polarization and challenges of EU integration.

Party politics scholars have noted that mainstream political classifications along the left-right spectrum no longer adequately capture the desires of many citizens. Instead, the deployment of an idealized past and social order, the desire for restoration of the past, marks the broadly similar narratives of contemporary ‘radical’ populist, neo-nazi and ethno-nationalist political parties like UKIP (UK), National Front (France), Freedom Party Geert Wilders (Netherlands), Golden Dawn (Greece), Jobbik Party (The Movement for Better Hungary), or the FPO (Freedom Party of Austria) (Bauer et. al., 2017). As often their names imply, these parties and movements deploy a patriotic and anti-establishment stance which promises to preserve and protect the values and interests of their supporters. Their candidates and leaders offer narratives that adopt and cultivate the desire for restoring of a golden era, a return to a glorious past, by endorsing public anger and dismay and promising to get things done in the interest of the citizens that were ‘left behind’. Instead of innovation, they naturally embrace *restoration*. Consider the ‘Take Back Control’ message of the Brexit campaign. It contained the depiction of a stalled present and a future that is compromised by the unstoppable changes imposed by elites on the country against its will. Integral features of this anti-establishment discourse were references to national greatness and economic supremacy, as well as powerful anti-immigration and anti-EU integration arguments, offering the nostalgic return to the past as an alternative possibility (Kenny, 2017). These parties have increased their power in the recent years, and their inclusion in coalition governments is not as shocking as in the past. However, there is no underpinning theory that explains the psychological component of this vote across Europe (Rooduijn, 2018).

These political agendas resonate well with the voters who support them. They are upset with political elites, frustrated with ‘politics as usual’, suspicious of multinational, international and national institutions, feel personally and socially betrayed and hold a strong sense of injustice. They are critical of globalization, despise the multicultural model, and favor restorative initiatives (Lilla, 2016; Sullivan, 2017). Their preferences are often descriptively referred to as *populist sentiment* but the psychological undercurrent of this complex political orientation needs better understanding, because it is not entirely sentimental, nor it is *populist* per se, as it is by definition the supply side of politics that is populist. At the present, this orientation harnessed by populist rhetoric is reactionary in its core. By labeling it ‘populist’, its complex affective and motivational properties remain largely overlooked.

While some voters find a home in the anti-establishment narratives of populist parties, others disengage, abstain from mainstream political activities, participate in grassroots movements like the ‘indignados’ (Spain) or ‘aganaktismenoi’ (Greece) (Dinas et. al., 2016), engage in anomic and violent political actions that lie at the extremes, or remain passive supporters of hate narratives. These inclinations, often (mis)labeled the ‘new wave of political radicalism’ (Taheri, 2015), have significant implications for democratic politics and are worth systematic exploration. If, as we suggest, they are reactionary in nature, their psychological origins, needs and aims will be very different to that of radical movements and further work is needed to fully understand them (Capelos et al., 2017).

We close with the note to resist normative dualisms of good-bad that could label this reactionary orientation as harmful, dangerous, or a sign of political dysfunction. It is important to critically assess whether and when reactionism could serve as an informed and constructive force, providing a critical evaluation to the present. Characteristics that promote deliberative engagement with politics, for example trust, efficacy and hope, appear lower in

the context of reaction. We have tried to connect the dots: the low efficacy of the reactionary orientation goes hand in hand with the willingness to adopt victimizing discourses that promote anti-immigration and anti EU integration arguments, and can explain the current resurgence and increased appeal of populisms, nationalisms, and extreme party agendas.

There is rich potential for further research here. The narratives that combine the power of the victimized people against elites, sentiments of injustice, nostalgia, betrayal, and resentment can be attractive for citizens holding reactionary fantasies of idealised pasts. We ought to investigate this further, and to start we should approach the political psychology of reaction as an empirical and theoretical challenge.

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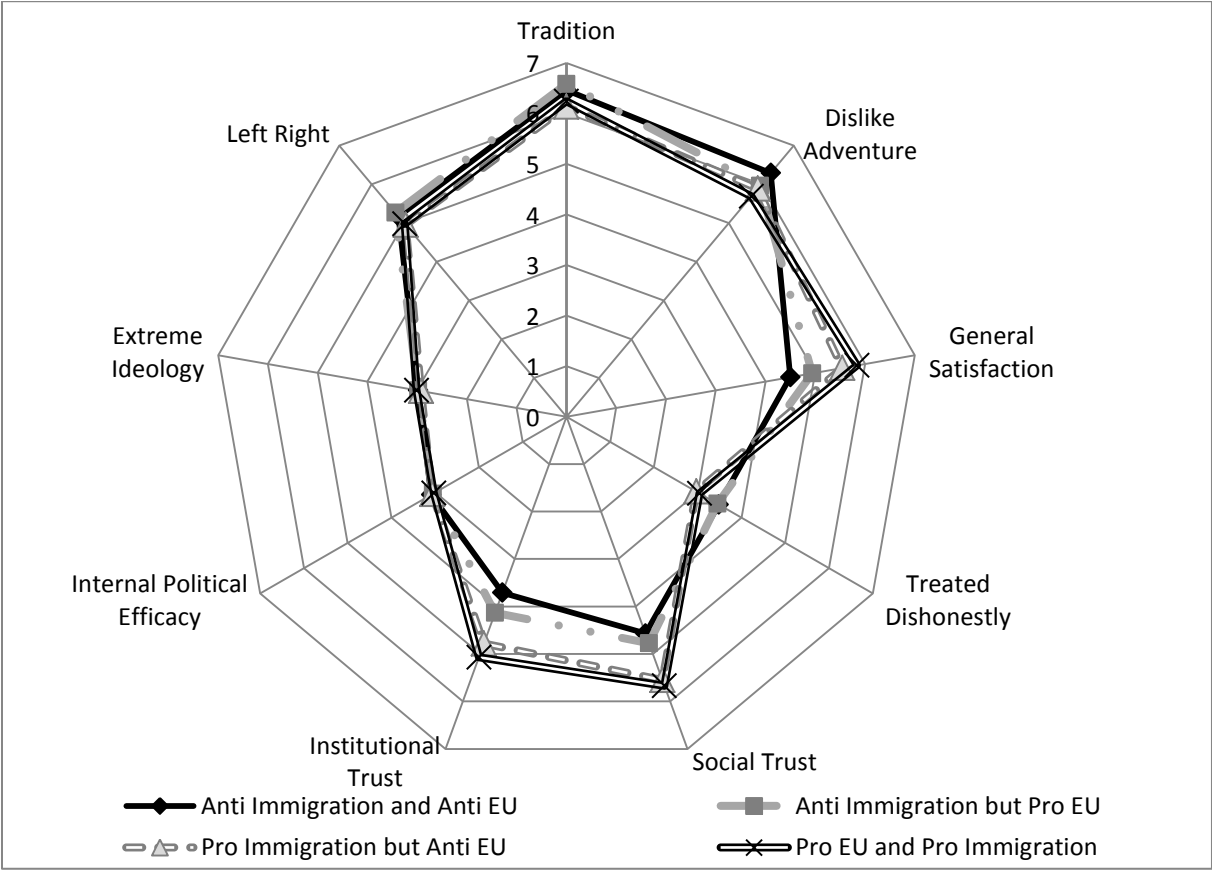
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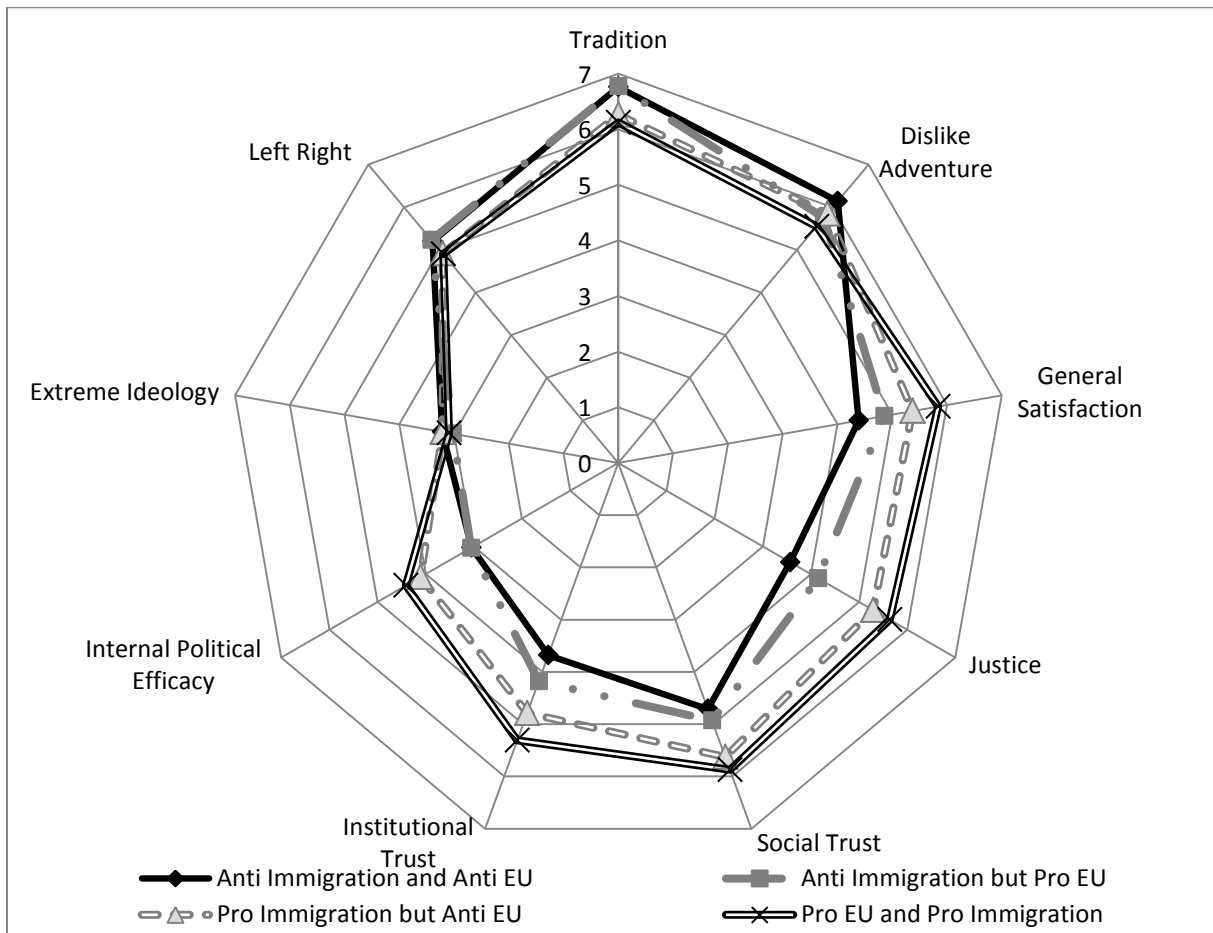
Appendix: Figures and Tables

Figure 1: Reactionary Component Scores 2004 for ‘anti’ preference combinations



Note: 2004 European Social Survey, points are means (0-10 scales). For detailed data and significance tests, see Table A1, Online Appendix.

Figure 2: Reactionary component scores 2014 for 'anti' preference combinations



Note: 2014 European Social Survey, points are means (0-10 scales). For detailed data and significance tests, see Table A1, Online Appendix.

Table I: Baseline Pro-Pro, to Anti-Anti: reporting coefficients (Odds Ratios in parenthesis)

	2004	2014
Anti Immi Anti EU		
Constant	3.04***(20.88)	4.88***(131.07)
PIGS	-1.37** (0.25)	-1.56** (0.20)
EAST	-1.25***(0.28)	-0.89 (0.41)
Traditional values	0.04***(1.04)	0.08***(1.08)
Opposition for adventure	0.04***(1.05)	0.04***(1.04)
General satisfaction with life	-0.29***(0.74)	-0.30***(0.74)
Internal efficacy	0.16***(1.78)	-0.11***(0.90)
Feeling being treated unfairly (direction is immigrants are treated better to ... worst)	0.01 (1.01)	-
Government's treatment of new immigrants	-	-0.28***(0.76)
Social trust	-0.22***(0.80)	-0.20***(0.82)
Institutional trust	-0.21***(0.80)	-0.23***(0.79)
Extreme ideology	-0.01 (0.99)	0.03***(1.03)
Left-right self-placement	0.11***(1.12)	0.12***(1.13)
Vote in last election	-0.01 (0.99)	0.004 (1.00)
Lawful demonstration	-0.04***(0.95)	-0.03***(0.97)
Religiosity	-0.04***(0.96)	-0.04***(0.96)
Gender	0.03 (1.02)	-0.7 (0.93)
Age	0.01***(1.00)	0.00* (1.00)
Education	-0.13***(0.88)	-0.09***(0.91)
Difficulty in Living comfortably	0.05 (1.05)	0.02 (1.02)
Variance component	0.52***	0.62***
N (countries)	16 (without France)	17
N (individuals)	18664	20530
Log Likelihood	-4.547738E+004	-4.954697E+004
Note: Data from 2014 and 2004 European Social Survey. Significance: * p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001		

Table II: Baseline Pro-Pro, to AntiIm-ProEU: Reporting coefficients (Odds Ratios in parenthesis)

Anti Immigration & Pro EU	2004	2014
Constant	1.61***(5.00)	3.36***(28.9)
PIGS	-0.23 (0.79)	-0.51 (0.6)
EAST	0.08 (1.09)	0.08 (1.09)
Traditional values	0.05***(1.05)	0.08***(1.08)
Opposition for adventure	0.02** (1.02)	-0.00 (0.99)
General satisfaction	-0.14***(0.86)	-0.18***(0.83)
Internal efficacy	0.03 (1.03)	-0.12***(0.88)
Social trust	-0.16***(0.85)	-0.17***(0.84)
Institutional trust	-0.11***(0.89)	-0.11***(0.90)
Extreme ideology	-0.01 (0.99)	0.00 (1.00)
Left-right self-placement	0.10***(1.11)	0.11***(1.11)
Vote in last election	-0.01* (.99)	-0.01 (0.99)
Lawful demonstration	-0.04***(.96)	-0.03***(0.97)
Feeling being treated unfairly (direction is immigrants are treated better to ... worst)	0.01 (1.01)	
Government's treatment of new immigrants	-	-0.21***(0.81)
Religiosity		-0.01 (0.99)
Gender	0.13* (1.14)	0.04 (1.04)
Age	0.00 (1.00)	-0.00** (1.00)
Level of education achieved	-0.11***(0.89)	-0.09***(0.91)
Difficulty in Living comfortably	0.05 (1.05)	0.03 (1.03)
Variance Component	0.21***	0.25***
N (countries)	16 (without France)	17
N (individuals)	18664	20530
Log Likelihood	-4.547738E+004	-4.954697E+004
Note: Data from 2014 and 2004 European Social Survey. Significance: * p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001		

Table III: Baseline Pro-Pro, to AntiEU-ProIm: reporting coefficients (Odds Ratios in parenthesis)

Anti EU & Pro Immigration	2004	2014
Constant	0.49 (1.63)	1.22***(3.38)
PIGS	-0.87* (0.41)	-0.91** (0.4)
EAST	-0.91** (0.40)	-0.66* (0.52)
Traditional values	0.01 (1.00)	0.03***(1.03)
Opposition for adventure	0.01 (1.01)	0.03** (1.03)
General satisfaction	-0.14***(0.86)	-0.12***(0.88)
Social trust	-0.05* (0.95)	-0.07***(0.94)
Internal efficacy	0.09* (1.09)	-0.01 (0.99)
Institutional trust	-0.10***(0.90)	-0.15***(0.86)
Extreme ideology	-0.02* (0.98)	0.02** (1.02)
Left-right self-placement	-0.01 (0.99)	0.03** (1.03)
Government's treatment of new immigrants	--	-0.06***(0.94)
Feeling being treated unfairly (direction is immigrants are treated better to ... worst)	0.00 (1.00)	--
Vote in last election	-0.01* (1.01)	-0.00 (0.99)
Lawful demonstration	-0.01* (0.98)	-0.00 (0.99)
Religiosity	-0.01 (0.99)	-0.01 (0.99)
Gender	0.08 (1.09)	-0.09* (0.91)
Age	-0.00 (1.00)	0.00 (1.00)
Education	-0.02** (0.98)	-0.01 (0.99)
Difficulty in Living comfortably	0.05 (1.06)	0.04 (1.04)
Variance component	0.24***	0.23***
N (countries)	16 (without France)	17
N (individuals)	18664	20530
Log Likelihood	-4.547738E+004	-4.954697E+004
Note: Data from 2014 and 2004 European Social Survey. Significance: * p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001		