

# The politics of style

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# Propositions

Accompanying the dissertation:

**The Politics of Style.**  
*Political Performance Caught Between  
Populism, Elitism, and Pluralism.*

By Carola Schoor

1. Populism, elitism, and pluralism are circularly related, sharing one underlying semio-linguistic structure, which defines one concept as the exact opposite of what the other two concepts have in common, in three different dimensions (ideational, social, and presentational).
2. Populist politicians do not *have* a populist style; they are themselves a metaphor for the people, and as such, with their whole appearance, are an expression of a populist style.
3. The concept of *a homogeneous people* is not necessarily part of populism, nevertheless, it is an expression of it.
4. The extreme-left and the extreme-right do not meet each other in populism; they are divided by it.
5. It is telling that Lakoff in 2002 only recognized two dominant family-related metaphorical frames in American politics – the authoritarian father and the nurturing parent. Evidently, since then, the rebellious children have pushed their frame forward in American politics.
6. Linguistics is equally important for the understanding of politics as political science and philosophy are.
7. Seeing *populism* as the opposite of *liberalism* by labeling it as *democratic illiberalism* is an unbalanced framing of the matter.
8. Populism, elitism, and pluralism are the political equivalents of the three central Lacanian notions on the subject: *pluralism* is the political equivalent of the split subject, *populism* of the imaginary symbiose with the mother, and *elitism* of identification with the name of the father.
9. Trump posing with a bible in front of a church, from which protesters had just been evacuated, is a vivid example of government by style.
10. Where the financial crisis of 2008 may have fostered a populist tendency in politics, it will become evident in the future that the Corona-virus crisis of 2020 furthered a pluralist/elitist wave.